

EARLY WORLD: AFTER THE FALL

Read Genesis 4-11

Corresponds to Workbook, pp 21-26

Cain & Abel (Gen 4:1-16)

What is life in Exile like for the first couple? What heartache do they experience? _____

How does the murder of Abel by Cain begin to fulfill the prophecy of Gen 3:15 that the serpent's offspring will attack the righteous offspring of the woman? _____

“Even difficult family relationships are a part of God’s redeeming plan.”¹

What is currently your most difficult family relationship? How are you seeing God work even amidst the complex messiness of it all? _____

Gen 4:7

How is sin depicted? _____

Gen 4:6-7

What warning does God give Cain? _____

“When God asks us to get moving, or change a bad habit, or do something that feels out of our comfort zone, it is always because He wants what is best for us. He is not a cosmic killjoy; He is a good Father who wants His children to flourish.”²

What “door” does Cain leave ajar? _____

Does he heed God’s warning? _____

Jesus to St Faustina: “(These souls with whom I can do nothing) sense their emptiness, but they do not recognize their own guilt, while souls in whom I reign completely are a constant source of remorse to them. Instead of correcting themselves, their hearts swell with envy, and if they do not come to their senses, they plunge in even deeper. A heart, which thus far is envious, now begins to be filled with hate. And they are already at the edge of the precipice.

¹ Gramer, Donald and Lorie. From their book *Marriage Care Novena*, accessed on-line from *Daily Catholic Wisdom* on August 29, 2020 at yourfriends@catholicwisdom.org.

² Brenninkmeyer, Lisa. Accessed on-line from *Daily Catholic Wisdom* on March 12, 2021 at yourfriends@catholicwisdom.org.

They are jealous of My gifts in other souls, but they themselves are unable and unwilling to accept them.”³

Why did Cain become enraged? What clue to the dynamics are given in 1 John 3:11-13?

“A closer look at the text reveals that the narrative does not simply say that Cain’s offering is not accepted, but that *Cain and his offering* are not accepted. The text implies that there is something wrong with the one making the offering, not simply with the offering itself. The focus of God’s admonition is not Cain’s offering, but rather Cain himself. The **lesson** is unmistakable: **it is the moral disposition of the one making the offering—of which the offering is but a gift and sign—that decides the worth of the sacrifice.** The God of the Hebrews is not appeased by the offerings, no matter how valuable, but rather he seeks an upright heart in those who offer sacrifice. This lesson, at the beginning of humanity’s story, will be **vital for correctly understanding the nature of worship and the God who is worshipped.**”⁴

Gen 4:6

How is Cain’s envy reminiscent of Satan’s envy? See CCC 2538-39. _____

Gen 4:8

Was this premeditated murder or an act of passion? _____

Gen 4:9

How does Cain respond sarcastically to God? Are we to be our brother’s keeper? See Luke 10:25-37; Mark 12:31; Galatians 5:14; James 1:27 _____

“God questions the sinner in order to draw forth contrition and give (Cain) an opportunity for confession. Cain refuses this mercy as Adam had done before him (Gen 3:9-12).”⁵ What question might God be posing to you today? _____

Life Application:

A strong sense of injustice resulting in bitterness or resentment is frequently mingled with hot anger. The combination is hate, a truly toxic emotion at all times in all persons. Hate begins with a grievance, which is any circumstance, complaint, or resentment a person thinks is unjust or hurtful. A grievance can be real or imagined. A grievance occurs when two things collide:

*Something happens in life that we didn’t want to have happen.

³ *Divine Mercy Daily: Daily Reflections from the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, Accessed July 10, 2020 from divinemercedaily@marian.org. *Diary* (1717).

⁴ Gray, Tim and Jeff Cavins. *Walking with God: A Journey Through the Bible*. © 2020 by Ascension Press, West Chester, PA, pp 21.

