

Lecture #2

Last week we had a study on creation of the material universe. The gospel of John goes back much farther into eternity when there was not yet this material creation. John says, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." That refers to the Living Word, Jesus Christ.

In Genesis we saw that Living Word take action as we read repeatedly, "And God said . . . let there be light and dark; separation of the sky and waters and land; let the sun/moon/stars shine; let plant life and fish, fowl and animal life come into being." In every aspect of creation we saw that God is a God of order. All things that exist are in groups that are interrelated. In the beginning there was nothing to cause destruction, nothing to mar God's creation. Creation moved on its perfect way. All was blessed by God.

On day six God created man "in His image." First He created man, then He communicated with man. In Genesis 1:28 we learned God said, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." This is what is known as the basis of the Edenic (E-den-ic) Covenant. Throughout Scripture we see that our God is a covenant making God. In your lesson packet we gave you a map of the ancient world. On the back of that map is a synopsis of the various Bible Covenants.

Well, from overview of chapter one we went to a zoom lens of chapter 2 and looked a little more closely at the finer points of God's creation of man and woman. Some things we discovered:

1. Man a natural being – he was formed of dust and God, Himself, breathed life into him. (A sort of mouth to mouth picture comes to mind)
2. He is a spiritual being – he is capable of receiving what God gives, capable of responding to what God says.
3. He's a rational being – he understands the desires of God and undertakes a coworker's role with God.
4. He's a social being – he is needing companionship and enjoying fellowship with the Lord.
5. Adam was also created a moral being. He had the privilege of responsibility being chosen to care for God's handiwork, chosen to obey God's directives, chosen to observe God's limits. The fall in the Garden of Eden has affected us all. God cursed the serpent and gave the promise of a redeemer that we know is God's Son, Jesus Christ. For Eve the pain of childbirth would be increased and even though she might wish to rule over her husband, he would rule over her. That struggle goes on in many marriages today. Who will take the leadership? Inevitably the woman tries and often succeeds. But it is God's plan that the man is to be the leader.

As for Adam, we noticed the discipline was not because he ate from the tree, but because he listened to his wife's counter-counsel when he'd had direct word from God. Where the work of tending the garden was once a part of partnership with God, now Adam would till the soil outside the Garden with the sweat of his brow midst thorns and thistles. And the harsh reality . . . Yes, Satan lied. He is the Father of Lies. You will

return to the dust of the ground. Adam lived to be 930, but the process of physical dying had begun.

E. Stanley Jones offers his list of seven deadly sins . . . listen,

Politics without principle,
 Wealth without work,
 Pleasure without conscience,
 Knowledge without character,
 Business without morality,
 Science without humanity, and
 Worship without sacrifice

It is worship without sacrifice that begins our lesson today. From the fall to sin in Chapter 3, we see sin in the individual now develop and express itself in the family of Adam.

Right up front we need to remember that only a few things are touched upon specifically in today's Scripture and a great many things are left unexplained. We're given highlights in man's history and experience as we pass from one fact to another. There is no statement of time elapsed in chapter 4; no explanation of the origin of sacrifice (vs. 3) or the requirement for Divine acceptance; nor is their explanation of blood revenge (vs. 14); nor the sign appointed for Cain; or of the growth of population implied in verses 15-19. Whatever views you may hold, or that I may present to you now, must necessarily be conjecture in the absence of clear Scriptural teaching.

So we start with the birth of Cain and Abel. No doubt with the birth of Cain, Eve thought, "Here is the promised seed." Have you ever stopped to think that when you have children the only training in parenting experience you've had is what your parents did or didn't do with you? Almost every parent can attest to that familiar feeling of not knowing what you're doing, or what to do next, or how to undo what you've already done. Adam and Eve had none of that "call home for advice," no grandparents to ship the kids off to to get a little "breather." Here was a new life, full of expectation – and we might expect, the center of family attention. But then Abel was born.

Based on what we've read, it's easy to see the possibility of sibling rivalry between Cain and "the baby." The first thing Scripture tells us positively is about their work. Cain tilled the soil and Abel kept flocks. I want to caution you about importing back to the time of Adam and Eve the instructions Moses was later given on sacrifices. The Hebrew word "minhah" is used here in the broadest sense. It covers any type of gift that any person might bring. Consequently, the merit one gift might have over another doesn't lie in the content or type of gift including the presence or absence of blood. We place emphasis on the blood because of what God has more fully revealed in the progressive revelation of Scripture.

