



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Genesis 4:1 – 8:19

"The Age of Conscience"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer removed from audio]

[Message] Now, for one or two of you who are here tonight for the first time, we are studying "God's Plan for the Ages." And so, we are looking at the Bible in synthetic fashion. That is, we are looking at the major teaching of the Bible and overlooking, here and there, some of the more minor aspects of its teaching. Now, we have been considering, specifically, the first age or dispensation in God's word, and we have called it the "Age of Innocence," which begins in Genesis 1:26 and ends in Genesis 3:24. The Bible is structured in accordance with the ages, and during these periods of time God has given men certain revelation and they respond to this revelation in a certain way. And in every case we shall see a failure, because man is sinful and God necessarily must execute judgment. But in the midst of his execution of judgment, he promises redemption through a redeemer we believe to be the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall bear the judgment that men should bear and make it possible for men to go free.

We have seen in the first age that God placed man in the Garden of Eden in an ideal environment, gave him one simple command and that command was not to eat of

the fruit of the tree which was in the midst of the Garden of Eden. And the prohibition was added, "For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shall surely die." We know that Eve took of the forbidden fruit, gave to Adam, they sinned, and thus became sinners, and came under God's judgment. As a result of this, in Genesis chapter 3, judgment is pronounced upon the serpent who was the instigator of Adam and Eve's sin, upon Adam, and upon Eve. But at the same time a promise was given of a Redeemer to come who would be the seed of the woman. This we saw a reference ultimately to the Lord Jesus Christ who alone, by way of the virgin birth, was the seed of the woman. At the same time we also saw that God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins, a visible pictorial means of demonstrating the way of approach to him was through sacrifice, through the shedding of the blood of animals, and by means of substitution. The fig leaves which they had made were insufficient for covering. The skins, which were given by God, were sufficient covering.

And we saw at the end of chapter 3 in Genesis, verse 23 and 24, that God drove man and the woman, Adam and Eve, out of the Garden of Eden. Notice the 23rd and 24th verses. "Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Now, apparently the reason that God gave the flaming sword to keep Adam and Eve and others from the way of the tree of life, apparently the reason for this was that if they should eat of the tree of life in their state of separation from God, they would thus prolong their sinful condition of separation into an eternal separation. So this was a measure of grace, as well as a measure of judgment in the sense that they were turned out of the Garden of Eden. It is said that a very ignorant country preacher, when he preached on this particular section, added his own comments. And he said, "Now, you know, in the years after, whenever Adam went out with his sons anywhere near the Garden of Eden, and as they passed by, and they saw the flaming sword which turned

every way to keep the way of the tree of life, and they saw that they could not get back in, it is said that Adam used to say to his sons as they passed, 'Now take a good look in there boys, there's where your ma eat us out of house and home.'" [Laughter] Now, I don't know that that is really true. I somewhat doubt that that is; it doesn't sound like biblical language to me to start with. At any rate, that is an apocryphal story.

Now tonight we're going to look at the second age or dispensation, which begins in chapter 4, verse 1 and goes through chapter 8 and verse 19. Now, you can see that Adam and Eve, having sinned in the Garden of Eden, and having lost their place and position before God, might well have said something like this. "Now Lord, we sinned because we did not know. If we had known the difference between good and evil and the consequences thereof we never would have sinned. So if we just had known that would be sufficient." And men frequently, you know, say the same thing today. "If we just had enough knowledge, if our education is right, then we do not sin." This, of course, is obviously an untruth, but nevertheless men say it.

So in the dispensation or age of conscience which follows, beginning with Genesis chapter 4, verse 1, man is possessed of the knowledge of good and evil. He has a conscience, and so in this age he enters it with this faculty. The test then becomes, with conscience, guided by his conscience, will man choose to do good and approach God by means of sacrifice, as the example of the sacrifice by God indicated. Man possessed of conscience, will he be guided by his conscience? Will he do good and approach God by means of sacrifice? In each one of the ages, remember, we have a test, we have a response, we have a judgment, and the revelation of the promise of God in redemption. So the test, will man approach God guided by his conscience, approach him by way of sacrifice?

Now, let's begin reading in Genesis chapter 4, and read first Genesis 4, verses 1 through 7. "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain." Cain means acquisition. It comes from the Hebrew word *qayin*, which means "to possess."

