

The Misfits Theology Club

Adam

Adam and Eve

Cain

Enoch

Enosh

Eve

Genesis

Genesis 5

Jared

Kenan

Lamech

Mahalel

Methuselah

Noah

Seth

"His Death Shall Bring It"



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Genesis chapter 5 contains a long list of interesting names, and each name holds meaning. In their day, a name meant more than simply a way to identify a person. A name said something about that person's nature, and often held prophetic power in the course of their destiny.

Now, before we get started, let me just say I know. I know the long lives of these people, the stories surrounding them, the fact there's dialogue and other crazy details, makes it kind of hard to believe, to take it all straight up. Here's my philosophy on that: You lose nothing at all believing this straight up. If you approach the story as it was written, and look for the "Easter eggs" the author carefully tucked into its nooks and crannies, you're going to get a lot out of it.

If you need to suspend reality, at least to read the story, so be it. The important part is not whether you can swallow supersized ages. The important part is what you understand from the story.

Here are a few lastingly significant names in this genealogy,

1. **Methuselah:** His name literally means, "*His death shall bring it,*" or loosely translated, "*When he dies, it will come.*" What will come? The Flood! Enoch seems to have had a revelation at the time of Methuselah's birth concerning the destruction in God's judgment to come, through a flood. While Methuselah lived, the flood would be held back.

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You can imagine how fascinated people were with Methuselah's comings and goings! Any time Methuselah had a cold, or injured himself, I imagine his family and friends immediately rallied to nurse him back to health. It's no wonder he lived so long.

In fact, Methuselah lived much longer than any other person of his time, giving testimony to God's long-suffering patience, holding back destruction till the last possible moment, when every person had been given a chance to repent and be saved.

But though God's judgment was delayed, it was no less certain. *It was inevitable; that day had already been marked down on the calendar.*

Assuming the chronology of Methuselah's life corresponds with Noah, then the very year Methuselah died, that's the year the Flood came—you see, if you tot up the years from Lamech's birth, to Noah's birth, and Noah's age when the Flood came, you get the same number as Methuselah's age when he died.

Read that however way you will, I am convinced the author intended for us to see it. It happened exactly as God had predicted.[\[1\]](#)

2. **Lamech**: Another parallel between Cain's and Seth's genealogies is the presence of two Lamechs.

Cain's Lamech, the son of Methushael, was a godless man who mocked God's words and twisted them for his own ends.

Seth's Lamech, the son of Methuselah and the father of Noah, was a godly man. His naming his son Noah revealed his understanding about the fall of humankind and God's cursing of the ground. It also indicated his faith that God would deliver humankind from the curse.

Godly Lamech believed and honored God's words, he understood this deliverance would specifically come through the son God had given him. (Just pause a moment, and think about that "Easter egg.")

3. **Noah**: His name meant "comfort," which in turn means "to strengthen" or "fortify." Noah would strengthen people in the Lord during a difficult time.

Each of these people were men of faith. They understood sin's curse was at the root of all their painful toil and suffering. They looked forward in expectant hope to the redemption God had promised. They produced godly families through whom God's purposes would continue.

Scripture doesn't say how many of their other sons and daughters were godly. But we do know that these were godly men and through them and their children a line would continue all the way to the last 8 believers on earth, Noah's family. While the rest of humankind would be destroyed in the flood, the human race through Noah would be preserved.

Look at it like this:

Cain

Seth

invested himself in a city
and named it after his son

invested himself in his son

sacrificed his sons to success

made his sons successes by
surrendering himself and them to God.

When I make that comparison, I have to ask myself what kind of heritage I'm giving to my own children, and to the next generation.

So, at first glance this chapter may have seemed a little bland after the drama of Genesis chapter 4, until we uncover one of the most fascinating aspects of this chapter in the meaning of the names listed. Look at the meaning unfold, it tells the story of how God will ultimately deal with evil. One commentary^[2] I read put it all together this way:

The list begins with *Seth*, which means "Appointed."

Enosh, his son, means "Mortal"

His son, *Kenan*, means "Sorrow"

His son *Mahalalel*, means "Praiseworthy God" – 'halalel' is the root for 'Hallelujah'

He named his boy *Jared* which means "Came Down"

His boy, *Enoch*, means "Teaching"

Methuselah, as we saw, means "His Death Shall Bring"

Lamech means “Strength”

Noah means “Comfort”

Now put that all together:

God has Appointed that Mortal man shall Sorrow; but Praiseworthy God, Came Down, Teaching, that His Death Shall Bring, Strength and Comfort.

Knowing how much the ancient writers loved this kind of layering, I am totally convinced they meant for us to see this rise up in the names of Seth’s ancient chronology.

[1] Compare Genesis 5:25 with verses 28-29 and Genesis 7:6

[2] Ray Stedman’s lectures on Genesis provided the core concepts and definitions for this post

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