

Genesis Ch5v1-32 - Decline and Death

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[0 : 00] Turn in your Bibles please to Genesis, Genesis chapter 5. Thanks Rob.

Genesis chapter 5, starting at verse 1. We're going to read the whole chapter together. I could have been very mean and asked someone to read this chapter, but as we get into it, you'll understand why I spare you.

Well, let's read together. This is God's Word, all of it recorded for our good and for our blessings. So let's read from verse 1.

This is the written account of Adam's family line. When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them.

And he named them mankind when they were created. When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image. And he named him Seth.

[1 : 30] After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years and then he died. When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enoch.

And when he became the father of Enoch, Seth lived 107 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Seth lived a total of 912 years and then he died.

When Enoch had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan. After he became the father of Kenan, Enoch lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters.

Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 905 years and then he died. When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalel.

After he became the father of Mahalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Kenan lived a total of 910 years and then he died.

[2 : 38] When Mahalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. After he became the father of Jared, Mahalel lived 830 years and, well, he had other sons and daughters.

Altogether, Mahalel lived a total of 895 years and then he died. When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch.

After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years and then he died.

When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters.

Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. Enoch walked faithfully with God. Then he was no more because God took him away.

[3 : 40] When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters.

Altogether, Methuselah lived a total of 969 years and then he died. When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son.

He named him Noah and said, He will comfort us in the labour and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the Lord has cursed.

After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Lamech lived a total of 777 years.

And then he died. After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Jephthah. Well, interesting.

[4 : 44] Let's pray. Father, we thank you that every person created and every name recorded is precious to you.

Just as we are precious to you and our names are known to you, you know us intimately.

You knew the day we were born. And you know the day of our passing. And so we pray and ask that you, Father God, the Lord of Life, would speak to us all today.

Speak to us in such a way as if we are hearing your very words, that you may cause us to look to you in faith and trust you for life.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Well, what's the point? Why bother reading a boring list of names that no one can properly pronounce?

[6 : 11] It's like counting sheep. It would put you to sleep. Well, these genealogies, these lists of names that we have in Genesis are crucial to the story of God's promise of redemption.

Look how it's introduced in verse 1. This is the written account of Adam's family line. The purpose is to help us follow God's redemptive plan through God's chosen family.

To follow God's redemptive plan through God's chosen family. Remember, God had promised that a seed from the woman, one of her offspring, a son would come who was going to destroy the work of Satan.

The seed would crush Satan's head. A son would come and redeem broken lives and restore this disordered world.

And that promise is traced through the son of Adam and Eve. So go back to chapter 4, verse 1. Adam made love to his wife Eve and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain.

[7 : 23] She said, with the help of the Lord, I have brought forth a man. Expectations are running high that Cain is the promised redeemer.

But instead of defeating Satan, Cain sided with Satan because he murdered his brother Abel. But all is not lost.

Look at the end of chapter 4, verse 25. Adam made love to his wife again and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, God has granted me another child in place of Abel since Cain killed him.

God's promise of a deliverer would come, but not through the family line of Cain, but through the family line of Seth.

You see, these names that are listed for us in chapter 5 is not a boring genealogy. They are reminders of God's promise.

[8 : 29] Every name written, every generation that passes should encourage our faith that God is working out his plan of redemption. In the course of history, people may reject God and rebel against God, but no one and nothing can stop what God has promised.

Not surprisingly, the New Testament opens up with a genealogy. Keep your finger in Genesis 5 and jump all the way to Luke chapter 3.

In the New Testament, Luke chapter 3. Just as Genesis opens with the genealogy of the family line of Adam, so the New Testament opens with a genealogy.

Luke chapter 3, and we're going to pick it up in the middle of verse 22. Here the author Luke introduces us to Jesus.

Jesus at his baptism. And during the baptism, verse 22, middle of verse 22, a voice came from heaven.

[9 : 46] God is speaking. You are my son, whom I love. With you I am well pleased. Now Jesus himself was about 33 years old when he began his ministry.

He was the son, so it was thought of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janai, the son of Joseph.

We won't keep going. Let's jump to verse 37. The son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalel, the son of Kenan, the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Go back to Genesis 5. You see, God always delivers on his promise. Of course, it doesn't always look that way.

Humanity is suffering and struggling. The world, the physical world, is creaking and groaning. It seems like we're in free fall. Well, all these genealogies, the promised Redeemer would come, and he did come.

[11 : 04] He came in the person of Jesus. So whenever you think that life is out of control, re-read your genealogies.

Plod through those unpronounceable names, and as each generation passes, as we tick off every year, remind yourself, God is in control.