"And said, I have gotten a man from the LORD." Now, it's quite possible to render this in the Hebrew text, "with the Lord," that is, "with the help of the Lord." And it's quite possible that Eve believed that Cain was the promised seed that was offered in Genesis chapter 3, in verse 15. And so, it may well be that this is what Moses means when she says, "I have gotten a man with the Lord," that she believed that Cain was the promised seed through whom the serpent's seed would be overcome. We cannot be certain of that, for the Hebrew text is ambiguous at this point.

"And she again bare his brother Abel (Abel means vanity.). And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. (I want you to notice this very carefully, this is an important incident in the Bible. It is alluded to several times in the New Testament.) And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. (Or perhaps since the word for sin and sin offering is the same in Hebrew, "a sin offering lieth at the door,") And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Now, let's look at this incident, which reveals so much, and illustrates that right at the beginning that man fails to approach God in the way that he should. And this is illustrated particularly in Cain, who ultimately will destroy Abel. Cain and Abel were brothers; they had the same nature, the same knowledge, the same advantages, the same environment. It is quite obvious from this that the reason that God accepted Abel's

offering and did not accept Cain's offering does not lie in any such thing as that. Now, notice Cain's offering that he brought. He "brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD."

The three things that Cain's offering reveals. In the first place, it reveals that he had religion, but yet he did not have the new birth. He had religion because he brought an offering. The very fact that he knew that he must approach God by means of an offering indicates that he was a religious man, but religion is not enough, you see. Now, we ought to know that, but God has to impress it upon us constantly. He brought his offering, but it was an offering of the fruit of the ground. Now, we have to interpret the Book of Genesis not only from the standpoint of Genesis, but from the standpoint of the revelation of the word of God as a whole. But let me say at this point that this reveals that he had religion, but he did not have a new nature. He had not come to know God in such a way that he was born again. He had religion without regeneration.

Furthermore, you will notice from this that Cain had a belief in the efficacy of works, for his offering is an offering which is the result of his own works. He was a tiller of the ground, and he brought of the fruit of the ground. This was something that he was responsible for. And so Cain, in his offering, reveals that he believes in works as a means of acceptance before God. The third thing is that this is plain disobedience. Now, I gather this from several sources. In the first place, it is stated that God was wroth with Cain and his offering. Now, this is evidence in a negative way that God had told him that this kind of offering was not acceptable. He was going against the plain teaching of God, because God was angry when he brought this offering. That in itself would tell us that it was wrong. It was disobedience. We might gather that, because in the pictorial lesson of Genesis 3:21, "Unto Adam and also unto his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them." No doubt that at that time God had explained to them that the way of approach to God, to himself, would be by sacrifice.

And so when Cain brought this offering of the fruit of the ground he had not only been told of God that this was wrong, but had been instructed in a visible way through this experience in Genesis 1. But we don't have to look only at Genesis in this respect. The Bible has some other things to say about it, particularly in the New Testament. So turn with me to Hebrews chapter 11, this is page 1301 in the Scofield Edition of the King James Version, the Epistle to the Hebrews chapter 11, and verse 4. This is the New Testament commentary on this Old Testament passage. Now, be sure to turn to this passage, it is very important, Hebrews 11:4. Remember that's near the end of the New Testament. Use your table of contents if necessary. You find it for yourself. Good. Hebrews 11, verse 4. Now, verse 4, notice it carefully now, "By faith," now this is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews expounding the text in Genesis. "By faith," now wait just a minute, "By faith Abel offered unto God." This means by belief. Faith is belief in some definite statement of God.

Just keep your finger in this passage, don't turn away from it. Don't lose it, you might not find it again. And turn back to Romans, Romans chapter 10. Keep your hand there; we're going to look back at Hebrews 11:4 in just a moment; Romans 10, verse 17, Romans 10, page 1204; Romans 10, verse 17. Now notice it, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." How does faith come? Faith comes by hearing the word of God. Mr. Moody, you know, used to say, "For many, many years I prayed, 'O God, give me faith.' And then," he said, "I read in this text, 'Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.' And so," he said, "I stopped praying with my closed Bible and opened my Bible and began to study, and faith came." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." You'll always find a Christian who has great faith has a great attachment to the word of God, for faith comes by the word of God.

