

Genesis 5:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;

Analysis

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God... This passage belongs to the primeval history section (Genesis 1-11) which establishes universal truths about God, humanity, sin, and divine purposes before focusing on Abraham and Israel. These chapters answer fundamental questions about human origins, the spread of wickedness, God's judgment, and the preservation of a righteous remnant.

Recurring patterns emerge: human sin escalating from individual disobedience to societal corruption, divine patience followed by judgment, gracious preservation of a remnant, and covenant promises ensuring redemptive purposes continue. The genealogies connect historical persons, demonstrate the fulfillment of divine promises (blessing and multiplication), and trace the line leading to Abraham and ultimately Christ.

Key theological themes in this section include:

1. sin's destructive progression affecting all humanity
2. God's righteous judgment while preserving mercy
3. human pride and autonomy opposing divine sovereignty
4. cultural development as both blessing and potential idolatry
5. God's sovereign plan advancing despite human rebellion.

These narratives provide the necessary context for understanding God's calling of Abraham and the covenant promises through which all nations will be blessed.

Historical Context

The primeval history (Genesis 1-11) parallels ancient Near Eastern traditions including Sumerian King Lists (pre-flood longevity), Akkadian flood traditions (Atrahasis, Gilgamesh), and Mesopotamian city foundation myths. However, Genesis demythologizes these traditions, presenting monotheistic history rather than polytheistic mythology. The genealogies connecting Adam to Noah to Abraham provide historical framework absent in pagan myths.

Archaeological evidence confirms ancient urbanization (chapter 4's cities), agricultural development, metallurgy, and musical instruments emerging in Mesopotamia's early history. The Babel account reflects Mesopotamian ziggurat construction (stepped pyramid temples), particularly in Babylon. Linguistic diversity requiring explanation was obvious to ancient peoples, making the Babel narrative culturally relevant.

For Israel in covenant with Yahweh, these chapters explained their relationship to surrounding nations. All peoples descended from Noah, but Israel descended from Shem through Abraham—chosen for blessing all nations. The flood demonstrated God's justice and mercy: judging wickedness while preserving the righteous. This pattern would recur throughout Israel's history, assuring them that God's covenant faithfulness endures despite judgment on the wicked.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to the biblical doctrine of creation, fall, or redemption?
2. How can we apply the principles from this passage to contemporary challenges in family, work, or church?

3. What connections can we trace from this verse to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?

Interlinear Text

אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא יְמִינָה
 This is the book of the generations of Adam In the day created of God
 H2088 H5612 H8435 H121 H3117 H1254 H430

אָתָּה עָשָׂה הָיָה אֱלֹהִים בְּדִמְוֹת אָדָם
 man in the likeness of God made H120 H1823 H430 H6213 H853

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 4:24 (Creation): And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Colossians 3:10 (Creation): And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Hebrews 1:3 (Parallel theme): Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Ecclesiastes 7:29 (Creation): Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

Hebrews 12:9 (Parallel theme): Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

Ecclesiastes 12:1 (Parallel theme): Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

1 Corinthians 11:7 (References God): For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

1 Chronicles 1:1 (Parallel theme): Adam, Sheth, Enosh,

Matthew 1:1 (Parallel theme): The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (Parallel theme): But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

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