

Journey Through the Bible

Lesson 2 – Time of Conscience

I. From the Fall to the Flood

A. Adam and Eve Outside the Garden

1. In their new state of consciousness of good and evil, Adam and Eve began their life outside of the Garden of Eden. Existence was quite different from before.
2. Previously, in the peace of the garden, the first man and woman had been charged with dressing and keeping a true paradise. Now Adam was hewing out a living by the sweat of his brow, battling unendingly against weeds and briars.
3. Eve discovered the truth of God's Word. He had said, "*I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children*" (Genesis 3:16).
4. The first child that Eve brought into the world was a son named Cain. She said, "*I have gotten a man from the Lord*" (Genesis 4:1). But then, Eve gave birth to another son, Abel.

B. The Differences Between Two Brothers

1. As often happens with brothers in the same family, these two were quite different. Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

2. Notice that Genesis 4:3-7 points out that these were not the only differences between these two men.
3. *In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. ⁴ But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, ⁵ but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."*

C. Worship Taught

1. Adam and Eve had obviously taught their sons about God's existence, and about the need to worship Him, and to offer sacrifices to Him. As time passed by, Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. Abel also brought an offering of the firstlings of his flock.

D. Sacrifice Accepted and Rejected

1. The Lord accepted Abel's offering, but not that of Cain. This disturbed Cain, and he became angry. The Lord said to him, "*Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do*

what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

2. In His mercy and willingness to forgive Cain's error, the Lord appealed to him. He told Cain that his offering could be accepted as well as that of Abel if he, too, would do the right thing.
3. The only thing that would prevent Cain from doing right would be sin.
4. Once a man was asked this question in a kind way, "What is your trouble?" He answered right away, "No trouble, sir, but myself." The deepest and most dangerous troubles do not come from without, but from within.
5. The enemy had entered through a gate that had been opened from within. Cain's problem was not Abel, but himself.

E. Blood Sacrifice, a Requirement

1. What was wrong with Cain's offering? One difference is that while Abel had brought a blood sacrifice, Cain had brought an offering of fruit of the ground.
2. From the very first. God's plan called for a blood sacrifice. In the Garden of Eden, God had slain animals in order to provide skins to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve. (See Genesis 3:21.)
3. In other words, for man's sins to be covered, blood had to be shed. Jesus Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Revelation 13:8 - *and all who dwell on earth will worship it,*

everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

4. The reason God chose a blood sacrifice is that the wages of sin is death. (See Romans 6:23. *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*)
5. Without the shedding of blood, sins cannot be remitted. (See Hebrews 9:22 -*Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*)
6. Adam must have related this knowledge to his sons, or Abel would not have known what to bring. We do know that Cain brought an improper sacrifice.
7. Early in scripture notice that sincerity alone will not put a person in right standing with God. The only thing God will honor is obedience. It is not enough to do what you think is right, or the best you know how. You must do as God commands.
8. Abel obeyed God out of faith. Hebrews 11:4 says, "*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*"

F. The Punishment of Disobedience

1. Sadly, Cain did not accept God's offer to try again, but instead murdered his brother, Abel. The Lord, who sees and knows all things, asked, "*Where is Abel thy brother?*" Cain lied, "*I know not; am I my brother's keeper?*"
2. Then God pronounced the penalty on Cain's sin: "*What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.*"
3. Cain replied, "*My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*" (See Genesis 4:13-14).
4. The Lord answered, "*Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on sevenfold.*" (See Genesis 4:15.) Then, the Lord set a mark on Cain, to prevent anyone who found him from killing him.

5. As a result of his sins of murder and refusal to obey God, Cain left the Lord's presence, and went to live in the lonely land of Nod on the east of Eden.

II. Men Who Walked with God

A. Seth

1. Adam and Eve had more children, but it was not until she gave birth to a son whom they named Seth that Eve said, "*For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew*" (Genesis 4:25).
2. It was in the days of Seth, who was evidently a godly man, with a desire to serve God as Abel had, that men began to call upon the name of the Lord. (See Genesis 4:26.)

B. Enoch

1. One of the most interesting men to live in the Book of Genesis was the great, great, great grandson of Adam. His name was Enoch, and he loved God and was obedient to Him.
2. The Bible says, "*And Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him*" (Genesis 5:24).
3. Hebrews 11:5 offers further information on this unusual event: "*By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found because God had translated him: for before his*

translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

4. Early in the dawn of history, there were men who pleased God by their obedience to Him and their faith in Him. However, all men did not share that faith and obedience.

