

“The City of God and the City of Man”
(Genesis 4:16-5:24)

If you had to go and live in a very dark place, such as in a cave or in an underground bomb shelter, where there wasn't any light, and you had to be there for several days or weeks, you would quickly reach a point where you would long to see light again and would be very happy when you did see it. God has made us so that we don't like the darkness. By nature we are afraid of it, because we feel so helpless when we can't see where we're going. Now if we had been born blind, we wouldn't miss it as much, because that is what we would be used to. But if we could see, and had the light taken away, it would be different. The same is true spiritually, as well. When we're used to the light of God's truth and the comfortable light of His presence in our hearts, it is very unnerving to have it taken away. This is what happened to Adam and Eve when they were thrown out of the garden. Thankfully, by God's grace, they didn't lose that light all together. There was still a glimmer when God shared with them the promise of the coming seed of the woman, but they didn't have nearly the light they had before. Things looked bad and were getting worse all the time. They saw division in their own household. One of their children was in the kingdom of the evil one. They saw their first born son murder their younger son Abel, and then be excommunicated by the Lord from His church. But this wasn't all that was going to happen. Things were going to get even darker yet. The kingdom of the evil one would continue to grow as men were born into the world. But thankfully, by God's grace, the light would also begin to shine brighter. As time went on, the revelation of the promised seed of the woman also began to grow, and along with it, certain blessings among the people of God.

In verse 16, we read that Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, since he had been excommunicated. He went out to build the city of man. Moses writes that he settled in the land of Nod, which was probably called by that name after Cain had settled there, because the name Nod means “wandering, flight or exile.” Then we read that Cain had relations with his wife, and she conceived and bore a son. Cain must have already been married when he was excommunicated. Remember that Adam and Eve were most likely about 130 years old when Cain killed Abel. They would have had several other sons and daughters by this time. They aren't mentioned specifically simply because the Bible, as we've seen, isn't a history of the world, but a history of the redemptive work of God. Notice that when Cain was excommunicated, his wife also went out with him. She too was cut off from the Lord. This shows how the sins of the covenant head of a household can also affect the wife and family. Husbands and fathers, this exhorts us to be very careful that we walk closely with the Lord and work diligently in His service. If we fall into sin, it can have a bad effect on all those whom we love. But if we walk in obedience, it can bring God's blessing. From this let's learn to labor with all our strength to have God's blessing on our house, and to do everything we can to avoid His curse. Now this isn't to say that the wives are always cursed with their husbands. For instance, Abigail was not cursed with her husband Nabal, when he refused to help David, because she did what he failed to do (1 Sam. 25). She was faithful. But she was still affected by it. May the Lord have mercy on us that He may keep us from sin, and give us the strength to walk in His way.

Cain and his wife had a son, and they named him Enoch. This wasn't the Enoch whom we will see later walked with God. Cain also built a city and named it after his son Enoch. It may have been a very small city, with only three citizens, or it may have been that Cain had several other children by this time, and their children had children. At any rate, they continue to multiply. And as they do, so does their wickedness.

The last son we read about in this genealogy, who might have also been the last in this line, prior to the flood, was Lamech. Again, this is not the same Lamech whom we will read about later who becomes the father of Noah. This one has the dubious honor of being the first polygamist. He married two wives, by the names of Adah and Zillah. And he had children by these two wives who were distinguished for their gifts. Adah gave birth to Jabal, his descendants were those who lived in tents and raised livestock. And she gave birth to Jubal, who was the father of all who play the lyre and pipe. Zillah also had a son, who was named Tubal-cain. He was a forger of tools of bronze and iron. This shows us that the Lord gave good gifts even to the ungodly line of Cain. This is what we call God's common grace. Are all the doctors, lawyers, politicians, artists and musicians only in the family of God? No. There are many in the devil's family too. Where did they get the gifts to do these things? From the Lord. This is what we call God's common grace. He gives good gifts even to his enemies, sometimes even greater gifts than He gives His own children. Now I don't believe that He gave them only to these families. After all, they were all destroyed in the flood, and these gifts still exist today. It may have been that the godly line learned these things from the ungodly line before they were destroyed. We will see later that they had far too much to do with each other (Gen. 6).

Lamech (whose name means powerful) appears to be a symbol of how bad things were getting in the ungodly line in those days. Apparently, he was the second man to kill someone, following in the footsteps of his father Cain and the devil (John 8:44). It isn't clear whether he killed a man and a boy, or just a young man, but he did kill at least one. It also isn't clear what he meant by what he said, "If Cain is avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold." Remember, the Lord said that if anyone killed Cain, vengeance would be taken on him sevenfold. Lamech appears to be saying either that if anyone killed him, seventy-sevenfold judgment would be taken on his killer, or that since someone wounded him, he inflicted seventy-sevenfold judgment on him. Either way, what he says shows how wicked he was. At best he appears to be boasting that he is greater than Cain and that those who hurt him should be punished even more than if they hurt Cain. At worst, he may in fact be trying to take God's place. God is the One who determines what the punishment should be for the crime. But now Lamech takes this authority to himself when he pronounces what the judgment should be on the one who would wound or kill him. This teaches us that when God's presence is no longer with a people, they quickly go downhill. Why do we see all the things we do happening in our nation today? Why do we see their sin and wickedness becoming greater and greater? Why are we killing our babies, committing more and more perverse acts of immorality, and growing colder towards our neighbor? It's because God is withdrawing His presence from us. We don't need to look for His judgment to begin, it began a long time ago, and it's only going to get worse. Our society is quite a bit like this one in the days of Noah. And unless the Lord does something soon, we may end up being destroyed like they were.

