

Sunday, October 16, 2022 pm

Journey Through the Bible (8) Period 1 of 17 (#4) Progressive Wickedness

Tonight, we continue our journey through the Bible. This study is based on the 17 time periods of Bible history. It is my hope that in time you will memorize these 17 time periods, and that we can relate certain individuals and events to each period of time AND tie them to the coming of Jesus and our salvation.

In our last lesson, we discussed the first marriage and the fall of man. Today, we want to conclude the first period of time by addressing 1) Progressive wickedness and 2) Genealogies.

I. Events to consider in this period

- a. Thus far, we have noted creation (Gen. 1), including the emphasis of man (Gen. 2), the first marriage (2:18-25) and the fall of man (Gen. 3).
- b. Progressive wickedness – Cain and Abel. Genesis 4 records some of the progressive wickedness of man.
 - i. 4:1-2 - we are introduced to Cain and Abel.
 - ii. 4:3-7 in the process of time, they both offer worship to God. God accepts the worship of Abel and rejects that of Cain. Cain is upset and the LORD speaks to him. Note vs. 6-7 – Cain is angry and upset, but the LORD tells him, *If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.* Notice: Cain has control of his decisions and destiny. Temptation is there, but he is to RULE over it.
 - iii. 4:8-11 - Cain murders Abel and tries to hide it from God. We find how far anger can go.
 - iv. 4:11-15 - Cain is cursed – there are great consequences because of his egregious sins. The ground would not yield its strength (a struggle to survive), he was driven from the presence of the Lord and live as a fugitive, and he was marked so that he would not be killed. There was a warning that anyone who killed Cain would suffer vengeance 7-fold.
 - v. NOTE: Both Abel and Cain are mentioned in the New Testament in relation to this event
 1. Abel- Hebrews 11:4, 12:24, Matthew 23:35, Luke 11:51 – noted for his righteous faith, and the first righteous martyr.
 2. Cain – Jude 11 (8-11), 1 John 3:12, Hebrews 11:4 (contrasted) – for his wickedness and evil works. His is indicative of greedy, false teachers who seek to exploit. They are selfish and willing to do whatever to gain their desires.
- c. Progressive wickedness – the descendants of Cain. Genesis 4:16-23. A section often overlooked.
 - i. 4:16 - He leaves the presence of the LORD – separated because of his egregious sin
 - ii. 4:17–18 - He dwells in the land of Nod east of Eden and has a son named Enoch (not the same Enoch we will discuss shortly). Enoch's descendants are also mentioned.
 - iii. 4:19-24 - Lamech – 4 generations after Cain is noted. A few things about him
 1. He had 2 wives – first recorded account of polygamy
 2. They have 3 sons mentioned – Jabal – father of dwellers in tents w/livestock> Jubal – inventor of musical instruments Zillah – Tubal-Cain – a craftsman in bronze and iron
 3. He kills another man for wounding him – possibly self-defense, but whatever the case he declares that he was justified and notes that one who avenges him would suffer 77 fold. (NOTE: This is not the LORD speaking as in the case of Cain).

- iv. NOTE: This is all that is said about his descendants, though I believe they are what is referenced in Genesis 6 (daughters of men).
- d. Seth – the promised lineage preserved – Genesis 4:25-26
 - i. God was not going to provide redemption through the murderer Cain, so Seth is born as, “another seed for me instead of Abel.”
 - ii. He bears a son, Enosh – more in a moment.
 - iii. NOTE: *Then men began to call on the name of the LORD.* Had that been lacking for a while? Regardless, we find men of a righteous seed beginning to seek after God.
 - iv. NOTE: Every human alive today is a descendent of Seth. Cain’s lineage is no more.
- e. Genealogies – Genesis 5 records the genealogy from Adam to Noah. It is easy to skip over much of this chapter, but it is rich with considerations.
 - i. There are 10 generations mentioned from Adam to Noah. This is the “righteous seed” through whom the Messiah would come. Bear in mind that to Jews, lineage was VERY important. Thus, the keeping of meticulous records. WHY is this needed? Consider the seed promise of Genesis 3:15.
 - ii. 5:1-2 Begins by recounting the creation of Adam and Eve, made “in the likeness of God”, created male and female, blessed and called “Mankind”. Recall, their responsibility, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it...” (Genesis 1:28)
 - iii. Their age is given when they have their son. E.g. Seth was born when Adam was 130 years old (NOTE: How long had they lived on earth before they actually sinned?).
 - iv. Note the ages – they lived a long time – hundreds of years, some approaching a thousand years.
 - v. After each generation, we read some 9 times, “And he had sons and daughters.” This is how the earth was filled with generations.
 - vi. “And he died” is mentioned 8 times. This reminds us of the consequence of Adam’s sin. Man was going to die.
 - vii. Enoch, the son of Jared (not Cain) – 5:18. Enoch was a unique character and introduced here (Genesis 5:21-24). We know him because he did not die a physical death.
 - 1. Enoch walked with God. In a world growing increasingly wicked, Enoch remained faithful to God.
 - 2. He did not see death because God took him. He is 1 of 2 we read of in the Bible to not see physical death. Elijah was the other.
 - 3. He is mentioned 3 times in the NT. Luke 3:37 – the genealogy of Christ from “the son of Joseph” to Adam; Hebrews 11:5 where he remembered because of his faith – so great God took him because he pleased God; Jude 14-15, where he is described as the 7th generation from Adam, a prophet warning the people of coming judgment.
 - viii. Methuselah – the oldest man recorded in scripture. He lived to 969 years, “and he died”. NOTE: Based on the genealogy of this chapter, he died the year of the flood.
 - ix. Finally, Noah is mentioned. Born to Lamech at 182 years of age, beginning at the age of 500 Noah had 3 sons – Shem, Ham and Japheth. We will note more about Noah in our next lesson.

