

Read the Bible in a Year

Week 2 - June 13, 2021

Read on Your Own this Week:

Psalms 4-6

Matthew 5-8

Readings in Class:

Genesis 19-35

A Brief Overview of Genesis 19-35

This week we continued the story of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, tracing the promise of the Seed. In Genesis 19 we get the story of Sodom being destroyed. At the end of chapter 18 we had God promising to not destroy Sodom if 10 righteous people could be found, but we find out that only Lot and his two daughters are saved.

Prescriptive vs descriptive in the Bible: The Bible describes actual historical events, sometimes without commentating on the morality of the act. The fact that something is described in the Bible (ie. Lot's daughters getting him drunk so they can get pregnant by him) does not mean the God is saying that it is morally good. We know from the prescriptive parts (prescriptive meaning a law or command), that getting someone drunk and having sex with your father is wrong.

We now get back to Abraham and the fulfillment of the promised birth of Isaac. After a brief account of what happened to Ishmael and an argument over a well, we get into the well known story of Abraham almost sacrificing Isaac. Note the parallels between this account and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Next is the death of Sarah and the finding of a wife for Isaac. Note how Abraham wanted to make sure that Isaac had a wife from amongst his people, not from the Canaanites. There are several cases in the Bible where someone marries someone from one of the surrounding nations and is led astray.

Next we get into the sons of Isaac: the twins, Esau and Jacob. There is the stealing of the birthright and the blessing. We also see the continuation of the promise given to Abraham. God promises Isaac in 26:1-5 that his descendants will be many and that they will be given the lands that Isaac was currently a sojourner in. And once again, we see the promise of the coming Savior: "In your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."

After stealing Esau's blessing, Jacob runs away and ends up marrying Leah and Rachel. Between them and their two servants, the heads of the 12 tribes of Israel are born. Once again we see God opening a barren womb (the ultimate example of this is Mary giving birth to Jesus).

Next we see Jacob (one who grasps the heel or deceiver) getting renamed Israel (He strives with God) and the reunion of Jacob and Esau. We then end this week with one more reiteration of the promise and the death of Rachel and Isaac.

Questions and Answers

Were Adam and Eve created on Day 6? How do Genesis 1 and 2 relate?

The creation of man is found in Genesis 1:26. This would be the sixth day (the section ends with 1:31 – and there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day). The confusion comes when you get to Genesis 2. It appears that Genesis 2 is another creation account. However, Genesis 2 is simply a more detailed account of Day 6. We like things to be in chronological order, but that's not how a lot of Hebrew writings work. This comes up in the Gospels. They are largely written thematically, not chronologically, which can get people confused when they try to match up events from the different Gospels. We also have seen this already in Genesis 1. Genesis 1:1 says that God created the heavens and the earth. The remaining verses are a detailed account of how that statement is accomplished.

Anytime in Genesis you see a variation of the phrase "These are the generations" or "this is the account" you see a shift in the narrative and usually an expounding of a genealogy. So Genesis 2:4 is the generation when heaven and earth were created, which would be the creation of Adam and Eve. Later is the generation of Adam, then the generation of Noah, then the generations of Noah's son's, etc. So Genesis 2 is a shift in the narrative from the general account of creation to the specific account of the creation of Man and Woman.

Why did Cain kill Abel?

In one word: jealousy. Cain was jealous that Abel's offering was accepted and his wasn't. Instead of changing his ways and offering something better he decides to kill his brother.

Which brings up the questions: "why wasn't Cain's offering acceptable?" There are two possible answers that play into this. The first is that Cain's offering was from the ground, which was cursed. We read about the cursing of the ground just before this account, so it is probably connected. We also see right after the cursing of the ground that God sacrificed the first animal to make garments of skin for Adam and Eve. A sacrifice is usually connected to the shedding of blood. There is also the sense in the text that Abel gave the best (the firstborns and the fat portions) but Cain did not.

Random Observations

Adam sinned against God by not obeying God's command to watch over creation. Adam should have told Eve not to eat the fruit.

Noah had siblings. We know nothing about them. It is possible they helped build the Ark and died before the flood or they could have been among those that died in the flood. (Genesis 5:30)

Based on the genealogies, it is possible that Noah's father or grandfather could have met Adam. Noah's son Shem was still alive in the time of Abraham and Isaac.

The wind that dries creation after the flood is the same spirit that hovered over the waters in Genesis 1

Abram's 318 men were mimicked by council of Nicea. It is said that there was 318 bishops and they noted this, too

Gen 15:4 is the first time "the word of the Lord" came to someone.

After Noah's sin he gives blessing and curses