May you come to understand the magnitude of easter

*“Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”*

 John 12:15

The apostle John here is quoting the prophet Zechariah. There are many prophecies of Jesus coming in great power and glory; coming as a warrior and violently establishing His Kingdom here on earth. And that day will come.

But Zachariah saw the Saviour coming in peace. That is the significance of a king riding on a donkey instead of a horse.

John points out the fulfillment of this prophecy when Jesus enters Jerusalem shortly before His crucifixion. Jesus came to earth the first time to begin His Kingdom and to save His people. While the Jews were anxious to have their conquering king arrive, they were not ready for that event. Their hearts were too hard and they would have been swept away with the rest of the evildoers.

Many of us now await the coming of King Jesus to establish His reign here on earth. But we must ask ourselves, “Are we ready?” The answer is important because it is a difference in where we spend eternity. Jesus asks, “*Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?*” (Luke 6:46) The evidence of our being ready for Jesus to come back is that we do the things He told us to do.

Following Christ is active, not passive. Do what He says; follow His commands. Then we know we will be ready to receive Him on that glorious day.

In Christ’s love

John

 4-10-22

Genesis 4:25-26, 5:1-32

I think we are all aware that the account of Noah and the destruction of just about every living thing is coming up soon in our study. Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden and all of mankind became sinners. In chapter 3 verse 15, God gives a promise and a prophecy; and we in the New Testament age can understand that God spoke of two spiritual lines. They are the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman.

Spiritually speaking, the seed of the serpent are those who choose to reject God and follow the desires of the devil. They are often referred to as his children. The seed of the woman are those who have faith in God and choose to follow Him; specifically, through Jesus Christ. These are children of God. There is also a physical element to these seeds. The seed of the serpent is satan himself, who is very real and powerful and prince of this world. He is not just an idea or a force. The seed of the woman is Jesus. He is the one who struck the death blow to satan; the one who bruised him on the head.

Genesis chapter 4 gives us a view of the spiritual line of the serpent and its effects in the physical world. This is the line of Cain. Cain began by having a heart that was not right with God. Instead of desiring to have a right heart, Cain chose to follow his spiritual father, the devil. In John 8:44, Jesus makes it plain that satan is a liar and a murderer. Cain followed after his spiritual father by murdering his brother Abel and then lying about it.

Cain’s genealogy continues showing that even the Godless are able to do good things, but their focus is not on their Creator. God is not mentioned in the genealogy of Cain. The climax of Cain’s line is Lamech. Lamech is the seventh generation from Adam and he is a demonstration of how far mankind has fallen. He violates God’s creation ordinance by taking two wives, he commits murder, and then with no remorse, proclaims a bloodthirsty vengeance. Lamech claims for himself vengeance seventy-seven-fold.

What a difference from the teaching of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Jesus told Peter that he must be willing to forgive seventy times seven times. Jesus taught us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. Here is a stark difference between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman.

It is easy to see the difference, but we must not stop there. Each of us who claim to be Christian, who claim to be the spiritual seed of the woman, needs to be living that way. The Pharisees claimed to be living as children of God and made great pretense for show; but Jesus called them out as children of the devil because the way they lived their lives betrayed their true heart. It is so easy to be a Pharisee. To act the part on the outside while evil smolders in our heart. The Bible teaches us that all of us stand before God guilty of far more evil than anyone could have done to us. As followers of Christ, we must do the hard work of pulling the thorns and thistles that grow in the garden of our hearts, so that the fruit of the Spirit may flourish.

Much to our relief, after the mayhem of the line of Cain, comes the Godly line of Seth. Now, we need to make sure we understand that phrase “the Godly line of Seth.” First, it does not mean that everyone in the line of descent from Seth was sinless or perfect or righteous. In fact, when we read the accounts of the kings of Judah who were in this line, we see that a number of them were children of satan.

What it does mean is that this is the line God chose to watch over and protect, so that it would be the fulfillment of His prophecy in Genesis 3:15; it would bring about the promise to Abraham that through him all nations would be blessed; it would bring about the promise to David that there would be an eternal descendant of his on the throne. This very particular Godly line of Seth ended with the birth of Jesus; the birth of God the Son in flesh.

Eve gave birth to Seth and she said, “*God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.*” This statement is from Eve’s perspective. The really good news is that she is glorifying God and giving Him the credit for this child. A very good start to the line of Seth. So often, we read these stories without thinking about the ones in the story. These are real people. Eve was a mom. She had every bit the care and compassion for her children that any mom does today.

Eve had the heartbreak of losing a son to death. She had the further heartbreak of another son being a remorseless murderer. This surely weighed on her heart. But now the Lord has given her some comfort in the gift of another son. How beautiful is our Lord, who will comfort one mother while providing for the redemption of the world.

God’s perspective was a little different. We mentioned some time ago that God was not taken by surprise with the death of Abel. It is not that God had plans for the line of Abel and then had to start over with Seth. God had picked out Seth from before time began and protected the purity of that line until Jesus was born.

The next man in this line is Enosh. And verse 26 tells us, “*Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord.*” The phrase “*to call upon the name of the LORD*” means to worship Him. Worshiping God did not just start with Moses and Israel. Surely Adam and Eve worshiped their Creator while in the garden paradise. Cain and Abel brought offerings to God in worship and they would have learned that from their mom and dad.

