



# GENESIS

## A WORLD BROKEN BY SIN

### SESSION 17

#### Opening Discussion

- ✝ The common narratives of Western culture are evaporating, especially knowledge of the Bible. Someone told me once that when she was ordering a cake and wanted it decorated with a depiction of Noah's Ark, the clerk had no idea what she was talking about. Examples like this prove the point that, more than ever, the Christian needs to be prepared to defend the purpose and importance of the bible. How would you answer the following:

What is the Bible? & What is the purpose of the Bible?

#### Some basics:

- A. The bible is about \_\_\_\_\_. He cajoled His contemporaries who read the Bible but missed the point. "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me" (John 5:39). On the road to Emmaus, Jesus said to the two, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures that things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:26–27).
- B. The Old Testament contains many prophesies about \_\_\_\_\_. "Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations" (Luke 24:45ff).
- C. The Bible was inspired and ultimately written by the \_\_\_\_\_. "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (John 14:25-26). For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (1Peter 1:21).
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ regarded the Bible as the very Word of God and authoritative. "For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished" (Matt. 5:18).

#### Read Genesis 4:1 - 2

- 1 In Genesis 3:15, God promises to send a Savior who will conquer the serpent and undo his power over man. The *seed/offspring* in the pronouncement that God makes—*I will put enmity between your seed and her seed*—is to be understood as both singular and plural. As a plural, it would imply the general ongoing warfare between God's people and Satan. But then God makes it very clear that this is also a prophecy that denotes a "singular" fulfillment. God says to Satan, "**HE** shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise **HIS** heel." Clearly this part of God's promise could only be fulfilled by one person—Jesus Christ.

We can only wonder then what Eve, herself, and Adam, understood about this promise. Did they know that the serpent was more than just a serpent? Did they understand seeping ramifications of their sin? Did they put all their hope and faith in God keeping his promise made in Genesis 3:15? Technically the bible doesn't directly answer these questions. But let's consider Eve's response to the birth of Cain Genesis 4:1. The text begins by saying: "*Adam knew his wife Eve and she conceived and bore Cain, saying:...*" However, at this point the Hebrew gets interesting. Scholars, since before the time of Christ, have debated the meaning of what comes next.

Our modern bibles construe her words as the following: "*I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.*" While this rendering is entirely possible—and is by far the preferred translation of the vast majority of scholars and theologians, both modern and ancient—nevertheless, this rendering seems absurdly redundant and wholly unremarkable. What woman wouldn't believe that the child she just bore was from the Lord? Who else would you give thanks to at the birth of a child? But even more important is the fact that this translation doesn't take into account the immediate context: that in Genesis 3:15, Eve was promised a Savior who would undo the harm that Satan had wrought--one who would be born of a woman.

Let's take a look at the Hebrew wording of Eve's statement about Cain in Genesis 4:1 and see what it says:

**קניתי איש את יהוה**

(Reading from right to left):

- A. **קניתי** (*qaniyiy*): This is the verb **קנה** meaning "to purchase" or "to acquire."
- B. **איש** (*iysh*): This Hebrew word means "man."
- C. **את** (*et*): There are four Hebrew words spelled **את** but only two are possible in this verse. The first one is that this is the preposition *with*. The translation would woodenly read: *I have gotten a man WITH the Lord*. But this would imply that Eve was impregnated by God. Genesis 4 begins by telling us that Adam did that. Thus, various translations have to add words to clarify such as "with the help of the Lord" or "through the Lord" or "by the Lord." However, the second Hebrew word spelled **את** is used about 10,000 times in the Hebrew Bible to identify the definite object of the verb. If this is the word used here in Genesis 4:1, then Yahweh is the definite object of the verb. In other words, Yahweh is what is "acquired." And this is actually the most natural reading of the text!!!!
- D. **יהוה** (*Yahweh*): This is the tetragrammaton that is sometimes transliterated as Jehovah, Yahweh, Yehovah, Yahu'ah, etc. It is the name of God.

**This means we now have two possible translations for the Hebrew.**

1. "*I have acquired a man with Yahweh*"
2. "*I have acquired a man, Yahweh*" or "*I have acquired a man, the Lord.*"

While the second translation seems the most Christological, considering the context, either one shows Eve's hope is in the Genesis 3:25 promise. There is no need to add words. What is profound, is that the second option—if correct—shows that Eve understood God's promise as an incarnational one—God being born among man. Martin Luther and many like him, preferred this understanding of Genesis 4:1. It is a truly Christ-centered way to read this text.

- 2 Why is so little made of Abel's birth? If Adam and Eve really did believe that Cain was the promised one, how might this have affected the family dynamics and brought about the tragedy to come?

### *Read Genesis 4:3-16*

- 3 What are some possible reasons that Abel's offering is accepted rather than Cain's?

#### **HEBREWS 11:4**

*By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.*

- 4 Consider how God speaks to Cain. He lovingly tries to show Cain the error of his ways. And he refers to sin much like a lion "crouching" and "desiring." Who else in the Bible is referred to as like a lion seeking to devour Christians (cf. 1 Peter 5:8)?
- 5 In Genesis 4:13-16, despite the fact that Cain murders his brother and then arrogantly remains unrepentant, God nevertheless puts a mark of mercy upon this sinner, a sign of God's divine grace and protection. What sign has God placed upon sinners like us to show His grace and favor wherever we may wander upon the earth?

#### **ROMANS 2:4**

*Do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?*

#### **1 PETER 3:15**

*And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him...*