II. Lessons to consider:

- a. ***God has always demanded worship His way –***
 - i. His instructions – Genesis 4:1-7, concerning the offerings of Abel and Cain, it is necessarily concluded that God had given some sort of instructions to Cain & Abel, and whoever else was living (Adam and Eve had other sons and daughters – Genesis 5:4) about how He intended to be worshipped. We know this because God accepted the

- offering of Abel and rejected Cain's offering. He then spoke with Cain about why it was rejected – he had not done well (4:7)
- ii. An introduction to how authority is established– while time the purview of this lesson, we learn in scripture that there 3 legitimate ways to establish authority for what we do – direct command, approved example and necessary inference (or in modern terminology – tell it, show it or imply it). We can see this throughout scripture. HERE we find an example of a IMPLIED conclusion – we KNOW God had given some sort of instructions, even though they are not mentioned. Abel obeyed & Cain did not.
 - iii. God has the right to set the standard – as we continue to deal with the subject of worship, realize that God has ALWAYS demanded worship as He specifies. AND He condemned worship that was CONTRARY to His instructions, regardless of motives. John 4:24- we must worship God, “In spirit and in truth”; Colossians 3:17 – do all in the name of the Lord.
 - iv. God demands the best. The first recorded act of worship finds Abel offering “*the firstborn of his flock and their fat*” (Genesis 4:4). God accepted this. Cain offered, “the fruit of the ground” with no emphasis on quality. Throughout scripture, God ALWAYS demands the best (cf. Malachi 1:8. 13-14). Today is no different.
- b. ***We see the dangers of temptation and how to overcome.***
- i. Genesis 4:7 – we must rule over it.
 - ii. It IS a matter of choice! When we sin, we are guilty because we chose to commit that sin.
 - iii. To fail to do so leads to death – James 1:12-15.
 - iv. We also learn that we must control the “triggers” that lead to sin – 1 John 2:15-16 – the “*lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and pride of life*”. Jesus addressed this in the sermon on the mount – Don’t even be angry without cause (Matthew 5:22), looking to lust which can lead to fornication (Matthew 5:28-30 – take drastic measures), etc.
- c. ***We find the progressive nature of sin –***
- i. Adam and Eve’s sin, while egregious (rebellion against God), as time progresses man behaves worse and worse. Cain murders his brother. And it goes downhill from there. We do NOT read about Cain’s descendants seeking God in any form. The closest we get is an arrogant declaration of Lamech (Gen. 4:23-24), and it is nothing more than an acknowledgment.
 - ii. Similarly, throughout scripture we find the progressive nature of sin. When we do not “rule over it”, it will rule over us.
- d. ***Concerning Enoch –***
- i. Unless the Lord returns while we live, we will likely not see what happened to Enoch.
 - ii. But we CAN walk with God, even in a sinful world. This has been a point of emphasis in various studies. Philippians 2:15, we shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

These are some lessons we can learn from this 1st period of Bible history. This time period becomes the foundation upon which the rest of the Bible is built. It also introduces us to how we ought to live and how NOT to live our lives. Learn from it and its events well, and build your hope upon God’s revealed will. Think about it!