God delivers on his promise. God is redeeming humanity, and he will restore this broken world. Rather than put you to sleep, it's going to build your faith.

Well, we're getting ahead of ourselves, aren't we? You see, this genealogy of Adam is not just history in the past.

It's our story and our future to come. It's a story that moves us from death into life. Three things we're going to see about ourselves from this list of names.

[12 : 13] First, our family likeness. Our family likeness. The beginning of Adam's family line reminds us of our own family line.

First, we're created in the likeness of God. Look at verse 1. When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God.

It reminds us straight out that we were created to be like God. For as we've seen already in God's image, when you look in a mirror, as you did this morning, you see a reflection of yourself.

It's not your true self, but an image of yourself. You see something of your likeness. Now, God has created us to be his likeness, to reflect him.

We are to be a visible representation of the invisible God. We are here to display his love, his justice, his mercy, his purity. God's intention is that he is reflected in human form and character.

[13 : 25] So, God wonderfully creates mankind in his likeness, and we have been created in that likeness. Now, God's likeness is seen in mankind.

Verse 2, he created them male and female and blessed them and he named them mankind when they were created. There's different kinds of mankind and the different kinds are male and female.

Both equally reflect the likeness of God. One is not better or less than the other, equal in value and worth and dignity. And while there's maybe male and female in God's likeness, that doesn't mean to say that God is 50% male and 50% female.

No, God is distinct from humanity. He's not like us. He's not restricted to physical body. But yet, together, as man and woman, we reflect his likeness, we display his character.

This is who we are. This is God's beautiful design for humanity. It's not just history in the past. This is our identity.

[14 : 48] identity. This is our story. But sadly, it's not the full story, is it? Because not only are we created in the likeness of God, we are fallen in the likeness of Adam.

Look at verse 3. When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image, and he named him Seth.

Like Adam, we are now cracked image bearers. Instead of reflecting God's beautiful image, we reflect our own broken image.

Yes, we're still capable of displaying God's love and justice, but now it is tainted and distorted. We are not as we should be. we've used this illustration before in Genesis, but I want us to think about it again.

Imagine you're looking in the mirror and reflecting back at you is your image. In fact, the image can appear to you almost identical.

[16 : 01] Now, lift that mirror off the wall and smash it to the ground. Bits fly everywhere, chips and cracks and sharp edges.

Now look down again at those pieces of mirror on the ground and look into it. It's hard to make out your face, isn't it? The image is now distorted and twisted and out of shape, full of cracks and sharp edges.

Well, that's what we've become. We no longer reflect the purity and beauty of God fully. It is marred and tainted by our life of sin. Instead of reflecting God to each other, we have crushed and corrupted one another.

You see, that's what verse 3 is telling us. We have inherited Adam's sinful nature. We now bear his likeness.

We reflect his image. We don't become sinful. We are born sinful. In other words, I don't sin because I do bad things.

[17 : 12] I sin because I am sinful. We enter this world as children of Adam. And as hard as it is for us to read, this is my history.

This is your history. This is your family history. This is who we are. We've gone from beauty to brokenness. In fact, we've gone from life to death.

So first, our family likeness and second, our impending death. Chapter 5 of Genesis is actually the second genealogy, the second account in Genesis.

the first genealogy comes for us in Genesis 2. Have a look back at Genesis 2. Verse 4. Genesis 2, verse 4.

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. This is the history.

[18 : 32] This is the story of creation and it is all marked by life. Everywhere at creation is the beginning of life. Humanity is given life.

God breathed life into the dust and it became a living being. And in the middle of the garden, you'll remember, was what? The tree of life.

This is the world as God intended. Mankind enjoying life in all its fullness. the one thing that is not present in creation is death.

Everything is growing and flourishing. But all that is about to change. Back to chapter 5. All of us must die.

You see, reading chapter 5 is like taking a stroll through a graveyard. the family line continues, but every person dies.

[19 : 38] Verse 5, Adam lived a total of 930 years and then he died. Verse 8, Seth lived a total of 912 years and then he died.

Verse 14, Kenan lived to a total of 910 years and then he died. Verse 17, Mahalal lived a total of 895 years and guess what?

He died. Verse 20, Jared lived a total of 962 years and well, he died too. Verse 27, Methuselah lived a total of 969 years.

The oldest person recorded in scripture and then, well, he died. And verse 31, Lamech lived a total of 777 years and then he had his funeral as well.

Now, I don't want you to get distracted by the number of years and say, come on, nobody could live that long. Don't focus on that. Focus on the fact that there is an end to the years.

[21 : 02] Satan's promise to Adam and Eve, do you remember it? You will not certainly die. It's not true. It's a big lie. But we live as if it is true.

