

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:20

“20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. 22 Then Jehovah God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- 23 therefore Jehovah God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”

Genesis 4:1 “1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from Jehovah." 2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to Jehovah. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And Jehovah respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

'The Mother of All Living'

We are back in the Book of Beginnings for the New Year and we are moving out of the Garden of Eden...

This morning we will be introduced to two of the major characters in chapter four and learn a bit more about human history and our vocations. In our first twenty-six lessons from Genesis, yes it has been that many, we have seen how the eternal Triune God brought forth all there is by the power of His Word.

We saw God's special creative powers bring forth the material of the universe, life on earth and man in His image. Over six days we saw God form the earth and seas, fill them with living creatures, put the lights in the heavens and give man dominion over all of His good creation.

- **Here we see the answer as to why we, or anything, exists and the ultimate meaning for the important truths like love and relationships!**

We see Eve brought forth from Adam's side, establishing the institution of marriage and the means by which God would fill the earth with righteous people!

- **At the end of all this God declares His Creation to be very good!**

But this was not the end of the story because in chapter three we found a dragon in God's garden and things were going to be changed in some very significant ways.

Satan deceived Eve and Adam then willingly partook of the forbidden fruit and all of mankind was put under the curse of death because God said to Adam, in the day you eat thereof you will surely die!

Now we have an understanding of why there is evil in the world: Why men and women made in the image of God are capable of gross sin and why even the creation itself groans and brings forth death and destruction. We see man's relationship with God broken, the relationship between man and woman broken and even man's relationship with himself is broken!

- **All the problems that psychiatrists & secular philosophers seek to find answers for in vain, are understood here in the Book of Beginnings.**

And finally, God presented the Gospel as He promised to crush the head of the serpent, gave his children a covering of skins and drove them from the garden for their own protection.

- **The rest of the Bible is the story of how Jesus comes to save His people from their sins & make them His glorious bride to fill the earth!**

Now this may all sound a bit simplistic but we must remember that the God who was there has revealed these truths and given us the foundations that we need to properly understand the rest of His revelation as well as ourselves and the world we live in!

Those who get things wrong here eventually get things very wrong further down the road.

As we think back on man's history before Jesus, we are told of man in the garden, we have man after the fall living outside the garden but before the great flood & finally we have Abraham down to the coming of the Christ.

- As we discussed at several points in the first two chapters of Genesis it is very difficult for us to understand man and creation before the fall.

Much of what we can know is from looking at what God promises our future will be in the prophets and the Book of Revelation! Now we move out of the garden and will be looking at the early generations of man up until the time of Noah...

As you children who listen to Jamie Soles would know: Antediluvians all!

- We are going to be dealing with people who lived to be hundreds of years old and exhibit great skills.

Along with this we will see an almost unrestrained capacity to sin that will lead to the destruction of all living things on the earth, save those kept in Noah's ark. Even after the flood we will see man attempt to save himself at the Tower of Babel and God's dispersing man.

- After that, we will see the beginning of God's answer to Babel with the calling of Abraham.

So with all of this in mind let us look at our brief text for this morning: Adam named his wife Eve before being driven from the Garden and I would argue he had the confidence to see her as the mother of all living because he believed God's offer of salvation!

God could have justly ended the human race by casting Adam and Eve into the Lake of Fire prepared for Satan and his angels...

- But God was gracious & merciful promising a Savior that would be born of a woman!

Obviously Adam did not know all of the details, but he did know that the seed of the woman would crush the seed of the serpent AND that mankind would continue even under the curse to be able to fill the earth.

- Thus Eve is truly the mother of all living!

So human history will continue and we read at the first verse of chapter four:

"Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain..."

There is a lot packed into the first part of that verse! We see the first physical union of a man and a woman and it takes place within marriage!

This will remain God's standard for all of history and we fully know looking back that it is so important because it pictures the love of Christ for His Bride the Church!

- Any sexual relationships outside of marriage are an abomination and straying outside the marriage bed was a capital crime!

We are told that Adam knew his wife! I think it is important to note that God did not use the "f" word or even say that he had sex with Eve... God said that Adam knew his wife which reminds us of the intimacy that should be a part of normal physical relationships between a man and his wife.

- God said the two become one flesh in an intimate and all-encompassing relationship.

While it is obviously sinful to have sexual relationships outside of marriage it is also sinful to not have proper relations within marriage! As Pastor Wilkins has often reminded us, marriage is NOT about you. It is about loving your spouse sacrificially the way that Jesus loves His Church.

If the physical relations in your marriage are not rich and growing more so each year then that is something you need to work on... What a pleasant homework assignment!

And for you young people, you will not find fulfilment in your marriage by experimenting and trying to learn before your time, which would be not unlike what Adam did in the garden! A good rule is to treat ANY members of the opposite sex in the same way you would expect someone to treat your future husband or wife!

As we discussed last week, you will learn how to discern who God is bringing into your life by being obedient in the various areas where God calls you to be obedient in as a single person.

- **Faithfulness now will bring a lifetime of joy in the future!**

For those who have strayed in their marriages or singleness, we know that we have an advocate with the Father and if we honestly confess our sins he washes them away with the blood of Jesus and gives us a fresh start by His Grace.

- **So the first husband and wife bring forth a son confirming that God has not taken away from man the calling to fill the earth!**

A calling we will see repeated after the flood so there is no doubt! Eve said, "I have acquired a man from Jehovah." The New King James version as well as the King James tidy this verse up and make it easy to understand, but it may not be that simple. A literal reading would be 'I have acquired a man, Jehovah.'