Of course, there was a problem with Cain's "gift"; he was the problem. Genesis 4:3 describes how Cain merely brought "some" of the fruits of the field. He brought what he wanted to bring and when his offering is contrasted with that of Abel, the flaw immediately shows up. Abel gave what cost him dearly, fat portions from among the firstborn of his flock. That meant giving in faith that God would provide a second lamb

to increase the flock. So here we have the beginning of the telltale signs contrasting ritualistic worship and true worship of God.

Clearly the focus of this passage on the men, not distinction between what was being offered. Vs. 4,5 "The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor." God's favor was pointedly directed toward the person first and then, and only then, toward the offering presented. Accordingly, this became the determining factor in all worship; the heart attitude of the individual. If the heart was not found acceptable, the gift was likewise unacceptable. God always inspects the giver and worshiper before He inspects any offering.

Here's a question we have to ask ourselves today . . . Is God really God in your life? Remember, He tells us, we don't tell Him! It was unacceptable but God said, "If you do right will you not be accepted?" There is grace, there is acceptance, there is counsel, not condemnation – but Cain's reaction was anger, so much so he couldn't even look anyone in the eye. It would give him away. We see God's appeal to reason and His concern for the sinner. "Sin is crouching at the door" – that's a metaphor for taming a wild beast. "It's desire is for you, but you must master it."

Doesn't that sound like God encouraging him? Cain didn't respond, "Lord, help me! I want to master it, I want to please You." While Eve had been talked into her sin, Cain would not have even God talk him out of it; nor would he confess to it once the deed was done.

So Cain attacked Abel in the field. Your footnote may say, "let us go out to the field" but it's not in all texts; but if the invitation was made, then it's doubly deliberate and premeditated murder.

It's interesting to note that the Hebrew word for "killed him" means "slice the throat." In his anger you can almost hear Cain saying, "Okay, God, you want blood, here it is!"

So the angry thoughts became a planned opportunity that took action, then Cain lied and denied responsibility. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Step back in your mind and take a broad overview of what becomes of Cain. First was **departure** – he left Adam and Eve and there must have been parental disappointment. One son in a fresh grave, the firstborn turned out of God's presence and cursed. We can only empathize with their hurting hearts. Second, his **dwelling** was to be East of Eden, a world away from God. Most of society today lives East of Eden. Cain did not ask for forgiveness, but wanted God's mercy. When he says "whoever finds me" suggests an expanding population and could also imply that every person encountered would be a near kinsman of Abel. God's concern for the innocent spilt blood of Abel on the ground is seen in the curse, but the mark of protection on Cain is evident of His concern for the sinner. The mark (and we do not know what that was) was a mark/sign not as a stigma but one of safe-conduct. God was the only one who would punish Cain. Cain's departure was both his sentence and his choice.

Vs. 17 says "Cain lay with his wife . . ." So one question that always comes up is where did he get her? One commentator claims tradition says Adam/Eve had 33 sons & 27 daughters. (First time I ever read that and you can take it with a grain of salt.) But all you can say of Eve is, "What a woman!" Cain had to marry a sister. Such closely

related marriages were unavoidable if we believe the human race propagated from a single pair. It isn't until Leviticus 20:17 that the actual sanction against such union became Law, but that was many, many generations from Cain.

So from Cain's departure and dwelling we come to his **descendants**. Did you notice the name Enoch twice in the lesson today?

Cain's son eventually begets the warlike family of Lamech. The Enoch of Seth's line comes down to the godly Noah.

What Lamech said to his wives in Genesis 4:23,24 is called the "song of the sword" and reveals the swift progress of sin. Where Cain had succumbed to it, Lamech exults in it and we see the intensified form of those evil tendencies which were evident in Cain. Lamech was the first recorded bigamist - he had two wives. You know the punishment for that, don't you? You get two mothers-in-law.

So we see the old cliché play out, "like father like son." I've shared this illustration before, but I want you to hear it again.

"The father of Jonathan Edwards was a minister and his mother was the daughter of a clergyman. Among their descendants were 14 presidents of colleges, more than 100 college professors, more than 100 lawyers, 30 judges, 60 physicians, 100 clergymen/missionaries and theology professors and about 60 authors. There is scarcely any great American industry that has not had one of his family among its chief promoters. Such is the product of one American Christian family, reared under the most favorable conditions.

