

**Genesis**  
**St. Jerome Adult Bible Study**  
**Lesson 2 – Answers**  
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1. After considering the creation stories in Genesis, I am even more convinced of God's saving grace and love for us. Even though He expelled Adam and Eve from the garden, He still cared for them by clothing them. Even more, I reflect on the phrase in the Lord's Prayer, "...lead us not into temptation..." which is exactly what God did for them by removing them from the temptation of the forbidden fruit.

2. Why Abel's offering to God was more acceptable than Cain's seems to me irrelevant. We mortals will never understand God's reasoning. What is important is that God gave Cain a way to atone or repent and it was Cain who refused God's redemption, not God who condemned Cain.

3. The story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11 – 32) is a close parallel to the story of Cain and Abel in that the older brother was jealous of the younger because of what he perceived as an unequal treatment from his father. Their father, in response, tells the older son that he will have everything that the father has – very similar to what God says to Cain:

“<sup>6</sup>So the Lord said to Cain: “Why are you so resentful and crestfallen? <sup>7</sup>If you do well, you can hold up your head; but if not, sin is a demon lurking at the door: his urge is toward you, yet you can be his master.”

4.a. Cain asks, “Am I my brother's keeper?” Indeed, that question has been asked at one time or another, in one way or another, by nearly every human since. The fact is, however, that we are responsible for the care of our brothers and sisters in this life and, while we might have different opinions on how to approach that obligation, we must try to save them from physical and spiritual harm – especially the poor and the helpless people who need more than most. In fact, Jesus said that we must love our neighbors, our enemies, and especially the least of our brothers.

4.b. As a lay minister of the Church, charged with attending to the needs of God's people, I have found that I receive far more help than I provide. I have found that people, especially those who have deep-seated problems, have a sort of insight or wisdom which they share with me and which edifies me in ways I could never have predicted. For example, when planning funerals for the loved one of our parishioners, I have often been blessed by the strength and by the weaknesses of the mourners.

5. Jesus teaches that whoever is angry with his brother is a sinner (Mt 5:21 – 24) and He seems to equate the sin of anger with the sin of murder. Jesus says that we must be reconciled with whomever we have a disagreement:

<sup>21</sup>“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup>But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna. <sup>23</sup>Therefore, if you bring your gift to the

altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

In Genesis 4:6, God tells Cain,

<sup>6</sup>“So the Lord said to Cain: “Why are you so resentful and crestfallen?

<sup>7</sup>If you do well, you can hold up your head; but if not, sin is a demon lurking at the door: his urge is toward you, yet you can be his master.”

Murder, then, is a grievous sin which grows from anger.

6. Just as God cared for Adam and Eve after He expelled them from the garden, He protected Cain from being killed by placing some sort of sign on him that warned off possible enemies. Even if God punishes those who sin, He still wishes to save them.

7. The trades taken up by the descendants of Cain were those that were instrumental to the building of civilization. The trades included tending livestock, making music, and metalworkers.

8. In Genesis 4:26, the author says, “At that time [at the birth of subsequent children of Adam and Eve] people began to invoke the LORD by name.” However, it wasn’t until the time of Moses’ encounter with God in Exodus 3 (“<sup>13</sup>“But,” said Moses to God, “when I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ if they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what am I to tell them?” <sup>14</sup>God replied, “I am who am.”) that the name of God became known. Whoever the author was, Genesis 4:26 is clearly an anachronism from the body of teachings that had been handed down orally prior to the actual writing.

It is interesting that orthodox Jews will not use God’s name, YHWH, because to name something or someone is to attempt to exert control which, of course, cannot be done with God.

9. The list of Sumerian Kings is of special interest to the biblical archaeological community, particularly because of its antediluvian (pre-flood) portion. The list of pre-flood kings is interesting for two reasons. First, because it mentions an antediluvian civilization and a cataclysmic deluge, and second, because the pre-flood kings have really long life-spans (as is evidenced by their really long reigns). After the flood, the life-spans drop dramatically but remain inordinately long for a time. The length of monarchial reigns gradually decreases until they reflect ordinary life-spans. This parallels the biblical account somewhat, except that the life-spans represented in the Sumerian King List are a lot longer than those in the biblical account. The average reign of the antediluvian king in the Sumerian King List was 30,150 years. The average life-span of the biblical antediluvian patriarch recorded in Genesis was 858 years (nowhere near as long but still inordinately long). Dr. Raul Lopez believes that the information contained in the antediluvian portion of the Sumerian King List may have originated with the Semitic “Noah’s Flood” tradition and thus supports the Genesis account. He believes that the gross discrepancies in the ages can be accounted for quite simply by a major difference between the Semitic numbering system and the Sumerian’s, and the fact that both civilizations used the same symbols to express numbers.

