

Genesis

What the Bible is All About

Genesis 3:15–24 | From Session 1

Genesis 3:15 has been called the *first gospel* because it gives a promise of one who will come from the **seed** of the woman and crush the serpent. A curse is pronounced on the serpent. And although dominion had been given to man, it has been taken from him and the world has become the dominion of Satan. He is the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4; John 12:31; Ephesians 2:2; Matthew 4:8,9).

The promise in verse 15 is that dominion will be taken back! The question Adam and Eve most likely had was: *By whom?* And *when?* Certainly, the evil one would try to stop it from happening.

The answer will not come until after the man and woman are expelled from the garden.

Session 2 | Genesis 4-5 | The Conflict Begins

Before the fall of man (the sin of Adam and Eve) the world was at perfect peace. Because of the sin of eating from the *tree in the midst of the garden*, that is, *the tree of knowledge of good and evil* (Genesis 3:17), death now entered the garden and the world. No longer would there be peace and perfection. The struggle began when God placed a curse on the Serpent and promised a Redeemer from the *seed* of the woman

Genesis 3:15 is referred to as *protoevangelium*. This term was used by the early church. It is a compound Greek word which means, *protos* = *first*, and *evangelium*=*gospel*. Specifically, the protoevangelium refers to the latter part of verse 15, "*it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" The word bruise can be translated "crush". Therefore, the **seed** of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. Dominion was handed over to Satan, and a Redeemer was promised to take it back. Satan (that old Serpent; Revelation 12:9; 20:2) has determined to not give dominion back. What follows is actual history.

Genesis 4:1–

Adam knew his wife; and she conceived. The promise from God was that He would provide a man who would get dominion back. Therefore, Adam and Eve knew they better get busy and have a child. The phrase *knew his wife* means they had marital sexual relations. They were no longer in the garden due to their disobedience. Adam and Eve are following God's command of Genesis 1:28 to be "fruitful and multiply, and *replenish (or fill) the earth..."

[*The KJV uses the word **replenish** in Genesis 1:28. Some have used this word to prove that the earth was filled once before (known as the gap theory). Critics say, "See, God told Adam and Eve to replenish the earth. That means it had to be filled back up." Why did the KJV translators use the word replenish? The word meant **fill** in the 17th century.]

... of plaining again.
 To REPLAIT. *v. a.* [*re* and *plait*] To fold one part often over another.
 To REPLENISH. *v. a.* [*re* and *plenus*, Lat.] 1. To stock; to fill. *Milton.* 2. To finish; to consummate; to complete. *Shakspeare.*
 To REPLENISH. *v. n.* To be stocked. *Bacon.*
 REPLET. *a.* [*repletus*, Lat.] Full; completely filled. *Bacon.*

1768 Dictionary | Samuel Johnson

And bare Cain and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

In essence Eve said, "I got him!" Eve most likely believed this new life, from *her seed*, would be the One who would crush the head of the Serpent.

The Seed

Following their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had many children (Genesis 5:4). Two of the children were, her firstborn Cain, and Abel (Genesis 4:1-2).

- Apparently sometime between verse 2 and 3, God began to require regular offerings or sacrifices to Himself (Genesis 4:3-5).

The Result of the Offerings

God accepted Abel's offering but did not accept Cain's. The literal the Hebrew reads, "*God looked at Abel's offering, but didn't look at Cain's.*"

The real reason for God not respecting Cain's offering seems to be the heart (or attitude) with which Cain presented his offering (See Isaiah 1:12-17; Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 15:18)

Two Kinds of Offerings

Cain's offering was rather ordinary; he just brought "*the fruit of the ground.*" Abel's offering seemed to be his best; he brought the "*firstborn of his flock and of their fat.*" Thousands of years later Abel is commended for his faith in Hebrews 11:4.

The Response to God's Rejection

"And Cain was very wroth (angry)." (Genesis 4:5)

God makes an appeal to Cain's conscience by giving him another opportunity to do the right thing but also warning him of the consequences of giving in to his sinful "desire" (Genesis 4:6-7).

