

NOON BIBLE STUDY: GENESIS 4

GENESIS 4:1-2 - ADAM AND EVE HAVE CHILDREN

ADAM AND EVE "HAD RELATIONS" WITH EACH OTHER (SEXUAL INTERCOURSE) AND AS A RESULT EVE BECOMES PREGNANT. HER RESPONSE TO DELIVERING THE FIRST CHILD IS "I HAVE GOTTEN A MANCHILD WITH THE HELP OF THE LORD!" HIS NAME IS CAIN. SOME HAVE INTERPRETED THIS DECLARATION AS THE BELIEF THAT THE EVE THOUGHT THAT CAIN WAS THE PROMISED ONE WHO WOULD CRUSH THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT (GENESIS 3:15).

ADAM AND EVE HAVE A SECOND CHILD NAMED ABEL. CAIN WILL BE A FARMER (TILLER OF THE GROUND) AND ABEL WILL BE A SHEPHERD (KEEPER OF THE FLOCKS). BOTH OF THESE JOBS REFLECT THE GOD-GIVEN ROLE OF HUMANS FROM THE BEGINNING, NAMELY TO STEWARD THE EARTH AND TO RULE OVER IT. EVEN THOUGH THIS NEW FAMILY IS OUTSIDE OF THE BEAUTY OF PARADISE, THEY ARE CONTINUING MUCH OF THEIR CREATED PURPOSE. BUT THINGS ARE GOING TO TURN UGLY.

GENESIS 4:3-5 - CAIN & ABEL OFFER SACRIFICES

WE DON'T KNOW THE BACKSTORY OF THIS EVENT (HOW MUCH TIME HAS TRANSPIRED? WHAT INITIATED THE BROTHERS BRING SACRIFICE TO THE LORD?). WE ALSO DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHY (FROM THIS RECORD ALONE) THE LORD "REGARDED" ABEL'S OFFERING AND NOT CAIN'S. BUT WE CAN OBSERVE WHAT BOTH BROTHERS DO AND HOW THINGS GO DOWN(HILL) FROM THERE TO GET AN INDICATION OF "WHY"

- 1 - BOTH BROTHERS BRING AN OFFERING FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE PROFESSIONS
- 2 - CAIN BROUGHT "FRUIT OF THE GROUND"
- 3 - ABEL BRINGS THE "FIRSTLINGS" (FIRSTBORN) AND THEIR "FAT PORTIONS" (THE BEST PART)

PERHAPS IT WAS THE EXTRA WORK/EFFORT AND SPECIAL NATURE OF ABEL'S OFFERING THAT WAS NOTABLE TO GOD?

GENESIS 4:6-8 - CAIN'S CONVERSATION WITH GOD, AND HIS MURDEROUS RESPONSE

JUST LIKE IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN WITH THEIR PARENTS, GOD OFFERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CAIN OTHER THAN FALLING INTO SIN. CAIN IS CLEARLY UPSET BECAUSE OF HOW THE OFFERINGS TRANSPIRED. BUT BEING "ANGRY" IS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROBE THE REASON "WHY", AN OPPORTUNITY WHICH GOD OFFERED CAIN IMMEDIATELY.

CAIN WAS ANGRY, HIS COUNTENANCE HAD FALLEN. HE WAS "FEELING" SOMETHING. AND THERE WAS A REASON "WHY" HE WAS FEELING THIS WAY. AND GOD GAVE HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL WITH THIS EMOTION - "WHY ARE YOU ANGRY?" HERE'S WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED HAD CAIN NOT IGNORED THE THINGS HE WAS "FEELING":

YES, GOD, I'M ANGRY. MY ANGER IS COMING FROM A PLACE OF SADNESS AND CONFUSION. I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY ABEL'S SACRIFICE WAS PLEASING TO YOU AND MINE WASN'T. I FEEL LIKE EVERYONE LOVES ABEL AND IGNORES ME. AND IT'S BUBBLING OVER NOW...

GOD REPLIES TO THIS: "THANK YOU MY CHILD FOR COMING TO ME WITH YOUR PAIN. I LOVE YOU CAIN. CAIN, HERE IS WHY ABEL WAS ON THE RIGHT TRACK AND YOU WEREN'T..."

GOD TELLS CAIN THAT "SIN IS CROUCHING AT THE DOOR", PERSONIFYING SIN AS AN ANIMAL WAITING TO ATTACK CAIN. BUT GOD WAS POINTING CAIN TO AN OPTION OTHER THAN BEING OVERCOME BY SIN ("DOING WELL"). THIS IS OUR FIRST INDICATION THAT SIN IS CAUSED BY SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE PRESENCE OF THE SERPENT/DEVIL. THIS ANGER AND EVENTUAL MURDER CAME FROM INSIDE OF CAIN AND HIS REFUSAL TO GO TO GOD FOR HELP.