⁵ *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible: Genesis. Commentary, Notes, & Study Questions* by Scott Hahn and Curtis Mitch. © 2010 by Ignatius Press, San Francisco, CA, pp 24.

*We deal with the problem by thinking about it too much.

People who harbor unforgiveness tend to fume. They exhibit a constant state of irritation, frustration, and hostility. They tend to overreact at the slightest provocation.

These factors are also present when a person forms a grievance:

*The person takes the grievance too personally.

*The person blames the offender for how he or she feels.

*The person creates a 'grievance story' that he or she tells repeatedly.

A grievance story is simply an account of the painful experience from an unhealed past. The story keeps a person stuck in the painful memories. The emotional wound never heals because one continually picks at any scab of forgiveness that might form over it."⁶

How might you keep a grievance from taking hold of you emotionally? How can you integrate God's warning to Cain into how you deal with a particularly distressing situation?

Gen 4:11

What second exile occurs? _____

How is God both just and merciful (4:10- 15)? _____

Gen 4:16

Does it bode well to read: "Cain then left the Lord's presence"? _____

The First Family Grows (Gen 4:17-5:32)

Gen 4:17-24

What do you learn about Cain's descendants? In particular, what deteriorating traits are listed of his great-grandson Lamech in Gen 4:23-24? _____

Was Lamech polygamous? (4:19) _____

How does this compare to Gen 2:24? _____

Summary: "Cain's descendants are industrious, musical, violent, and polygamous. The descendants of Cain were technologically advanced and yet morally debased. To their credit, they were pioneers of urbanization (4:17), pastoral culture (4:20), instrumental music (4:21), and metalworking (4:22). To their shame they were the first to engage in murder, polygamy, and vindictive violence."⁷

The Literary Technique: Toledot

A Hebrew literary technique called "toledot" lists a partial family tree, highlighting particular ones to focus the reader on the story line. Like a camera focusing sharply in on a

⁶ Colbert, Don, MD. *Deadly Emotions*. © 2003 by Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, TN, pp 123-125.

⁷ *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible: Genesis. Commentary, Notes, and Study Questions* by Scott Hahn and Curtis Mitch. © 2010 by Ignatius Press, San Francisco, CA, pp 24.

subject, a toledot gives clues as to 'where the story is going.' Altogether there are ten toledots in Genesis alone.

Gen 4:25

Who is the third son to Adam and Eve? _____

What important practice emerges? _____

This is extremely important! The storyline will proceed from Seth and his descendants, who rather than practice evil, choose rather to "invoke the Lord by name."

Gen 5:3

How is Seth described? Compare to Gen 1:27. _____

What future Son will be in the image of His father? Colossians 1:15; John 14:9-10 _____

Note: Gen 5:1-32 serves as another toledot. Genealogies are often strategically placed to prepare for the narrative that follows. Only Seth's line, who worship God, are described as being in the image of Adam, as 'sons of God.' In short, here the Jewish genealogy known as a toledoth helps differentiate the good guys from the bad guys!

What does this genealogy of Adam through Seth to Noah reveal? In particular, what do you learn about Enoch in Gen 5:24? What prophecy does Lamech give regarding his son Noah in Gen 5:29?

Contrast the line of Cain and Seth. _____

Gen 5:23

Who are the three sons of Noah? _____

Keep an eye on Shem!

The Flood/ God's Covenant with Noah (Gen 6-10)

6:1-4

The male descendants of Seth ("sons of God") began to intermarry with the daughters of Cain. Scripture uses the term "unequally yoked" to describe such marriages. What warning is given in 2 Corinthians 6:14-17? Why is this development ominous? _____

Gen 6:2

How do the words "saw," "good (fair)," and "took" remind the reader of Eve's original sin? _____

6:5-6

What is the condition of man at this point? How is God portrayed? _____

How does your sin cause God to grieve? _____

Gen 6:7, 13

What decision does God make? _____

Gen 6:8

How does the entire remaining story of salvation hinge on this one verse? _____

Gen 6:9

What three characteristics of Noah are given? _____

What 4th characteristic is found in Gen 6:22 and 7:5? _____

How did God view Noah in Gen 7:1? _____

How is Noah cast as the "new Adam"? _____

Gen 6:15

It is interesting to note that it took from 55 to 75 years to build the ark, a large three-story structure to accommodate 35,000 species of animals. It is not coincidental that its dimensions are exactly those of Solomon's Temple, the future "ark" of God's presence. In modern terms, it was the size of a Navy battleship.