[For this reason, dispensationalists refer to this stage of human history as the DISPENSATION OF CONSCIENCE.]

- It doesn't appear that God has given any written laws to Adam and his children.
- Therefore the people's relationship with God seems to have been governed by God on the basis of their conscience.
- The responsibility given to mankind in this dispensation is to live righteously before God on the basis of a God-given conscience.

Even today, people seem to intuitively agree about what is right and what is wrong. For example in most all cultures it is wrong to kill another human. In most all cultures it is wrong to steal. Where did this intuition of right and wrong come from? God has placed it in every human heart from the very beginning of human history. It is what sets us apart from the animal kingdom.

- Yet, Cain refused God's invitation to be reconciled.
 - This refusal to do right then led to Cain's murder of his brother, Abel (Genesis 4:8).
- God confronted Cain about his sin but this time pronounced judgment (Genesis 4:10-12).
 - Cain knew he was guilty and did not argue with God about the punishment, in fact he acknowledged his punishment (Genesis 4:13).
 - God, in his grace (undeserved favor), did not punish Cain with death, in fact he put some kind of mark on Cain to forbid others from taking his life and as a warning.
 - At least at this point in human history, capital punishment was not an option, but this would soon change.
- Cain's direct descendant Lamech appeared to have followed in Cain's footsteps. First, Lamech departed from God's plan of one man and one woman in marriage and boasted to his two wives a double murder he committed (Genesis 4:23-24).
 - A question often asked is *where did Cain get his wife* (Genesis 4:17). In chapter five (5:4) we read Adam and Eve had many sons and daughters. It follows that Cain and Abel would have had brothers and sisters (not recorded) prior to the events that take place in 4:3-5. Therefore, Cain would have married a close relative (a sister, or a niece, etc.).
- In Genesis chapter 6 we will see Cain's act of violence comes to characterize the whole earth (Genesis 6:5, 11-13). God's mercy on Cain only served to multiply evil, rather than restrain it.

People are born with a depraved heart, and as a result, they corrupt every relationship and every action (Romans 1:28-32; 2:14-24). Our environment or our education will not determine whether or not we do what is right.

Over time their consciences become "seared" (1 Timothy 4:2) with the result that they heartily approve of inherently sinful conduct (Romans 1:32).

One day the conscience will again become the basis of God's judgment (Romans 2:15-16). Only the regenerative power of the Holy Spirit on the basis of Christ's shed blood can "cleanse your conscience" sufficiently in order to enable you "to serve the living God" obediently (Hebrews 9:14)

It is in this dispensation and this account of Cain and Abel that we see the first salvo fired in the battle between the ungodly seed of the serpent and the godly Seed of the woman that the Lord had prophesied in Genesis 3.

In Cain's succeeding generations, we see a steady downward spiral morally.

But There is More to Cain's Dismal Life

Besides the increase in violence:

- Though God had condemned Cain to wander the earth (Genesis 4:12), Cain defied the Lord once again by settling in the land of Nod and then building a city.
- Instead of honoring God, Cain chose to honor his son by naming the city after him (Genesis 4:17).
- Now banished from God's presence, people decide to fill their lives with pursuit of the things of this earth (Genesis 4:20-22).
- Although they are very inventive (Jubal, inventor of stringed musical instrument, 4:21; Tubal-cain, inventor of metallurgy, 4:22), there is not one mention of the Lord in all their inventiveness.
- Like many today, they decided to enjoy the creation apart from the Creator.

Once again God provides hope through the line of another son of Adam, Seth (Genesis 4:25-26). Eventually, one of Seth's descendants, Noah, finds "grace in the sight of the Lord." (Genesis 6:8)

This is the first use of the word "grace" in the Bible.

Through Noah and his family, God once more provides hope for the future, and this hope results in the commencement of the next dispensation, the dispensation of government.