The contrast is presented in the Jukes family, which could not be made to study and would not work and is said to have cost the state of New York a million dollars. Their entire record is one of pauperism and crime, insanity and imbecility. Among their 1200 known descendants, 310 were professional beggars, 440 were physically wrecked by their own wickedness, 60 were habitual thieves, 130 convicted criminals, 55 victims of impurity, only 20 learned a trade (and 10 of these learned it in state prison), and this notorious family produced 7 murderers."

If that illustration shows anything it is that evil begets evil. The good news for us is that today we have the power of the Holy Spirit and the victory over evil that Jesus won on the cross to break that cycle if your heritage is more closely aligned to the Jukes family. You may be the first generation Christian and the one to break Satan's hold on your loved ones.

If the Bible were biased to only tell either the good/bad of a person, we'd think of Cain as bad. But the truth is more complex: God makes use of this family in areas of arts, crafts, metalworking. We should be reminded that we're indebted to the secular world for their gifts, but at the same time be astute so as not to overvalue them. Cain's family is a prime example of technical prowess and moral failure that is a picture of humanity today.

Adam and Eve had another son named Seth. Certainly he was not the only other child they had, but his lineage is recorded because through him we have the blood line that extends through the whole Scripture leading to the Savior, Jesus Christ. Some of you may have seen the Panorama Bible Studies that used to be in your local Christian bookstores. They tell about the Bible in pictures. *As you can see from the one I*

brought with me, this shows the blood line of the Messiah beginning with Noah through the Scriptures.

In chapter 5 we get to that first real list of what the old King James termed "beget." It's these lists that usually slow us down or bring a complete halt to Bible reading. Eight times Satan's lie is contradicted – men do die. But I want to share something interesting with you that comes from Ray Stedman's commentary on Genesis. He calls it "Hidden Treasure." There's a message in these names.(OVERHEAD)

It is

Seth appointed	<i>to</i>
Enosh	<i>mortal man</i>
Kenan	<i>to experience</i>
Mahalalel	<i>sorrow</i> <i>but the</i> <i>blessed God</i> <i>shall</i>
Jared come down	
Enoch	<i>teaching</i>
Methuselah	<i>that</i> <i>his death shall bring</i>
Lamech	<i>the</i> <i>desparing</i>

Noah comfort/grace

Let's look a little closer at Enoch for a couple of reasons. It says that when Enoch was 65 he became the father of Methuselah and after he became a father he walked with God. That's interesting isn't it? There's something about children, the increased responsibility, the change of perspective, that can make a man turn towards God.

And it says that he walked with God 300 years. Think about a "walk" – that's one step at a time, one foot after the other over and over, a daily grind maybe, but a consistent pace. Your Christian walk is not just highs and lows . . . it's the dailyness of being obedient and faithful to whatever He has called you to do. Remember during this time Enoch's life had the real challenge of testifying against evil as we read about in Jude 14,15. ¹⁴Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Enoch was no more – God took him. The only other person in Scripture to have that experience is Elijah. It's an Old Testament type and picture of the rapture of the church – a time when Christians will simply disappear from earth and be caught up into heaven.

One other little comment about Methuselah – we saw that his name means "his death shall bring." Methuselah is the oldest man in the Bible 969 years. The year he died, the flood came.

I don't want to pass up this interesting observation also. Vs. 32 says "After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth." This wasn't in our lesson today, but I want to show you a little math. In Genesis 9:29 we'll learn that Noah was 950 when he died. In 9:28 it says he lived 350 years between the flood and his death. That means he was 600 when the flood came. But God told him in today's Scripture that man would have 120 years before the flood . . . meaning Noah was 480

when he began to build the ark to save himself, his wife, his sons and his sons' wives – a full 20 years before he even had sons at age 500. Here is a man who stepped out in full faith!

In chapter 6, vs. 5 the "Lord saw how great man's wickedness of the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time." What an indictment! God determined to destroy it all, but Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Do you notice that God didn't come down and "clean up society?" He didn't do it then and we shouldn't expect that He'll do that today. We are to be salt and light in the world, but it is headed for ultimate destruction. Again, the good news is that those in Christ will be saved just as Noah's family was saved in the protection of the ark.

Two things challenge us in the opening verses of chapter 6. Who were the sons of God/daughters of men? and "Who were the Nephilim?"