C. Noah

1. In the days of Enoch's great grandson, Noah, God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Mankind, was so wicked and lawless, that God grieved that He had ever made man.
2. He said, "*I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them*" (Genesis 6:7).
3. There was one man, however, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord: Noah. While others thought continually about evil things, and practiced all kinds of wickedness, Noah believed in God and obeyed Him.
4. Hebrews 11:7 puts it this way: "*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*"

- D. What did they have in Common?
1. What did Abel, Seth, Enoch, and Noah have in common? Faith.
 2. They believed God, and obeyed Him. From the beginning of mankind faith has been God's requirement.
 3. As Hebrews 11:6 points out, "*Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*"

III. The Righteous Family Preserved

A. Faith and Action Required

1. Notice that while God made a way of escape, He required faith and action on Noah's part.
2. God gave Noah specific instructions on how the ark was to be built. The type of wood, (gopher) the size, (300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high) the number of doors and windows (one) and floors (three) were all decided by God. The Lord even told Noah how many animals to take into the ark. He was to take the clean beasts by sevens, and the unclean by twos. (See Genesis 7:2).

B. One Plan of Escape

1. What if Noah, like Cain, had decided to do things his own way? What if he had added another window or door, or used a different type of wood, or changed any other detail of God's plan?

2. Without any doubt at all, his family would have perished in the flood along with the rest of sinful, disobedient humanity. God has never spared those who were disobedient to His Word.
Because of Eve's sin, the first human couple had to leave the beautiful Garden in Eden.
3. Because of Cain's sin, the Lord set a mark upon him and banished him from His presence.
4. Because of the sinfulness of the human race, the whole world— except Noah and his family—were destroyed. *As far as God was concerned, the Earth had become a sewer; there was violence everywhere. God took one look and saw how bad it was, everyone corrupt and corrupting—life itself corrupt to the core. Genesis 6:11 (MSG)*
5. As God said, "*My spirit shall not always strive with man.*" (Gen 6:3).
6. However, God saved Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness. (II Peter 2:5 - *And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.*) Evidently, Noah not only prepared for his family, but warned others as well of the impending judgment and their need to repent and obey God.
7. His message, however, went unheeded. God, in His long-suffering, was waiting for mankind to repent. (I Peter 3:20 - *who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water*)

The end result was, "*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.*" (See Hebrews 11:7.)

8. The home is still the place to start the devotional life before God, and is the preserver of the godly life within the family.

C. The Place of Safety

1. One week before the flood, Noah and his family were led of God into the ark. The Lord also directed the animals in, after which God shut the door. (See Genesis 7:15, 16- *Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark.* ¹⁶ *The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut him in.*) Noah was 600 years old.
2. The rain began to fall, and the fountains of the deep were broken up. Steadily, the depth of the water increased for the 40 days. The water continued to cover the mountains for 110 more days. At the end of 150 days, the waters began to subside. The waters decreased continually for another 150 days.
3. The ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month. On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains became visible. The ark came to a rest upon the mountains of Ararat.

4. Forty days later, Noah opened the window and sent out a raven and a dove. The dove found no place to land, and returned to the ark. After seven days, Noah sent the dove out again, and when it returned, the bird had an olive leaf in its mouth. Finally, after an additional seven days, Noah sent forth the dove again, and it never returned.

D. Noah Receives a Promise

1. After a year and 17 days. God told Noah, together with his family and the animals, to leave the ark. Genesis 8:13-18: *By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. ¹⁴ By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry. Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶ "Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. ¹⁷ Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number upon it." ¹⁸ So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives*
2. One of the first things that Noah did upon leaving the ark was to build an altar upon which he offered burnt offerings to the Lord.

3. How many of our homes have a family altar?
Today many excuse themselves on the ground that the pace of life has been so speeded up that there is no time for family devotion and prayer.
4. The Lord said, "*I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed time and winter, and day and night shall not cease*"
(Genesis 8:21-22)
5. This was not the end of God's communication with Noah, however. As He had commanded the first man and woman. God told Noah and his family to multiply and fill the earth. (See Genesis 9:1 - *Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.*) He said that from that time forward, animals would fear men and be used by men for food, except for the blood. (See Genesis 9:2-4.)
6. Also, God instituted human government by providing that murderers suffer capital punishment. (See Genesis 9:5, 6.)
7. To Noah and his sons. God said, "*And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall*

all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth"
(Genesis 9:9-13).

IV. Mankind Judged

A. Today, when we look into the sky and see the rainbow, we remember that it is God's token of His covenant promise that He will never destroy the earth by water again.

1. However, the earth will one day face the judgment of God in a frightfully different manner. It is revealed in II Peter 3:4-7, where Peter says scoffers will say, "*Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*"

2. Judgment is coming upon the wicked and ungodly. And though the agent God uses will not be water, it will be just as devastating on those who have refused to obey God.
3. Daniel Webster, when Secretary of State under President Fillmore, was dining once with twenty distinguished men at the Astor House in New York. He was unusually quiet and his thoughts seemed to be elsewhere. To draw him out someone asked him an unusual question, "*Mr. Webster, will you tell me what was the most important thought that ever occupied your mind?*" Webster thought for a moment, then said for all to hear, "*The most important thought that ever occupied my mind was that of my individual responsibility to God.*" It is said that he talked for twenty minutes upon the subject.
4. Noah also felt the same responsibility to God.