GENESIS 4:9-12 - CAIN'S CONFESSION & CONSEQUENCE

CAIN IS CONFRONTED BY THE LORD. CAIN'S INITIAL RESPONSE IS FLIPPANT: "AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER" AS IF TO SAY "IT'S NOT MY JOB TO CARE ABOUT WHAT MIGHT BE GOING ON WITH MY BROTHER." WOW. SO SOON AFTER THE FALL, HUMANS ARE DEFLECTING AND DENYING. GOD KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED BUT AGAIN, EVEN AFTER A VICIOUS MURDER, SEEKS CAIN OUT AND ASKS HIM WHAT HAPPENED.

AS A RESULT OF CAIN'S SIN, HE WILL BE CURSED. WHEN CAIN, FORMERLY A FARMER, WOULD FARM, IT WOULDN'T BE PRODUCTIVE AND CAIN WOULD SPEND THE REST OF HIS DAYS WANDERING THE EARTH (NLT: "HOMELESS WANDERER ON THE EARTH").

GENESIS 4:13-16 - A SIGN FOR CAIN

IN A STRANGE FOLLOW UP TO CAIN'S CURSE, CAIN APPEALS FOR DIVINE PROTECTION AS HE SPENDS THE REST OF HIS LIFE AS A VAGRANT. HE MOVES FARTHER AWAY FROM EDEN TO A LAND CALLED "NOD" (HEBREW WORD FOR "WANDERING"). HE FEARS THAT SOMEONE WILL TRY AND KILL HIM (PERHAPS IN VENGEANCE FOR ABEL'S MURDER OR BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT WANDERING CAIN WANDERING AROUND.) GOD PUTS A "SIGN" OR MARK ON CAIN THAT SOMEHOW INDICATES TO OTHERS THAT KILLING CAIN WILL LEAD TO SEVERE PUNISHMENT FOR THEM. THIS SIGN IS A SIGN OF REASSURANCE FOR CAIN BUT ALSO A SIGN TO THE REST OF THE WORLD THAT THEY SHOULD NOT FOLLOW THE WAY OF CAIN.

GENESIS 4:17-22 - CAIN'S DESCENDANTS, CIVILIZATIONS BEGIN

THE CALLING UPON HUMANITY WAS TO BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY, TO FILL THE EARTH (GENESIS 1:28). EVEN IN THEIR FALLEN STATE, THIS WORK BEGINS IN A LARGER WAY. CAIN IS NOW A WANDERER BUT HE AND HIS DESCENDANTS ARE STILL BEING PRODUCTIVE. NOTABLE ADVANCEMENTS ARE HIGHLIGHTED THROUGH THESE INDIVIDUALS:

V. 17 - CAIN BUILT A CITY CALLED "ENOCK"

V. 19 - LAMECH TAKES TWO WIVES (SOMETHING THAT HADN'T BEEN DONE BEFORE)

V. 20 - JABAL WAS FATHER OF THOSE WHO DWELT IN TENTS AND HAVE LIVESTOCK

V. 21 - JUBAL WAS FATHER OF THOSE WHO PLAY LYRE AND PIPE

V. 22 - TUBAL-CAIN WAS FORGER OF IMPLEMENTS OF BRONZE AND IRON

V. 22 - TUBAL-CAIN HAD A SISTER (NAAMAH). THIS THE FIRST FEMALE DESCENDANT MENTIONED, THOUGH THERE WERE LIKELY MANY OTHERS.

IN THIS CASE THESE PEOPLE ARE THE FIRST TO *EVER* DO SOME OF THESE THINGS!

GENESIS 4:23-24 - LAMECH

LAMECH APPARENTLY KILLED SOMEONE FOR "WOUNDING/STRIKING" HIM. HIS ACTIONS ARE AN ABSOLUTELY DISPROPORTIONATE RESPONSE AND FURTHER PUSHES HUMANKIND DOWNWARD. THE MOSAIC LAW WILL EVENTUALLY CODIFY SOME PATTERN OF AND "EYE FOR AN EYE" NOT A "LIFE FOR A SCRATCH!" LAMECH THEN BOASTS TO HIS WIVES THAT IF GOD IS GOING TO AVENGE CAIN IF SOMEONE KILLS HIM, THEN SURELY GOD WILL PROTECT AND AVENGE LAMECH EVEN MORE SO (IMPLYING CAIN KILLED OUT OF ANGER AND LAMECH'S MURDER WAS JUSTIFIED). THIS IDEA IS NOT GOD'S IDEA, IT'S LAMECH'S. AND IT'S NOT TRUE.

AND JUST LIKE THAT THE SINS OF THE FATHERS BEGIN TO BE PASSED DOWN TO THEIR SONS.

