

Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2018 9:17 PM  
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Genesis 4-5

Genesis 4-5 is all about the 1,600 or so year-era after the "fall" of Adam and Eve, prior to the Flood! It begins with the story of Cain and Abel, which sets the stage (and tone) for sin's advancement in the world after the Fall! Bill Arnold, author of "Encountering the Book of Genesis," calls it "events outside the Garden"! It could also be looked upon as the "tale of two families" or two genealogies!

It's a very unique time of human history, recorded only in the Bible, sometimes called the "antediluvian period"! Unique because during this period, before the flood, things were much different! People lived lots longer! And they had lots of children! They were healthier and stronger! And probably smarter! The climate was more favorable! Civilization became very advanced! Sin had just begun to demonstrate its full hostile and devolving effect! And yet, despite the millions and even billions of people populating the earth during this time, God chose to focus His inspired story only on the history of two families! The family of Cain, often considered the "secular" line, and the family of Adam and Eve's son, Seth, the one who "replaced" Abel, and considered by some to represent the "sacred" line (although this could be disputed)!

The saga begins in Genesis 4 with the birth of Cain, whom Adam and Eve must have considered the promised "seed" of Genesis 3:15; the one who would strike the "serpent" and make everything right between them and God! Then Abel was born! And things seemed alright until it was time for them to bring offerings to the Lord, probably at the behest of Adam and Eve! You know the rest of the story! How "the Lord had regard for Abel's offering...but not for Cain's"! And how that led to Cain's anger and, more significantly, the exposure of his true "heart"!

Moreover, Abel's offering was from the "firstlings of his flock" – a blood sacrifice – after the pattern that God Himself instituted in preparing coverings for Adam and Eve! And which, in all likelihood, God had somehow specified! And Adam and Eve had discussed!

And speaking of the blood, Willmington's "Guide to the Bible" calls this the "first plank of that great Scriptural platform of truth that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin!"

Leviticus 17:11 says: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement!" And Hebrews 9:22 reiterates: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin!"

Theologian Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse has written: "The highway to the cross was now firmly established! Here the first lamb is seen, one lamb for one man! Later, at the Passover, there was one lamb for one household (Exod. 12). Then, on the Day of Atonement, there would be one sacrifice for the Nation of Israel (Lev. 16). And, finally, it is Christ, the Lamb of God, who would take away the sin of the world!"

Well, God continued to hold out His hand to Cain, even warned him about "sin crouching at the door," and even after he had "spilled the blood" of Abel, his brother, God called for him and

sought him out! But rather than repent and find grace, Cain responded with those words, coming from his heart, which still vibrate through time: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Arnold sees it this way: "Eve had to be talked into her sin, while Cain couldn't be talked out his, even by God!"

And some of the saddest words in the Bible follow in Gen. 4:16 as we see Cain "going out from the presence of the Lord"! MacArthur calls him the "prototype of the doomed"! Makes me think of someone looking back and saying (singing?) "I did it my way!" (How sad!)

Well, interestingly, that's not the end of the "line" for Cain! In God's graciousness (call it "common grace"), he was allowed to keep on living in his sin (no capital punishment administered at this point) and he apparently grew quite a legacy! From a human standpoint! Materially! He "tried" to build a city, and six generations later (according to his genealogy), his great, great, great, great grandson, Lamech, is the first recorded polygamist, and second recorded murderer (which he boasted about), and his three sons became the recognized "fathers" of those who "live in tents and have livestock," and those who "play the lyre and pipe," and those who "forged implements of bronze and iron"!

The long lives of Cain's descendants apparently allowed them to develop intellectually and technologically (until they got it right!) and produce an impressive secular society, but with no mention of God! And, according to Genesis 6:6 (which we'll get more into next week), so morally corrupt that God would "be sorry He made man on the earth"! Wow! And, whatever and however spectacular life on Planet Earth might have been during that era, it all got destroyed in the flood! ("What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and yet lose his soul!")

Well, then there's the geological line of Adam and Eve through Seth! Eve said, in Genesis 4:26, that "God has appointed another offspring in place of Abel..." and we learn in vs. 26 that Seth eventually had a son named Enosh, and that "then men began to call on the name of the Lord"!

There are others mentioned in the lineage! In the seventh generation a man named Enoch "walked with the Lord" and that must have been a special delight for God because one day as they were walking together, "God took him," the Bible says! Which can only be viewed as a great advancement (certainly from an eternal perspective), considering the conditions prevailing in the world at that time! (Among other things, Enoch "broke the pattern" we see in Genesis 6 of a man being born, and living a certain number of years, and then having "other sons and daughters" and then dying! Do you think God is trying to show us that not all of us will die, but some one day be transformed to heaven, at the coming Rapture? Or that there's something really special beyond this life on earth?)

Well, interesting too that Enoch was called a "preacher of righteousness" which we have to learn by going to the second last book of the Bible (in Jude 14-15). Also, that he had a son he named Methuselah, whose name literally means "When he's dead it shall be sent!" Willmington's Guide suggests that God had apparently told Enoch (while they were walking?) not only what to name his son but that when he died (but not until!) the world was going to be destroyed by a terrible flood! If true, that just might explain why Methuselah turned out to be the oldest man who ever lived! 956 years! When he died the rain started, presumably!

The Guide quotes 2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow about His promise (concerning the destruction of the world), as some men count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish, but that all come to repentance!"

Well, doesn't appear from the text that there were a lot of converts as a result of Enoch's preaching! In fact, Noah and his wife and three sons and their wives would be the only ones spared in the flood! And so, it's hard to make much of a case that Seth's line should be called the "sacred line" I would think! And yet it is significant that God preserved the "seed" of the woman (Eve) through it all during this Antediluvian Period, beginning with Seth and down through Enoch and Noah and then through Shem, and as we'll see through Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and the lineage of David, the king, and finally to the "babe of Bethlehem"! The fulfillment of the promise of a "Deliverer" in Genesis 3:15! (By the way, if you doubt the literacy of Genesis 5, know that the exact same genealogy is included in 1 Chronicles 1 in the lineage of David, and in Luke 3 concerning the genealogy of Jesus! And that Enoch is authenticated as the "seventh generation" of Adam, in Jude 14!)

This lesson is really special because it demonstrates again so clearly the message of redemption God has provided for man so flawed by the fall in the Garden! And, of course, we'll get more into this as we move on to Genesis 6-9 and the great, worldwide flood with all it indicates about the "world that was" (during that unique era of history) and what it implies for the day in which we're living!

Well, walk with the Lord this week, my brothers, and be a blessing!

Lowell