Alulim reigned 28,000 years; Alingar reigned 36,000 years; En-men-lu-ana reigned 43,200 years; En-men-gal-ana reigned 28,800 years; Dumuzid the shepherd reigned 36,000 years.

10. The descendants of Seth (Genesis 5:3 – 32) include Enoch. Enoch was very special because he was taken up by God while still living, a privilege extended only to one other man, Elijah. Genesis 5:23 – 24 - <sup>23</sup>*The whole lifetime of Enoch was three hundred and sixty-five years.* <sup>24</sup>*Then Enoch walked with God, and he was no longer here, for God took him.*”

One should also note other references to Enoch in the scriptures:

*Sirach 44:16 - <sup>16</sup>(ENOCH walked with the Lord and was taken up, that succeeding generations might learn by his example.)*

*Sirach 49:14 - <sup>14</sup> Few on earth have been made the equal of ENOCH, for he was taken up bodily.*

*Hebrews 11:5 - <sup>5</sup>By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and “he was found no more because God had taken him.” Before he was taken up, he was attested to have pleased God.*

11.a. I am unable to trace my family tree back before my father or before my maternal grandparents.

11.b. I must confess that I have very little interest, if any at all, in genealogy. I am more interested in trying to be the best version of myself regardless of what genes are in my makeup.

12. The story of the “sons of God” having relations with human women who bore the Nephilim seems a strange insertion in Genesis 6:1 – 4 which raises many questions about who and what they were. However, the story serves to further explain how God saw corruption and lawlessness on the earth and why He wanted to destroy all living creatures.

13. After God flooded the known world, destroying all living creatures except for those on Noah’s Ark (one must presume that fishes survived), the world was once again like the chaos from which God created life – Noah becomes a new Adam and God again brings life from the waters.

14. One must compare the separate stories of the flood and understand that it is not the details that are important but the message that God is in control of everything, has given us a covenant, and continues His creation.

Genesis 6:19 – 20 (P source) <sup>19</sup>Of all other living creatures you shall bring two into the ark, one male and one female, that you may keep them alive with you. <sup>20</sup>Of all kinds of birds, of all kinds of beasts, and of all kinds of creeping things, two of each shall come into the ark with you, to stay alive.

Genesis 7:2 – 3 (J source) <sup>2</sup>Of every clean animal, take with you seven pairs, a male and its mate; and of the unclean animals, one pair, a male and its mate; <sup>3</sup>likewise, of every clean bird of the air, seven pairs, a male and a female, and of all the unclean birds, one pair, a male and a female. Thus you will keep their issue alive over all the earth.

In subsequent passages, The J source has the flood lasting 40 days and nights while P says that the flood lasted 360 days.

15. “Remembering” by God means to be placed in His loving care. By “re-mem-bering” Noah, he brought all creation into a new beginning with a covenant from the Creator.

16. Before the flood, God saw that humanity had become evil and had turned away from Him without possibility of redemption. Although mankind remains sinful after the flood, Noah’s worship and his obedience to God, apparently caused God to see the potential of human souls and he promised to destroy them no more.

17.a. Until God revoked the principle through the prophets (Jeremiah 31:29 – 30 and Ezekiel 18:1 – 4), sons were punished for the sins committed by their father down to the third and fourth generation:

Exodus 20: 5 – 6 - “For I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their fathers’ wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; <sup>6</sup>but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation, on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

Numbers 14:18 - <sup>18c</sup>The Lord is slow to anger and rich in kindness, forgiving wickedness and crime; yet not declaring the guilty guiltless, but punishing children to the third and fourth generation for their fathers’ wickedness.’

Thus, Canaan, the son of Ham and father of the Canaanites, was punished for Ham’s sin of dishonoring his father Noah.

17.b. The Israelites (descendants of Shem) believed that the Canaanites were cursed because of Ham’s sin and were, therefore unworthy of life. One wonders if this ancient cultural attitude was the beginning of strife in the Near East.

18. The north and west of the Fertile Crescent was settled by the descendants of Japheth. The Canaanites settled around the Red Sea, in Canaan, and in north Africa. Shem’s descendants (later to be the Israelites) settled the Arabian Peninsula and parts of the Fertile Crescent.