Of course, Abel could no longer offer worship to God once he had been killed and Cain turned away from God and no longer worshiped Him. It is hard to tell what Adam and Eve went through after the death of their son. Perhaps their worship continued or perhaps they were too grief-stricken. There is a good chance that they had other children before they had Seth and certainly did after he was born. Seth was 105 years old when he had Enosh. He, too, probably had other children before that and more after.

The point being that worship of God became standard for many; certainly not for all or even most, but for many. Adam and Eve would have worshiped and passed that on to all their children. Seth passed it on to Enosh. Other members of the different lines could also have worshiped God. Each would have to decide whether to be followers of the devil or of God. Although many throughout the next ten generations may have followed God, apparently, by the time it got to Noah there was only one.

We must remember that human knowledge of God would have been passed down from the beginning and there were some who chose to follow Him even though they may not have been descended from Abraham or even in the line of Israel. Job, his three friends, and Elihu all worshiped God before Abraham was born and were of different nationalities. Abraham met up with Melchizedek who was a priest of Yahweh and not of Abrahams line. Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, was a priest, probably of God, and also a Midianite. Worship of the true God would have been known from the beginning and passed down by any who were faithful.

The beginning of chapter 5 reiterates some very important facts. God created man, He made mankind male and female, and they were created in God’s image; in His likeness. Furthermore, God blessed people so that they would be fruitful. The genealogy of Cain was very direct in order to get to Lamech and show how quickly mankind had gone downhill. But in the lineage of Seth, not only is the line that leads to Jesus carefully kept, but it continually mentions that they each had “*other sons and daughters*”. The blessing of God still applied even after the fall.

But as we read through the genealogy, in addition to the blessing of fruitfulness, there is the constant reminder of the consequence of disobedience. Over and again, we read, “*and he died*.” God is faithful and He granted His people long life and children, but mankind’s unfaithfulness still leads to death. Many times, we learn in the Bible of how God is always faithful, even when people are not. How fortunate for us that our God is faithful and ordained from the beginning a way for us to come back to Him.

Close to the middle of this genealogy of Seth, God slips in a reason for hope. He gives a demonstration that there is more than simply the life we live here on earth. He also gives us a peek into our future. The man Enoch is born the seventh generation of Adam. In fact, Adam would have still been alive when Enoch was born. We must keep in mind that this is not the same Enoch that we read about in the line of Cain; the Enoch that was Cain’s son.

There is a very obvious difference for Enoch in the genealogical account: it doesn’t say “*and he died*”. Instead, we are told, “*Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him*.” The Bible means what it says: Enoch didn’t die; God took him alive into heaven.

The phrase “*walked with God*” gives the idea that Enoch was very close to God. He lived his life attempting to please God, worshiping Him, and being obedient to Him. Enoch was a spiritual seed of the woman. Hebrews 11:5 makes plain how Enoch was pleasing to God. *By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.* A theme throughout the Bible is that salvation is by faith. Faith is what pleases God. Enoch believed in God, had faith, and because of this he was pleasing to God.

We learn just a little more about Enoch in Jude 14 and 15. Jude warns of those who are satan’s children and says, ‘*It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”*’ So, Enoch was also gifted by God as a prophet and he would have been warning all the Godless ones of what was coming.

And what does Enoch have to show us about our future? First, Enoch is a picture of the rapture. At some point, God is going to call the living followers of Jesus Christ to Himself and they will not taste death. Next, in his prophecy we see a picture of the second coming of Jesus Christ when He comes with a great army of His people and conquers the antichrist, the false prophet, and all their followers.

I want to point out that while Enoch was faithful and pleasing to God, he was not perfect. Enoch was a human-being and he was born under the sin of Adam. Because of his faith, the blood of Christ would have acted retroactively to cleanse him. There are certainly others in the Bible who were pleasing to God such as Noah and Job and Daniel whom God did not take up. He had other purposes for them.

God shows us the stark difference between Enoch, the seventh in the line of Seth, and Lamech, the seventh in the line of Cain.

Enoch’s son in this line was Methuselah. We’re all familiar with Methuselah as the oldest man in the Bible. He lived 969 years; 31 years short of a millennium. It is interesting to note that his son in this line, Lamech, only lived 777 years; he died before his father. Methuselah would have experienced the loss of a son. That is something to keep in mind with Biblical genealogies, these were real people who lived real lives. They experienced the same types of joys and heartaches that we do. And one day, we’ll get to meet some of them.

Methuselah’s son was named Lamech, and again, what a difference between him and the Lamech in the line of Cain. Cain’s Lamech proclaimed vengeance and violence. This Lamech, in the line of Seth, fathers Noah, and prophesize words of hope for all mankind. “*This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the Lord has cursed*.”

Prayer

Thank You Lord, because you have given us rest from our labors. In Jesus Christ, we cease our work of trying to obtain salvation, and rest solely in Him. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. And He strengthens us to carry the burdens of this life, that we may happily receive the eternal weight of glory that is His.

It is truly our desire, to be spiritually descended from the seed of the woman. How grateful we are to You, O Lord, that by Your Holy Spirit we have received the faith necessary to believe. By His strength, we pray that our faith grows such that all our works may be pleasing to You.

We confess that many times we fail You; the lusts of our flesh and the lure of the world are too much for us and we fall victim to satan’s traps. We praise You for the precious shed blood of Jesus which cleanses us from the stain of sin and keeps us in Your favor and presence.

And we pray these things in that powerful name

Amen