Gen 6:18: A family is saved!

What covenant is made by God with Noah? What is the sign of this new covenant?

Gen 7:12

How long did it rain? What was the result in Gen 7:22? _____

Note: This time period of 40 days/nights/years will resurface repeatedly in the future narrative.

Gen 8:1

This is the turning point of the Flood narrative. "God remembers Noah" is using covenant (or family) language.

Gen 8:4

The mountains of Ararat are in the far eastern portion of Turkey, along its border with Iran.

Gen 8:20

"Then Noah built an altar to the Lord" with sacrifices of clean animals. Building an altar with a bloody sacrifice will become a defining characteristic of Jewish worship. How was God preparing His people to later appreciate the sacrifice that occurs on the altar in Catholic churches? _____

Gen 8:21-22

What promise does God then make? _____

Gen 9:8-13

What two commands does God give Noah?

(1) _____ (9:1)

(2) _____ (9:5-6)

“God reiterates man’s dignity, reminding Noah and his family that ‘God made man in his image.’ Everything that happens after the water abates is a reminder of the first creation: blessing, image and likeness, the command to be fruitful and multiply, and, finally, covenant.”⁸

Typology:

“The New Testament interprets the flood as a *foreshadowing* of Baptism, which cleanses the believer of sin and confers the grace of salvation in Christ (1 Peter 3:20-21; CCC 701). Allegorically, the ark of Noah is a figure of the one Church; and the baptism of the world, which purified and redeemed it, corresponds to the saving Baptism of the Church. The family of Noah is saved by water and the wood, just as the family of Christ is saved by Baptism, which represents the suffering of the Cross.”⁹

Gen 9:18

Who was the father of Canaan? Why was this mentioned twice in the narrative before Canaan was even born (9:18, 22)? _____
(You may be better able to answer this question by reading through this chapter to its end).

The evil cycle begins again after the recreation. What does Noah do in 9:21 that precedes this tragedy? _____

Gen 9:22

The youngest son Ham, in a power play reminiscent later of Absalom with King David’s concubines, commits incest with his father’s wife/ his own mother, the meaning of the Hebrew euphemism “to see his father’s nakedness.”¹⁰ In this manner, Shem and Japheth covered their mother, who had just been raped. The child born of this illicit union will be Canaan.

“Ham’s ultimate purpose may have been a power play to lay claim to the leadership of the family. The family position of authority, which included the roles of kingship and priesthood, was typically passed down from father to firstborn son. Ham may have been seeking to hijack this head position before it could be handed down to his older brother, Shem. Thus, Ham’s sexual relations with his mother may have been a calculated act of rebellion and a grasp at family power.

⁸ Gray, Tim and Jeff Cavins. *Walking with God: A Journey Through the Bible*. © 2010 by Ascension Press, West Chester, PA, pp 25.

⁹ *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible: Genesis. Commentary*, pp 27.

¹⁰ See Leviticus 18:18-22, 20:17.

Ham's exploitation of his father's drunkenness leaves the human family once again in turmoil as a result of sin. Noah, having followed Adam by eating the fruit and becoming naked and ashamed, likewise starts a domino effect of sin that leads to a curse. This new cycle of sin will once again plunge humanity into great peril. The second creation is followed by a second fall. Yet there is hope because Shem, Noah's faithful son, receives the blessing from Noah (Gen 9:26). Perhaps through the line of Shem, a "seed" will arise who will crush the serpent and redirect man's increasing wickedness."¹¹

Gen 9:25

Once sober, what does Noah do to Ham? What blessing does he give to Shem in 9:26?

