**June 10, 2020 | A Study on Chapter 5 of the Book of Genesis**

**From Adam to Noah**

Chapter 4 ended with the birth of Seth.  Chapter 5 traces the genealogy from Adam to Noah, covering 1,656 years of human history in a single chapter.  Although little is revealed about the people listed in this chapter, they are important because they are in the lineage of Jesus.  Many people are fascinated with their family history.  When I was in college in Columbia, I spent some time researching my family history at the state archives.  While my family is from Tennessee, my grandfather was born in Parksville, SC in 1879 (yes, 1879).  Later I met the curator (a Harmon himself) of a museum in Lexington who provided me with the Harmon family tree dating back to 1752 when a German man named Melchior Herman emigrated to the colony of South Carolina and settled in what is now Lexington County.  It seems that the Harmon's are prolific in Lexington and have become prominent in commerce and government unlike the ragtag collection of misfits who left for Tennessee in 1905.  Familial pride has its place but often those who are most vocal about the prominence of their ancestors are the least accomplished in their own right.  God does not judge us on the deeds and decisions of our fathers, rather the relationship with God is reset with each new generation.  We may inherit property from our parents but we do not inherit God’s grace.  Last week I referenced Luke (a Gentile Greek) who listed the ancestors of Jesus all the way back to Adam in his gospel account.  There is another list compiled by Matthew (a devout Jew), however that list only goes back to Abraham who is considered the patriarch of the Jews. The Israelite's were proud of their heritage as evidenced by the confrontation Jesus had with Pharisees when they claimed (incorrectly) that their nation had never been in bondage (John 8:33).  This pride of heritage had an ugly side as well as shown in the story of the Good Samaritan who came to the assistance of a Jew even though Jews looked down on Samaritans as biracial.  The Jews themselves were victims of discrimination during their period of slavery in Egypt.  During this present time of racial discord, we would do well to remember that we all share the common ancestry of Adam and Eve and more importantly we are all God’s creation, wonderfully made by God (Psalm 139:14).  I have previously talked about attending the dedication ceremony of the Clyburn Center for Primary Care.   One of the directors prayed that the staff of the center would see each client as a child of God.  When we curse one another, we are cursing God.

If you were surprised that my grandfather was born in 1879, you may be astonished to learn that 2 grandchildren of John Tyler are still alive.  Tyler, our 10th president was born in 1790 so we have 3 generations dating back nearly to the birth of our nation.  As remarkable as that is, the generations that cover these 1,656 years in chapter 5 total only 10 due to the incredibly long life spans during this time.  With the exception of Enoch, each man listed lived at least 800 years.  Some attribute this to lack of disease and a pristine environment while others believe that it was God’s desire that the earth be quickly populated and long life spans would facilitate that.  David Guzik speculates that there may have been 7 billion people on earth at the time of the flood.  John Phillips points out that five men were the patriarchs of the human race responsible for witnessing to the generations that would follow.  Their names and the meaning of their names are:

**Seth (appointed)**

**Enos (mortal man)**

**Cainan (possession)**

**Mahaleel (praising God)**

**Jared (descent)**

Following the patriarchs is a line of 4 prophets.

* **Enoch**
* **Methuselah**
* **Lemech**
* **Noah**

Even while God was being proclaimed by the patriarchs, Satan was working in the parallel line of those descended from Cain.  These early prophets would have warned about the ever increasing wickedness of the world.  Of these prophets, the most noteworthy story is that of the first prophet, Enoch. It appears that the birth of his son was as life changing event for him as that marked the beginning of his close relationship with God.  The Bible makes the simple statement that Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him.  Hebrews 11:5 confirms that Enoch did not die, rather he was taken up by God in a similar fashion to Elijah.  Some believe that Enoch and Elijah are the two witnesses who will be martyred then resurrected during the future tribulation (Rev. 11:3-12).  Jude makes reference to the prophecy of Enoch in verses 14-16 of his letter.  The chapter ends with the birth of Noah and his sons who would repopulate the earth after the flood.