Every one of us here in this room lives with the expectation that you'll go to bed tonight, you'll close your eyes and sleep, and you will open up your eyes and wake up tomorrow morning.

Isn't that what we expect to happen? But there's no guarantee. The day is going to come, maybe sooner, maybe later, when every single one of us here will draw our very last breath death, and life will end.

Jonathan Mark Grant lived a total of 49 years, 59 years, and then he died.

He died. when we die, a post-mortem will be carried out to determine our cause of death.

[22 : 22] Perhaps it will be a terminal illness like cancer, maybe a heart attack, maybe it will be because you were involved in a serious accident and well, you were maimed in such a horrific way.

maybe the cause will be unknown, but some reason will be given as people talk. How did they die?

Well, according to scripture, the cause of every single death that takes place on planet Earth, mine and yours included, is sin.

We die because we have rebelled against God, because we have set up to overtake his rule and authority and sit in his place.

Death is not just a consequence of sin, it's the punishment for our sin. Remember what God has said to Adam? If you eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you will certainly die.

[23 : 32] If you reject my rule, if you seek to take my place, I am the creator, but if you want to put yourself in place of me, you will die.

Sin is serious, it is destructive, and God cannot allow sinful humanity to go on wrecking their lives and destroying the lives of each other, which is what we do.

do. So God said to Adam, you will return to the ground since from it you were taken, for dust you are, and to dust you will return.

Every single funeral, my funeral and your funeral, yes, we hope many wonderful things will be said about us, about our wonderful life, but it will stand before every single person as a reminder that the reason I am in a coffin and I will be buried in the grave is because I'm a sinner.

The apostle Paul reminds us of exactly the same, doesn't he? Romans 6, 23, the wages of sin is death.

[24 : 57] At the end of your working week or month, you receive your wage, maybe it comes in direct into your bank account or somebody gives you an envelope, but you receive your wages for the work you do, you get your payment.

Well, at the end of our life, we're going to receive our wage too. We're going to receive our payment for the way in which we've lived our life. The wages of sin is death.

Our family likeness are impending deaths. Thankfully, the story doesn't end there. The story of God's redemption moves us from death into life.

Our new life. First, death has been interrupted. As we walk through the graveyard of chapter five, we come across something that should fill us with joyful expectation, where celebration will overtake the sorrow and the sighing.

Adam dies, Seth dies, Enoch dies, Kenan dies, Mahalel dies, Jared dies. Now look at verse 21. When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah.

[26 : 29] After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years.

Enoch walked faithfully with God, then he died, because God took him away. What?

Did you read verse 24 carefully? He didn't die. Enoch walked faithfully with God, then he was no more, because God took him away.

Death has been interrupted. Death, death, death, death, life. God has intervened and spared Enoch from death.

Why? Well, twice we're told in those few verses that Enoch had walked faithfully with God. That is, he was a man who walked by faith.

[27 : 40] He trusted in God's promise of a redeemer. He knew that the son of a woman was to come who was going to crush Satan's head, and he longed for God's promise redeemer.

Hebrews helps us to understand. You can follow it on the screen here. I'll have to go over here and read it like this. by faith Enoch was taken from this life so that he did not experience death.

He could not be found because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God, and without faith it is impossible to please God.

It's not because Enoch was better than anybody else or that he sinned less. It's because he had faith. It's because he trusted in God's promise to deliver him.

You see, death doesn't have to have the last word. God has the last word. God is saying through Enoch, although death is the reward of our sin, although you deserve death, I am over death, and I can deliver from death.

[29 : 01] you can have life. You see, God is not vengeful. He's not joyfully delighting in judgment. God longs to deliver us from the curse of death.

In fact, this is only the beginning. God has not only promised to interrupt death, but God has promised to undo all the brokenness we see in the world.

there is the undoing of the curse. You see, as we trace the family line of Adam, as we follow God's redemptive plan, God shows us what we can expect.

Look at verse 28. When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. He named him Noah and said, he will comfort us in the labour and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the Lord has cursed.

Now, we know what that is to experience, don't we? We live in a world full of painful toil. we live in a world that has been cursed.

[30 : 24] The effect of God's curse caused by our collective sin has frustrated this physical world in which we live. That's what COP26 is all about, spread across our news every single day on every news programme.

The world coming to terms with climate change and the problems that man has caused. Yes, carbon dioxide is causing floods and famine and is wrecking lands and nations and people.

But look beneath the surface. Behind it all is the curse of God because of sinful man. We have not looked after the world as God had said.

We're beginning to reap what we have sown. And while I agree we all need to work hard at becoming carbon neutral we need to do and play our part but here's the problem broken humanity can never fix the problem.