Now, let's turn back to Hebrews 11. "By faith," what does this tell us? This tells us simply this that God had given Abel instructions regarding the proper offering to bring. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which," that is by

his faith, "By which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his good works." Look at the text. God testified of his church membership, of his religion, of his good character, of his good disposition. What does God testify of? Cain and Abel were both sinners. "God testified of his gifts." God looked at the gift, and he received the giver, because of the gift. Because you see, in this Abel was, in visible way, portraying that which Jesus Christ would do when he suffered upon the cross of Calvary. You see, when we come into the presence of God as Christians, we do not come in our merit. We come in his merit. He is our Lamb of God, and so when we come into the presence of God someday, if we have put our trust in Jesus Christ, we will be saying, not "O Lord, look at me. I have believed in Christ, accept me." But really we will be saying, "O Lord, accept Christ for me. He is my offering. He is my Lamb of God. He was offered by Thee, but he was offered for me." And we shall be accepted because God will testify of our Gift, you see. And so here "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."

So we go back to Genesis chapter 4, and we understand why Cain's offering was not accepted and why Abel's was. Cain's offering was an offering that was an approach to God on the basis of religion without regeneration, on the basis of belief in works, and a revelation of his disobedience to the command to approach God by way of sacrifice. Abel's offering, on the other hand, was an acknowledgement that men are sinners, because he brought an offering to be slain as if to say, "I deserve death." And thus, Abel's offering was a revelation of his acknowledgement of his sinfulness. Jeremiah says, you know, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Whose heart is he talking about? Why, he's talking about the heart of every one of us; every one of us, and not only before we became Christians, but after also.

You often hear preachers say, you know, "Now, I want to speak to you right from my heart." I have a preacher friend in Houston who says, "Well then, if they are going to speak right from their heart, I turn off my hearing aid at that point, because 'the heart is

deceitful above all things and desperately wicked who can know it?" [Laughter] Be careful about speaking from the heart.

Cain's offering is a revelation of his belief in approach by way of works. Abel's is an acknowledgement of his sinfulness. Furthermore, Abel's is a revelation of substitution. You see, he brought the animal which was to stand for him. He deserved death, and so the animal was slain in picture form, because Abel, even though he might not have understood everything involved, Abel's offering was a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Furthermore, in Abel's offering there is a revelation of the fact that approach to God is on the basis of a blood sacrifice. Hebrews chapter 9, in verse 22 says, for "without shedding of blood is no remission." This is why all through the New Testament we have emphasis laid on the fact that Jesus Christ suffered upon a cross that we have been saved through his blood. Because you see, the blood is necessary for the sacrifice, and Abel's offering reflects that.

And finally, Abel's offering is a reflection of his faith, of his trust. He believed the words that God said. He believed that God must be approached by way of sacrifice, and so he accepted this testimony from God when he approached God in that way. And so, God has respect unto his gift. And let me say this that the gospel of Jesus Christ is simply this that Jesus Christ the Son of God died for us upon a cross at Calvary as our Lamb. This is the sacrifice which we could not offer. The blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin. All of these things were just God's way of teaching men to be taught simply and plainly in picture form. All through the years all of these lambs pointed to him. And so, he is our offering, and when God said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," he means nothing more. "Offer him as your offering, just simply acknowledge that you need an offering, that you are a sinner, that you need Jesus Christ, and just simply believe that I have already offered the sacrifice for you and that your only way of approach to me is through him." And the moment we do that, believe that message in our heart, act upon it, just say, "Thank you, Lord, for giving Jesus Christ to

die for me, in the heart." That moment the benefits of this work are imputed to us. God testifies, not of our faith, but testifies of our gift, which we have made ours by faith. In that moment we are given new life. We become Christians, not until then, we have a new nature. This, you see, is the gospel message, good news, wonderful news to know that he is my Lamb, and Jesus Christ is accepted in my place. This is why we say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." That means that we do nothing; we simply acknowledge that that which God has done is sufficient, very simple and very plain isn't it? No joining the church, no praying through, no being baptized, no doing good works, all of these things good in themselves, but they do not obtain eternal life. They follow as results, as issues of this decision.