Some have argued the Eve thought she was birthing the promised Savior right away, understanding that the Messiah must be God Himself, which is unlikely. Others versions read 'with the help of Jehovah' focusing on the blessing that Eve was enjoying even in her fallen state. I think Eve was expressing more than just how she had a son or even that he came with God's help, I think she was somehow looking down through history to the coming of Messiah one day.

Next in verse 2 we read, "Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel."

Many argue that because there is no mention of Adam knowing her again or her conceiving again that Abel was a twin brother and I think this is likely. Of course we will see next week that he was the favored one which is not unusual with twins in the Bible so you older twins should be careful.

- **Obviously Adam and Eve had many more children but God gives us the names and details about these first two and it is clearly a picture of the two humanities!**

A picture that will carry down to the very end of the Book of Revelation: The saved and the lost, the sheep and the goats, the wheat and the tares, the faithful and the unfaithful, or the righteous and the unrighteous:

- **All are present right here from the beginning.**

We are then given details about their names, their vocations and their worship, which we will consider next week, Lord willing. Cain means possessed which ties nicely with what Eve said about the boy she got from Jehovah! Abel means breath or vapor, something that is fleeting.

These are fitting names and we could ponder how they knew the appropriate name for Abel: Perhaps the meaning grew from his life but that does not fit with Adam naming the animals.

This is one of those places where we have to realize that we don't and even can't fully understand the intelligence of these early men and women.

The world would have us believe that primitive man was, well primitive!

They were nomads roaming the earth trying to survive, having just come from a union of pigs and monkeys according to the latest theory!

- **They went around grunting at each other and certainly had no capacity to read or write.**

When we see the rapid advance of civilization before and after the flood it is hard to imagine this without a good means of communication, including writings.

- **Ah, but our secular friends will reply that we know that oldest communications are just primitive cave drawings and stone sketches!**

Yes, that is true, but we also know even in our own time that the more advanced writings and records are the hardest to preserve... Just what do you think you have in your house that will be around in two thousand years? The same is true for even a region like Sacramento!

- **And I don't think we even need to speculate about the fact that we have nothing surviving from before the flood: That is pretty obvious.**

All this to remind us that what we have here in Genesis chapter four, is NOT primitive cave men breeding but men and women made in the image of God bearing children and giving them names in a God-like manner.

We are going to end this morning with a discussion of vocation... So before we get there I want to say another word about the naming of Abel: As I said it means breath or vapor and it certainly applies to his life: But he is the righteous brother as we shall see in the coming weeks, and thus his name reminds us that even as Saints our time here on earth is fleeting and that we should make the most of it.

As we read in Psalm 144: "3 Jehovah, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him? 4 Man is like a breath; His days are like a passing shadow."

James in his usual practical way, puts it like this: "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

So God's command to fill the earth goes on and so does the command to subdue it and to have dominion and we see this taken up right away with the vocations of Cain and Abel.

"Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."

- **So immediately after the exit from the Garden and in the first generation of man we have vocations!**
- **This will be the focus of our applications for morning!**

But we must also see again how this runs very contrary to the views of secular historians. These early men should have been roaming nomads desperately trying to scrap out a living on the land.

Instead we see Cain and Abel immediately involved with husbandry and agriculture!

- **They are carrying out their dominion mandate right from the beginning.**

The nomads and primitive people that we see today and down through history are a result of rebellion against God as we shall see in two weeks with Cain.

Yet another reminder that the Book of Beginnings is important and gives us the proper foundations for all of life.

So Cain and Abel are identified by their vocations and as we shall see next week these vocations even inform their worship so they were very important. It is not unusual for the conversation with strangers to quickly turn to the question, “So what do you do?” I have heard it said that this is demeaning in some way, looking at a person only in terms of their employment, and it can often be that especially if the more superior feeling person says with his or her nose in the air, ‘what do YOU do?’

- BUT on the other hand, we must not shy away from the Bible’s emphasis on vocation.

We see it focused on right here at the beginning and it carries through many examples in the Scriptures, the teachings in the Books of Wisdom and the instructions in the New Testament epistles.

- Our vocation, our work is part of the ‘good works’ that we were created in Christ Jesus to walk in!

Here at Church of the King we have tried to emphasize the importance of this with our working men and younger boys. [mention the tapes.] We can summarize all of this with Paul’s brief instruction in his Epistle to the Church at Ephesus:

Ephesians 6:5 “5 Bondservants, *[if what he is about to share applies to slaves then certainly it applies to employees!]* Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; *[yes, the bottom line is that we ALL work for our master in heaven!]* 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. 9 And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

- Yes, even the bosses work for the Master!

Where there are women working outside the home of necessity or desire they are subject to the same principles. But those who are serving in the home must not succumb to the modern drumbeat that they are somehow second class citizens who are denied the opportunity to be ‘fulfilled!’

- In fact I would point out that being a homemaker is the one vocation that gets the MOST attention in the Scriptures!

Proverbs devotes almost an entire chapter to your vocation! The Lord wants us to realize just how important your vocation is in the advance of His Kingdom!

As we enter this New Year, let us renew our commitment to our marriages and vocations and take to heart the words of Moses in Psalm 90: “16 Let Your work appear to Your servants, And Your glory to their children. 17 And let the beauty of Jehovah our God be upon us, And establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands.”

Communion Meditation: Genesis 4

“3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to Jehovah. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And Jehovah respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.”