B. The Days Before the Flood

1. The worldwide flood in Noah's day was of such tremendous significance that Jesus used its lessons to teach about His second coming.
2. Matthew 24:37-44 > *As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the*

Son of Man. ⁴⁰Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴²"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

3. Notice the clear comparisons between the world in Noah's day and today.
4. Eating and Drinking -There is nothing wrong with eating and drinking. These are normal pursuits of life, even though many carry them to the extreme and make a god of their belly!
5. Philippians 3:17-19. *Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. ¹⁸For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.)*
6. The carnal man is concerned only with feeding the physical man. With the exception of Seth, there is little mention that these people before the flood talked (prayed) with God in the cool of

the day as did their forefather Adam, nor sacrificed to God as did Abel nor walked with God as did Enoch.

7. Marrying and Giving in Marriage- Again, marriage is not sinful, neither is it wrong for a man to give his daughter in marriage. Marriage was ordained by God, and is blessed of Him. It is His plan whereby mankind establishes the close relationships of a godly family and home, and multiplies and replenishes the earth.
8. In Genesis 6:1-2 it appears that the godly line of Seth was intermarrying with the carnal line of Cain. According to II Peter 3:3-7 their behavior had degenerated to the point that they had become scoffers and doubters. Had they forgotten God's judgment on Adam, Eve, and Cain? Apparently so because Lamech boasted of slaying a man with no regard for judgment. (See Genesis 4:19-23.)
9. Buying, Selling, Planting, and Building - In Luke 17:26-30, Jesus expands the comparison with the days immediately preceding His coming by including the days of Lot. As we have already noted about those days just before judgment fell, there was nothing inherently sinful about buying, selling, planting or building.
10. *Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.*

28"It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. 29But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. 30"It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

Luke 17:26 - 30

11. Mankind was developing skills and talents in many areas. Lamech's three sons excelled in making tents, cattle raising, music, and industry. They now had music for entertainment. Thus mankind, particularly the descendants of Cain, increased in power, wealth and luxury.
12. They built but where was the altar? Their simple nomadic lines were becoming sophisticated and materialistic and corrupt. Violence filled the earth. Every imagination of the thoughts of his (mankind's) heart were only evil continually. (See Genesis 6:5-13.) God said, "*I will destroy them with the earth.*"

C. They Knew Not

1. Life was going on as usual . . . the human race was engaged in its normal pursuits . . . the day before the judgment looked like any other day to them.
2. *There was no advance warning of exactly when judgment would come!* Jesus put it this way. "*And knew not until the flood came, and took them ail away*" (Matthew 24:39)

3. *So shall also the coming of the Son of Man Be* - Noah had preached and warned of impending judgment, but what was the reaction of a sinful world?
4. The same reaction that such a message receives today: "Oh, I've heard about that all my life! I don't think there ever will be a judgment day, things will always go on as they have been."
5. The wise man obeys the word of God and makes preparation now for the coming of the Lord!

D. The Same Extreme Wickedness

1. The parallel between the day of Noah and our generation is further marked by the extreme wickedness common to both times. II Timothy 3:1-4 clearly describes our generation, and declares these are the signs of the last days! *Don't be naive. There are difficult times ahead. As the end approaches, people are going to be self-absorbed, money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane, contemptuous of parents, crude, coarse, dog-eat-dog, unbending, slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, treacherous, ruthless, bloated windbags, addicted to lust, and allergic to God. They'll make a show of religion, but behind the scenes they're animals. Stay clear of these people.*
2. Just as surely as the flood came on the unsuspecting populace in the days of Noah, and destroyed all those who had not taken advantage of God's way of escape, so is the judgment of God coming upon the generation of the last days.

3. There will be no advance warning of the exact time of His coming. As Jesus said, *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be*" (Matt 24:36,37)

E. Noah Prepared!

1. Noah was perhaps a strange looking figure, laboring for many years over an unusual vessel and talking about an impending flood. No doubt, he was the brunt of many jokes and the subject of much light hearted laughter.
2. But when the flood came, Noah—who had obeyed God—was on the inside of the ark looking out, while the scoffers and unbelievers suffered the penalty of their sin.
3. So it will be at the return of the Lord. Those who have spurned God's claims on their life, and who have rejected opportunities to serve Him, will receive condemnation and sorrow and pain.
4. Those who were willing to obey the voice of God and make preparations will be ushered into everlasting joy.
5. As Jesus said, "*Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Whosoever*

therefore shall be ashamed of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:34-38).