So right here in the beginning of the age of conscience there is a revelation of the proper approach to God. Now, let's quickly move on from here, because we want to try to get on up through the flood tonight. It seems like it's an impossible task, but we shall be able to do it. When Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden, and their family began to grow, Cain and Abel were born, as we have seen here in Genesis chapter 4. And in the latter part of 4, verses 8 through 15, there is a revelation of how Cain in anger because of his lack of acceptance by God, Cain slew Abel. This is what you might expect. Disobedience, remember sin is not immorality, sin is disobedience, it is unbelief which is issues in rebellion, which leads to immorality. And so Cain, who did not believe the words of God concerning the proper approach to him, was disobedient and brought the offering of the first fruits of the ground, and as a result of his disobedience, then immorality resulted from it. And so he slew his brother Abel. This, you see, is a revelation of how sin works in the human heart. It comes from unbelief, leads to rebellion, and finally to positive immoral acts.

Then Moses describes the Cainitic civilization. I say Cainitic, because it is that which results from Cain. And so we read about it in Genesis 4, verse 16 and following.

Let me read it, 4:16-24, and you will notice that seven men are mentioned and the last man is the worst of them all, Lamech; verse 16 of chapter 4 now.

"And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD (Isn't that revealing? Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, having disobeyed God his outward manner of life conforms to the inner relationship that he has to God. He is separated from God.), and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, (This is not the Enoch that we shall read about in the next chapter. This is another Enoch. Remember, possibly many hundreds of years are compressed in this. In fact, we know that many hundreds of years are compressed in this short paragraph, so there is not necessarily any possibility of confusion. Though Enoch is a good name, and why there should not be two I don't know.) And bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: (And you'll notice these words that end in "e-l." "E-l" is one of the Hebrew words for God. So you can in the early stages of the Cainitic line that there is a recognition of God and his presence and activity among men. You can see it in the names.) And Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor (or a forger perhaps) of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah. And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

Here is the Cainitic civilization. It is progressive but it is apart from God. Manufacture, agriculture, and other forms of industry begin to develop. But the characteristic of the Cainitic civilization is its materialism. It almost seems as if it is 20th century, doesn't it? And it seems as if there is a compensation for the fact that they have lost the presence of God by the artificial. And we seem to find it in this brief account, which has only suggestions, in a sense, of that entire civilization. The outstanding character is the seventh from Cain, Lamech, a man who moves from monogamy to polygamy, and from murder to the praise of murder. For this is exactly what he means "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, I am so important that I shall be avenged seventy and sevenfold," as if to brag over the cruelty which is inherent in him.

Now, having described the Cainitic civilization, Moses moves now, in verse 25 to the description of the civilization that arose out of the birth of Seth. Now, as you study through Genesis you gain the impression that this is the minority. Seth's seed were not as numerous as Cain's and it appears that all the other sons of Adam and Eve are reflected in the Cainitic line, whereas in the Seth line there is a remarkable remnant, so to speak. But let's read it. "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth." Now Seth means "appointed." "For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." So she apparently, you see, saw that Seth would be the promised seed again. Abel was slain and so Seth becomes the other seed. "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD." So here we have the Sethite line, and the characteristic of this line is the fact that there is the direct acknowledgement of God. "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." It appears almost as if there is a reestablishment of true spirituality. But at any rate a clear acknowledgement of God. Just as you might expect, the line of the serpent is much broader and much more numerous than the line of the woman's seed, the spiritual seed, from whom the promised seed would come.

Now let's read on, and you'll notice that the 5th chapter really is a description of this line. And it too will wind up with a description in some detail of the seventh from Adam by way of Seth. Now, the seventh from Adam by way of Cain was Lamech, who of course is the outstanding illustration of the product of sin in the human race. Enoch who walked with God is the seventh from Adam in the line of Seth, and he is a remarkable illustration of a person who does walk with God.

"This is the book of the generations of Adam. (The 5th chapter reads.) In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, and after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters."