We are the problem. History has proved that with every new generation we are more corrupt than ever before.

[31 : 41] We need a redeemer. We desperately need a savior. And our redeemer is not Gretchen Thunberg or the United Nations.

God has promised to undo the curse and to bring comfort. Look at verse 29. He had promised one Noah and he said he will bring comfort to us.

A comforter has been promised. Of course the ultimate comfort that we could ever have is one who would come to deliver us and undo the curse that we live with.

When this broken world could be redeemed and this disordered world could be renewed. Isn't that the kind of world we all long for?

Where death has been interrupted and everything broken is made right again? well the good news for us is God has interrupted death for us and God is undoing the curse for us.

[32 : 52] This is the solution and here's how. Through Jesus. Turn with me please to Romans chapter 5.

It will help if you follow along in these verses. Romans chapter 5. I want us to be really clear about this.

We've been thinking about how God brings us from death to life. how he interrupts death and how he's undoing the curse.

And if we're to experience this for ourselves that is to no longer stay in death but move to life then there's some things we've got to be real about and we've got to understand here's the first one we've got to recognise that we are children of Adam.

Look at verse 12. Therefore Romans 5 verse 12 Therefore just as sin entered the world through one man came through Adam and death through sin and in this way death came to all people all of us because all sinned.

[34 : 31] Do you get it? We've got to recognise this. Because we are children of Adam we too will die. it's the wages of our sin. That's who we are.

Now sinful humanity can't fix that problem. We need a redeemer. We need redemption. And that redemption is found in another man. A better Adam.

A greater one to come. It's found in Jesus. So we just don't recognise we're children of Adam. we need to receive the gift of righteousness.

Look at verse 17. For if by the trespass of one man death reigned through that one man.

So because of the sin of Adam death has reigned through that man. How much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

[35 : 41] You see Jesus Christ God's Son has lived the perfect obedient life for us. He has lived a righteous life.

A life of justice and purity. Of all the people in Adam's line there was one who came born of a woman Jesus Christ who did not sin.

And God now gives to us the gift of Jesus' righteousness so that our sin is covered so that instead of sin instead of death there is life.

Think of it like this. If you can imagine this hand my hand here is Adam. We have been born into Adam's family line.

We share his likeness. We have his image. This is who we are. In all its mess and all its brokenness death is to come.

[36 : 52] Now think of this hand as the life of Jesus. One of the family line of Adam but a better Adam a perfect Adam an obedient one who never sinned who never failed who bears God's image fully and completely who reflects the likeness of God in all its beauty and God says to us I give you the righteousness of Jesus and I can cover you children of Adam I can cover you with the righteousness of Jesus so that your sin is covered and dealt with so that when God now looks at us he doesn't see broken Adam and broken children of Adam but he now sees the beauty the perfection the greatness of

Christ covered in Christ how could we possibly receive that how can we move from death to life well look at verse 17 again the middle of verse 17 it's for those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness in other words it's it's a free gift what better gift could we possibly have than something that God does for you and for me he gives us his righteousness which we receive by faith so that we may be covered once and for all remember Enoch who didn't die but God just took him Enoch looked forward in faith to the coming promised redeemer this gift of righteousness is ours as we look back in faith to

Jesus Christ the one who died our death the one who was raised again defeating death destroying death and the grave for us we look in faith to him you see what God did for Enoch for just one God can do for all who will trust in him yes you and I each one of us we will die physically we will have our funeral people will mourn us and grieve for us but you know what if we are trusting in Christ our funeral our death is only the blink of an eye it is the beginning of eternal life in the new creation this is our true comfort in our painful toil in our struggle through this life our true comfort is the promise that is yet to come a world that will never break and where people will never ever die a world without the curse and without sin let me tell you this and I don't want any of us to leave this room without being clear you are either born into

Adam which we all are or we are now in Christ through faith where are you this morning are you in Adam with death to come or are you in Christ by faith one or the other Christ has done it all Genesis 5 is not just history this is my story and your story it tells of our future Jesus Christ our redeemer who can move us from death into life itself where are you let's pray in

Adam by birth or in Jesus by faith father I ask of one thing that each and every one of us here this morning would have our eyes open to understand clearly that we need to have our faith in Christ father please impress that upon our hearts please help us to know the joy of the righteousness that we can receive to be covered by Christ so that we might have life today and life for all eternity father be gracious to us it's in his name we pray amen well we're going to sing and this song that we're going to sing is a vision a picture of the life that is to come that we are looking forward to it tells of a life where there is no more death no more sorrow is a partaken who or are going to say same as as