GENESIS 4:25-26 - SETH, SON OF ADAM

ADAM AND EVE HAVE ANOTHER SON, SETH AND THEIR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS BIRTH INDICATES THEIR GRATITUDE FOR GOD BLESSING THEM WITH ANOTHER SON AFTER THE DEATH OF ABEL. SETH WILL HAVE A SON NAMED ENOSH AND DURING THE TIME OF ENOSH, HUMANS BEGAN TO "CALL UPON" (WORSHIP AND PRAY TO) THE NAME OF THE LORD. THE FAMILY OF CAIN IS A MESS BUT IN THE FAMILY OF SETH, WE HAVE SOME HOPE.

THERE ARE FEW CHAPTERS WHICH ILLUSTRATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN LIKE GENESIS 4 AND HOW RAPIDLY AND DRAMATICALLY THINGS CAN CHANGE AS A RESULT OF SIN IN PEOPLE'S LIVES. CAIN HAS UNBRIDLED ANGER WHICH LEADS TO THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER AND THE FIRST DEATH IN HUMAN HISTORY. HIS DEMEANOR IS CHANGED AND IS DEFENSIVE AND IRRESPONSIBLE. HE IS CURSED AND FORCED TO WANDER THE EARTH AND IS PARANOID OF OTHERS KILLING HIM. HIS KIDS ARE AFFECTED WITH A SIMILAR BENT.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, SIN IS CROUCHING AT OUR DOOR. WE MUST MASTER IT OR IT WILL MASTER US! WE CANNOT TAKE SIN LIGHTLY. WE CAN NOT DABBLE OUR TOES IN THE EVILS OF THIS WORLD OR LIVE WITHOUT RESTRAINT OF THE EVIL DESIRES THAT WISH TO RULE OUR HEARTS. IN EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF TEMPTATION WE MUST LOOK TO THE LORD, WHO LIKE HE WAS WITH CAIN, IS THERE TO HELP US "DO WELL" AND FIGHT AGAINST THE PLEASURES OF SIN. DO WE HEAR HIS CALL TO TURN FROM SIN?

DO NOT JUST WAKE UP AND WALK OUT OF YOUR HOUSE. REMEMBER THAT SIN HAS MADE IT'S BED ON OUR PORCHES OVERNIGHT WHILE WE SLEPT AND IS HOPING WE FORGOT THAT YESTERDAY SIN WANTED TO RULE US. WE CANNOT WALK CASUALLY INTO OUR DAYS AND RELATIONSHIPS AND SITUATIONS THINKING THAT IT IS SAFE TO EMBARK. WE MUST KNOW SIN IS WAITING FOR US, SEARCHING AFTER US, LONGING TO FEAST OFF OUR EMOTIONS AND ACTIONS AND DECISIONS. THERE ARE DAYS WHEN WE WILL WALK RIGHT BY SIN WHICH WAS HIDING AT OUR FRONT DOOR, AND WE ASSUME WE ARE SAFE - YET SIN HAS HIDDEN ITSELF AND IS SLYLY AND SILENTLY FOLLOWING BEHIND US, READY TO POUNCE WHEN WE LET OUR GUARD DOWN OR BECOME DISTRACTED. BEWARE.

AND BEWARE IN PARTICULAR OF SINS AND TEMPTATIONS THAT WERE SPECIFICALLY THE DOWNFALL OF YOUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS. ADAM SINS, RESPONDS WRONGLY AND MODELS FOR CAIN THE WRONG WAY TO LIVE. CAIN THEN FOLLOWS THIS PATTERN, WITHOUT EVEN REALLY THINKING MUCH ABOUT IT. IN JUST TWO CHAPTERS THE PATTERN FOR THAT FAMILY IS SEEN. AND CAIN'S DISTANT GRANDCHILD LAMECH WILL FOLLOW THE SAME PATTERN, BUT WORSE. BY THE TIME THIS SIN PATTERN REACHES LAMECH, HE IS ACTUALLY BOASTING OF HIS SIN AND DOESN'T EVEN INCLUDE GOD IN THE CONVERSATION. THINK ABOUT THE RAMIFICATIONS ON OUR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN IF WE, TODAY CHOOSE TO "DO WELL".

DON'T RATIONALIZE SIN. DON'T DABBLE IN SIN. DON'T PLAY WITH SIN. DON'T ENTERTAIN SIN. DON'T BECOME FRIENDS WITH SIN. DON'T MAKE PEACE WITH SIN. DON'T CONSIDER SIN. DON'T ENJOY SIN. DON'T BE DECEIVED BY SIN. INSTEAD, WAKE UP EACH DAY WITH THE RESOLUTION TO "DO WELL" AND WITH THE HELP OF OUR LOVING AND PRESENT GOD AND HIS ACTIVE SON - MASTER, KILL, HATE, FIGHT, REPENT OF AND OVERCOME SIN.