How would you have liked to have lived to be eight hundred years old? Well, perhaps we would not have noticed it particularly if we just grew old slower. But if I knew that I faced seven hundred and fifty more years, I would be very discouraged, to tell you the truth, the way that I feel now. At any rate, they lived for a long time. By the way, one of the advantages for living for a long time at this particular time was the preservation of the truth as it passed down from generation to generation. And there was a lot of fellowship, and long fellowship between the ages and generations. "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died." Now watch this little clause, "and he died," which follows after every single individual mentioned here with the exception of the seventh." "And he died," for you see, this illustrates the fact that all men are sinners. What was the judgment? The judgment was spiritual death, which would finally issue in physical death. "Dust thou art, unto dust thou shalt return." And so

we see it here. Even in the line of Seth, which was the line through whom the promise would come, this is still a sinful line.

"And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos: And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died. (There it is again.) And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died. And Cainan lived seventy years and begat Mahalaleel: (This is the fifth.) And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters."

Now, I don't guarantee my pronunciation of these Hebrew names. The only thing I try to do is to pronounce each occurrence the same way after I have pronounced it once. [Laughter]

"And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died. And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared: (By the way, just to comfort you a little. We are not always sure of the pronunciation anyway.) And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Mahalaleel (glad to get rid of him) [Laughter] were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died. And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch."

Now, Enoch is the seventh from Adam. It's interesting that in the New Testament, you remember that in the Book of Jude, the New Testament writers studied the Old Testament very, very closely, and there's a little remark made by the author of Jude. You

need not look it up. I'm just going to read the 14th verse of the Book of Jude. It reads like this, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." So you see they studied these things.

Now, Enoch is the seventh so he corresponds in the line of Seth to Lamech in the line of Cain. Now, let's see what Moses has to say about Enoch. Verse 22, " And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Now, of the other six men it was stated, "and he died, and he died, and he died," "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Paul says. The wages of sin is death, and so men died. But here we have a man who does not die. Instead of "and he died," we read, "He walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." What was the cause of Enoch's success? What was it that led Enoch to walk with God?

Well, let's turn over to the New Testament again, and let's read in that same chapter of Hebrews, chapter 11, for this is something of an Old Testament theology, Hebrews chapter 11, and let's read the 5th and 6th verses. In these verses we have the explanation of Enoch's experience. Verses 5, "By faith Enoch," now wait, "by faith." "By faith," this is the cause of Enoch's experience with God, "By faith he walked with God." What does this mean? He believed God. He just believed the word of God, and so he walked with God. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." Now, that's the explanation of "He walked with God and he was not, for God took him." The write of the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses this as a translation. Now, you know what a translation is, not the kind of translation that takes, for example, the Greek of the New Testament and translates it into English, that is, puts it into English, but a translation such as to be taken from the earth to heaven, moved from one place to another. "A change" is the basic meaning of translation. When you translate the Greek into English you are turning the Greek into English. When you translate a person into the presence of God,

you are taking him from the earth into the presence of God. And this is what is meant, "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. But 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." So the cause of Enoch's success is his belief in the word of God.

I think it's wonderful, you know, that the Bible says that "Enoch walked with God." It is very careful. It does not say that Enoch walked before God. Enoch did not walk behind God. He walked with God. He did not take any steps before God. He did not take any steps behind God. He walked with God. When God stepped, Enoch stepped. And so they, together, lived their lives. That is, Enoch lived his life in the presence of God. By faith he believed God. So the course of his life was a life that was motivated by divine direction, by trust, by keeping step with God. This, of course, is the ideal life, to keep step with God. This is the kind of thing that God expects of Christians. It's possible today in the 20th century to walk with God. Did you know that? If you really, in your heart, desired to walk with God as Enoch walked with God, you may do it today. If you have that much motivation, you may do it today. We have the word of God, we have the presence of God by the Holy Spirit, and it is possible for us today to walk with God. And when we walk with God we fulfill the aim and purpose of our being here. That's why it is so important that we come into right relationship with God, and then begin to walk in the line of the word of God; the culmination of Enoch's life, "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him" into the presence of the Lord.

I love that little story, you know, of the little girl who went to Sunday School, and she came home and her mother said, "What did the Sunday School teacher talk about?" And the little girl said, "Why, the Sunday School teacher talked about Enoch and how he took long walks with God." And the mother, trying to get some more information out of

her, "And what happened?" "Well, Enoch and God used to take long walks. And one day they walked so far, and it was getting dark, and God said to Enoch, 'Enoch, it's getting dark, you better come on home and spend the night with me,'" [Laughter] And so that's what happened. "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." He was translated so that he should not see death. This is the seventh from Adam by way of Seth, a great illustration of the life of faith.