I don't know . . . but I do know they grieved God to the point He was sorry he ever made man. That's not very satisfying, so let me share with you a synopsis of the views I read in my preparation:

1. The sons of God were fallen angels cohabiting with mortal women. Or
2. The sons of God were the godly line of Seth intermarrying with the worldly line of Cain.

First and foremost, there are many reputable men on both sides of the question.

One says, "The main point of "sons of God and daughters of men" is that a new state had been reached in the progress of evil, with God's bounds overstepped in yet another area. Consider fallen angels (Jude 6 says that angels "left their proper habitation"). The Gospels show us that demons have a craving for a body which might to some extent parallel this hunger for sexual experience."

Gleason Archer offers this thought in his commentary on Bible Difficulties, "If we were to concede that spirits could somehow enter into sexual relation with human beings - which they can not - then they could not even so be fitted into this passage here. If they were minions of Satan, that is, fallen angels, they could not have been referred to as "Sons of God." Demons of hell would never be so designated in Scripture. Nor could they have been angels of God since His angels live in total obedience to Him and have no other yearning or desire but to do God's will and glorify His name. A sordid involvement with godless worldly women would therefore be completely out of character for angels as "sons of God." The only viable explanation is that these were men from the line of Seth."

Another says, "Sons of God are not angels because angels are spirits. They may on occasion appear in bodily form in semblance of men, but they have no physical bodies and therefore are incapable of carnal relations with women. That these are angels is rabbinical speculation based on pagan superstition. Genesis 6 records the first occurrence of mixed marriage between believers/non-believers. "Sons of God were descendants of the godly line of Seth, yoked to ungodly women who were "daughters of men" from Cain's line."

You can process that information for yourself. As to the Nephilim, I'll just give you one man's idea.

Les Woodson offers this: "The offspring of the union of God's people with Satan's were called Nephilim. These creatures are often supposed to be giants of some kind who ruled with a big hand. But this need not be the case. To be called mighty men (rendered "giants" in KJV) does not imply physical size anymore than it suggests mental and worldly prowess. In fact, they were plainly called "men of renown." The alternative possibility is to translate the word itself as "assailers." That would be in keeping with the nature of the Canite line, which was known for its murder and vicious hostility. Whatever the Nephilim may have been, they were so ruthlessly wicked and corrupt that God allowed only 120 years before they were to be totally and irrevocably destroyed. The 120 years does not refer to a maximum age span for man but to an "allotted time of grace" before the judgment of the Flood."

As to the ark Noah built, it was more like a chest than a ship. AUGUSTINE said if brought down to the dimensions of man, would be like a coffin. Remember Moses was destined to die, but voyaged to life in a small ark.

So Noah built the ark, brought in the animals in pairs, with extra for sacrifice when they left the ark. I'm sure you had a good discussion about what it would be like on the ark. And thinking about the food needed for both man and animal to last a year. Monumental undertaking.

The Ark door has obvious literal and symbolic importance. There was one door. The invitation was to "come." There was urgency, yet not haste. Time for the whole task, but none for postponements. Jesus used the metaphor in John 10 "I am the door." There is but one way to safety. And God, Himself, shut them in; an expression of God's fatherly touch at the very brink of judgment. The emphasis is not on disaster, death and doom . . . it is the story of faith and survival.

Many question the actuality of the Flood. Jesus, however, spoke of the Flood as an historical fact (Matthew 24:37-39) and He was around when it happened! The story of the flood is found in traditions of all peoples: Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Greeks, Chinese, Aryans, Persians, Polynesians, Celts, Incas, etc. In every case only one family is said to have escaped in some floating device.

There is not time to discuss whether this was a global flood or not. We're told that the fountains of the deep burst forth and the water above the firmament came down for 40 days/nights. It was 150 days before the water began to abate. Only eight people were saved. What would they do with a brand new world?

What lessons can we apply to ourselves from these Scriptures? Three come to mind:

1. Worship without sacrifice is unacceptable. Romans 12:1 "Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - which is your spiritual worship." God wants you before He wants what you bring.

2. Family is not unimportant. What you model to your children and to your grandchildren, what your parents model for you, has far reaching consequences. You have a decision to make . . . will it conform to the world, or will you take the lead and model Christ in every way?

3. Sin separates us from God but is not unforgivable. All it takes is a truly repentant heart and confession. We had that wonderful verse in 2 Samuel 14:14 "... God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from Him." That way is the door Himself, Jesus Christ. Let's Pray.