But in the midst of this darkness, a light also begins to shine. We also see here the growth of the city of God, or the covenant community. Adam again had relations with his wife

Eve, and she bore another son. She named him Seth (compensation), because God gave her another son in the place of Abel, whom Cain had killed. He was the one through whom the Lord was going to continue the faithful line. He was a blessing from the Lord, one of the rays of hope. God was not finished with them yet. His promise to send a redeemer had yet to be fulfilled, and Seth was the beginning of that promise. But you know there was another blessing that Adam and Eve had probably missed altogether. One that we might miss as well, and can only see now through the eyes of faith. They knew that their son Abel had been faithful to the Lord, and that he was now dead. But they may not have known at that time what happened to the faithful who die in the Lord. The angels knew. The Bible says that the angels long to look into the work God is doing to save fallen man. When Abel died, they saw something very wonderful, something much more wonderful than a man returning to an earthly paradise. They saw a man who had fallen into the depths of sin, redeemed and brought safely to heaven. They saw the glory of Christ's redemptive work in bringing one of God's sinful and miserable creatures into the glory and happiness of heaven. Abel was the first man ever to enter into the heavenly paradise of God through the seed of the woman. This gave the angels something to praise God for. Certainly, this would have given Adam and Eve something to praise Him for as well. And we should praise Him that this promised blessing is not only for Abel, but also for all of us who love and trust the Lord.

But there's more. Seth also had a son. He named him Enosh. And Moses tells us that something interesting happened in his days. Men began to call on the name of the Lord. This appears to be the first revival of religion, the first outpouring of God's Spirit in the days before the Flood. Certainly, those in the godly line must have already been calling on the name of the Lord. This must have been something unique. Perhaps it was that men began to call on the name of the Lord together, in public assemblies, instead of only in families. Perhaps the Lord moved in a powerful way to cause more and more people to be converted to Him and to seek Him. Either way, this can't happen unless the Spirit is given in greater measure. When He is poured out, it always has this effect. He stirs up the hearts of His people to pray. When Paul was converted, one of the first things that was said about him was, "Behold, he is praying" (Acts 9:11). When the Spirit of the Lord was preparing His people for the great revival that took place in New York in 1858, the first thing He did was to move on their hearts to gather together to pray. This is always the effect of God sending the Spirit. This is how He prepares us to receive His blessing. But this is also the way He sends the Spirit: when His people humble themselves and seek His face. May the Lord encourage us through this to pray, to seek Him diligently and earnestly until He opens the windows of heaven and pours out His Spirit upon His church.

The next thing we see is the growth of the city of God through the godly line of Seth. We also see the extremely long life spans of these people, who lived anywhere from 365 to 969 years. Perhaps if we have time later, we might be able to consider why they lived so long. But the important figure to see here is Enoch. He pleased the Lord so much that the Lord took him up to heaven to be with him and spared him from death. Let's consider for a moment what Enoch was like.

Enoch appears to be a man who was distinguished in one area: his personal commitment to the Lord. He was a man who walked with God for over 300 years. His soul was built upon Christ to a greater degree than anyone else's. He was a wonderful trophy of God's grace. We read in Jude that Enoch was also a prophet. Jude writes, "And about these [that is, these evil

men who crept into the church] also Enoch, *in* the seventh *generation* from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him’” (1:14-15). Here Enoch clearly prophesied regarding the coming of the Lord in judgment. This was a further revelation of the promised seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent. He also spoke of the souls Christ would redeem, whom He would bring with Him at His return, and His judgment upon the wicked. Enoch seems to be speaking here about the second coming of Christ. But it is possible that this prophecy also had reference to the flood which was about to come upon the world, a flood which was a picture of the final judgment when Christ would return to destroy the wicked once and for all.

Enoch was also unique in the fact that he didn’t die. The author to the Hebrews writes, “By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God” (11:5). This is the first instance of the redemption of the body. Many souls had been saved. One had even been brought safely to heaven. But no one’s body had yet been redeemed. Here the Lord was revealing that it was also His intention to save the body as well, to redeem it from the Fall. He was revealing that on the last day, all the dead will be raised, and those who are in Christ and are yet alive will be transformed into His glorious likeness. There were other pictures of this in the resurrection of the saints on the day of Christ’s crucifixion -- whom some believe didn’t die again, but were taken up to heaven and glorified (Matt. 27:52-53) --, and in Elijah, but this was the first. The church was given a greater light with respect to God’s plan for our bodies. They knew that Enoch had been taken to be with God, along with his body. They also knew that this is what God had for them, if they would be faithful to Him. And this was more than they knew before. This is what the Lord says that He also has in store for us. This is what we should be longing for: to be with Him. If our yearning to be with the Lord has grown cold, may the Lord stir us up again to the point where we can say with the apostle John, “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

And so the church of that time was surrounded by a great darkness, but in the midst of that darkness, the true light began to shine brighter and brighter. God continued the godly line. He sent revival. And He gave Enoch both to prophecy and to be an example of what will happen to the godly who trust in His Son. Here was the peak, but after Enoch was taken out of the world, there began a decline. The people of God were the minority in those days, and they always will be. But by the time we get to Noah, the Lord says that he is the only righteous man left on the earth (Gen. 7:1). That is what we look at next time. Amen.