But let's read on, verse 25, "And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech." Now this is another Lamech in the line of Seth. "And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died." Methuselah, the oldest man who ever lived, nine hundred and sixty-nine years. "And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah." Noah means rest. It comes from the word that means rest. "Saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died. And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth." Three sons now, Noah had. They each had a wife, and Noah had a wife names Mrs. Noah, so that there were eight souls in Noah's family, three sons and daughters, and also Noah's wife.

Now, you can see in this next section which begins in chapter 6, the further degeneration of humanity. "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." In other words, "I'm going to bring judgment upon the human race, because of man's developing sin, but I will give them one hundred

and twenty years of grace, a time in which they may opportunity to turn to me." Let me read on, I want to say a few words about the second verse in a moment, but let's read on a few more verses.

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (See it's obvious that man is failing again in the test that God hath given them, to do good and approach him by way of sacrifice. And now we've come down to one family, only one family that is faithful to God in this age of conscience.) And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD 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."

Now, I want to say just a word about this union that is referred to here in verse 2, "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." It is possible that this that is described in Genesis 6:1-7, this marriage between the sons of God and the daughters of men is a reference to the marriage of the descendants of Seth with the descendants of Cain so that we have here an improper union between those who worship the true God in the true way, with those who did not. And thus, by reason of this union of diverse spiritual elements, the sin that is described here resulted. That is a possible interpretation. I do not think that it is the right interpretation. I think that when we read, "The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair," that this is a reference to the angels. "Sons of God" is an Old Testament expression for angel. You will find this, in fact this exact expression in the

Hebrew text only occurs here and in the Book of Job, and in every case the identical expression in the Hebrew text is a reference to angels, so that we have here a strange kind of union. Apparently, now of course we do not know everything about this. It's so strange that most of the time when we read this we wonder how it could possibly be. And yet it is in the word, and I'm going to turn to a New Testament passage in just a moment to confirm what I am saying. Apparently this is a reference to angelic beings cohabiting human bodies. That is, something like demonic possession. For remember, we studied how Satan has his angels, as well as the Lord has his. And so it seems as if we have this type of union. The result is that "There were giants in the earth in those days," as we read in the 4th verse.

Now, I want you to turn with me to the Book of Jude. That's the next to the last book in the Bible, and we're going to read just a couple of verses, Jude verse 6 and verse 7. Now, in verse 6 we read this, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner," with these, understood. That is with these angels. "Giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh." This is a Greek word that means "another of a different kind" not another of the same kind, but another of a different kind. "And going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." We shall, in a little while, come to Genesis chapter 19, where you will remember, in the case of Lot, there was a desire on the part of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah to in some way have relationship with the angelic beings who came to announce the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah to Lot. It is described in Genesis chapter 19, and that is the reference to "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange or different flesh."

So it seems here that sin had reached such a degree of intensity in the human race in Genesis chapter 6 that it became a stench in the nostrils of God, and it was necessary

for him to destroy the human race, with the exception of the one family of Noah and his sons, for he must fulfill his promise of redemption. And so the judgment of the flood is announced. Verse 8, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations." I wonder, you know, by the way, and I should have said this, you might wonder why the angelic beings would attempt this kind of relationship with men. Perhaps, and this is only a perhaps, we cannot be dogmatic in something like this; we don't have enough revelation in the word. Perhaps this was Satan's attempt to prevent the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, because if in some way the humanity of the human nature of the human race might be polluted in this way, we would not have a redeemer who would come from and be the seed of the woman, and thus be the substitute for men. This is only a suggestion. We do not have enough revelation to be certain, but that might explain why we have this attempt on the part of demonic angelic beings to pollute the human race, prevent the incarnation. We know that has been Satan's work down through the years, even up to the time of the cross. He attempted here and here and here to persuade Jesus Christ to turn aside from the cross. Maybe that's why we read that Noah was "perfect in his generations," that is, his line is not affected.

And so God brings the flood upon the human race in order to stop this and make it possible for the incarnation to take place. "Noah was perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." I think these are the only two men in all of the Bible who are said to have walked with God, Noah and Enoch.