What became of the three sons of Noah?

Gen 10:2,5 : *Descendants of Japheth* _____

Gen 10:6 : *Descendants of Ham*

10:8 Cush: _____ Chief cities _____

10:13 Mizraim: _____ (Later fought Samson)

10:15 Canaan: _____

All of the traditional enemies of Israel come from the line of Ham--i.e., the Egyptians (10:6), the Canaanites (10:6), the Babylonians (10:10), the Assyrians (10:11), the Philistines (10:14), and the Jebusites (10:16).

Gen 10:21: *Descendants of Shem* (eldest son) _____

Hint: The story will follow the line of Shem from henceforth! Who will become a descendant of Shem in Gen 11:26? _____

Summary:

"The earth is again populated (Gen 10).

*Shem (Middle East; Mesopotamia)

*Japheth (north of that, spreading east and west)

*Ham (Canaan and North Africa)."¹²

The Tower of Babel (Gen 11)

Gen 11:4

The Tower of Babel (probably in the form of a ziggurat) was located in the center of the city of Babylon, in present-day Iraq. What was the intention of the people of Babylon and their neighbors? _____

¹¹ Gray, Tim and Jeff Cavins. *Walking with God: A Journey Through the Bible*. © 2010 by Ascension Press, West Chester, PA, pp 27-28.

¹² Cavins, Jeff. *The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation* (Workbook). © 2019 by Ascension Press, West Chester, PA, pp 26.

This introduces a crucial and recurrent theme of the Story of Salvation: Will we “call on the name of the Lord” or try to “make a name for ourselves”?

Note: The literal meaning of the name “Shem” is “name.”

Gen 11:7

How is this phenomenon reversed at Pentecost in Acts 2? _____

What is really going on with the story of the Tower of Babel?! “The drama of Genesis 11 is a human effort to thwart God’s blessing to Shem. It appears that Nimrod, the founder of Babel, is trying to seize the kingship from the line of Shem; just like his father, Ham, Nimrod seeks to rule over all. The attempt to make a ‘shem for themselves’ is analogous to a political party in America saying that will ‘make a President for themselves,’ or a group of Catholics saying they ‘will make a Pope for themselves.’ This is a rebellion against the established authority of Shem and his line, the Shemites (or Semites).”¹³

Gen 11:26-32

What do you learn about Abram in this passage? Who was his father/ brothers/wife? Where was he originally from? Where did his father Terah take the family? Did they arrive at their destination or stop somewhere along the way? _____

Geographical note: Haran is located 600 miles northwest of Ur, in modern Syria.

Summary:

Adam and Eve struggle in exile, watching their eldest son kill their second. The family continues to multiply, with Seth (their third born) becoming the one from whom the Messiah will eventually be born. The narrative will closely follow the line of Seth, contrasting it to the evil of his brother Cain’s line.

Man continues to sin exponentially, and a grieving God wipes out all living things, with the exception of Noah and his immediate family- (a type of Baptism and future salvation). In spite of this second “recreation,” another Fall occurs, with the grievous sin of incest by Ham, which leads to the birth of Canaan (and all of the future enemy tribes and nations waging war with Israel). Finally, evil grows to such an extent again (with the concerted effort of many to build the Tower of Babel and usurp God’s rightful worship), that God intervenes, scattering the people far and wide.

What will now happen to the line of Seth who alone “call on the name of the Lord”? Will the “seed of the woman” (Gen 3:15), the only hope of mankind, come soon from this line?

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¹³ Gray, Tim and Jeff Cavins. *Walking with God: A Journey Through the Bible*. © 2010 by Ascension Press, West Chester, PA, pp 29.