"And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

So here then we have man tested in the age of conscience. He is given a simple means of life, approach to God by way of sacrifice, to do good in this respect. Man fails. Sin ultimately fills the whole of the human race. Every imagination of his thoughts are only evil continually. The wickedness of man is great in the earth, and it is necessary for God, because of man's response to him to bring judgment. And again, the judgment is brought, this time a flood. Now, you know the facts of the flood. I hope you've read up through chapter 8. We do not have time to go into it tonight. You know how Noah was given instructions in connection with the ark. By the way, if you read through this, and I hope you did, you will notice that Noah simply followed the directions of God. He did not give God any advice about the construction of the ark. The Lord laid down the provisions for the construction of this great ark, and Noah was to follow them implicitly.

When I was in Houston once a few years back preaching on Noah, I made an observation, which I had heard many preachers make. And that is, based on Hebrews chapter 11, you remember it says, "By faith Noah constructed the ark," and by the ark he convicted the world, because for one hundred and twenty years, you see, Noah constructed the ark. His sons were working with him. And I made this observation, it's a suitable one for a preacher to make, but I'm not sure that it had any basis in the word. And that was this, that Noah's carpenters were very close to the way of salvation, but they did not take advantage of it. And you know it is very possible to be right under the sound of the gospel of Jesus Christ and really respond to it. And so I made quite an application over the fact that it was possible to be near the truth and not lay hold of it for oneself. Well, there was a man in a congregation who was the head of a large warehouse corporation in Houston, Manchester Terminal.

The next day we had lunch together, and he gave me some paper. And I copied out what the paper said, and I have it in my notes. Let me read you what he said. He wrote at the top of the paper, "Were there carpenters other than Noah and his sons, used

in constructing the ark? Assuming that Mrs. Noah and her daughters-in-law did most of the work producing food, Noah and his sons could put in ten or more hours per day for one hundred and twenty years. One hundred and twenty years times four men equals four hundred and eighty man years. Four hundred and eighty man years times three hundred and sixty working days per year equals one hundred and seventy-two thousand eight hundred man days. One hundred and seventy-two thousand eight hundred man days times ten hours a day equals one million seven hundred and twenty-eight thousand man hours." He says, "A tree planted when the keel was laid could have been used for constructing the top deck." And then in parenthesis, "When were termites invented?" [Laughter] And then he had a little tabulation. He said, "Now, I think that perhaps this would have been sufficient to build the ark, one million seven hundred and twenty-eight thousand hours at two dollars and twenty-five cents per hour would amount to three million eight hundred and eighty-eight thousand dollars. And adding seven hundred and seventy-seven thousand six hundred for compensation insurance, retirement, and old age benefits, [Laughter] we have a total cost for the ark of four million, six hundred and sixty-five thousand six hundred dollars for labor only." And so he felt that it was possibly unlikely that any carpenters were employed by Noah in the construction of the ark.

The truth remains, however, that in Noah's day, when he built that ark, there is no evidence that rain existed. There was a mist that rose up, that remember, covered the earth. And the ark must have been a tremendous testimony to people, you know, as they walked by and saw Noah and his sons hammering away, or whatever they did to construct that ark. And they asked Noah, "Now, Noah why are you building this thing." And Noah would say, "Well, God has said that at the end of one hundred and twenty years he's going to destroy the earth." And day after day they were convicted by the ark. Noah was a preacher of righteousness, Peter tells us in his second epistle. So he preached constantly and told them of the judgment that was to come. But nobody believed. Nobody accepted the testimony of Noah. That's why the Lord Jesus said when

he comes again the second time it will be as it was in the days of Noah. "So shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man." The gospel will go forth, but men will not hear it or heed it. And so in this day men did not believe the word of God.

The result was that when the floods came, the ark had been constructed; Noah and his family entered the ark. Remember, they were given instructions, seven clean animals, two unclean. When I was in Britain I read in the British edition of the *Reader's Digest* a little squib that said this, "Why didn't Noah swat those two flies when he had a chance?" [Laughter] Two unclean, seven clean entered the ark, and the ark was the means of preservation from judgment.

Now, it's interesting, isn't it, that in the case of the sin of man in the garden, they were given the promise of the Redeemer who would be the seed of the woman, and God clothed them with coats of sin, so that they escaped eternal judgment. Now, here man has sinned again, man has failed, but God provides a way of escape by means of the ark and it is very interesting to read that 14th verse in the light of the teaching of the Bible as a whole. "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it." Now this is a word which in Hebrew means "to cover" kaphar. "Thou shalt cover it within and without with covering or with pitch."

Now, it's very striking, and I think important that the word for atonement in the Old Testament is the word "covering." It comes from the same word. You see the thing that kept Noah and his family safe in the ark was the pitch, the covering. And the thing that keeps a person safe when divine judgment is finally poured out upon the human race is the atonement of Jesus Christ. And so, here in the ark we have pictured again in visible ways, the only way of escape from divine judgment. It is by means of Jesus Christ who is the ark, you see. And if we are in Christ, when judgment comes, we shall not be disturbed. And so, again we come back to this same truth, that putting trust in Jesus Christ provides eternal life and acceptance with God, a relationship to him, and negatively

a deliverance from divine judgment. Well, this is the end of the second dispensation, the age of conscience. Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we are so grateful to Thee for Thy word. We are so grateful to Thee for the way that Thou hast manifested Thy grace through Jesus Christ. And Lord, we pray as we continue to see how Thou hast, in the word, unfolded Thy plan and purpose that we may come to love Thee more through him and to win others to him. We ask in his name. Amen.

[Johnson] Now, perhaps you have a question or so you would like to ask. Yes sir.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] No, there is not. It is obvious that in the beginning that Cain and Seth, for example, they must have married within their own family. And if it may, you know this is always a problem with some people about where did he get his wife. That's an old question that is always asked. Let me read you something that might be of help. "Cain's wife was one of the daughter's of Adam, or female descendants of Adam mentioned in Genesis 5:4, where he says, 'He begat sons and daughters,' whom Cain knew in the land of Nod, but did not first take there." In other words, he did not first find his wife there, but he knew here there in the land of Nod, that is when he began to have his family. "Such allowances were at first necessary; therefore to speak of the marriage of brother and sister is not correct, because in the very earliest period of mankind, there were still no families at all, only one family. Therefore, neither the particular love of brother and sister. Because you see, if there are no other families, then there is no particular love of brother for sister, or sister for brother, or brother for brother, because there is not that distinction

until different families come into existence, for because all members of the same degree stood in equal nearness to one another, they were also equally distant, just as far as you could be. Therefore the reproach that these original unions were immoral is untenable." By the way, accept this explanation of not, we know that God allowed this in the beginning, and necessarily so.

It's interesting that's always a problem, and frequently the problem of an unbeliever, who wants to find something wrong with the Bible, you see. Because if he can embarrass you in that way, well that indicates that this must not be true.

[Comment from the audience]

[Johnson] It is good to know an explanation, but to realize that in these early days God had to allow this and preserve those who were united in this way from any physical problems as a result from it, or spiritual problems, too. Of course, we do not know their physical make up and many other things of the pre-flood men, and so our ignorance here is a hindrance to our full understanding. Any other questions?

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] Well, I think that you could probably assume that, because he went out and dwelt in the land of Nod, and that word, in the Old Testament so many of these words have a relationship to the truth that is being presented. And since the land of Nod means "wandering" it seems that there is involved in this a far spreading out of the human race. So I would assume that it was some place from Eden.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] Yes, oh yes.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] Perhaps, reflected in the fact that they lived for a longer period of time, too. It's very possible. This is a case where we just don't have all of the facts that we would like to have. But it would be just our curiosity.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] Not that I know of.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] Right, now he, of course, is referred to in the New Testament and referred to as a profane person and of the evil one. There is no further reference.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] No, there's just not stated that there was any rain, the only thing that was stated was that in Genesis chapter 2, and verse 6, "But there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground," chapter 2, verse 6, which implies, but again, I say hesitantly, because since we don't have the positive statement, "There was no rain," we can't be dogmatic. But we can say, at least as far as 2:6 is concerned, there is indication that the way the earth was watered was by this mist.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] They would not know as far as their experience was concerned, no. But of course, God had given him instructions with regard to. It's just like today, we might not understand. We don't know what the Lake of Fire is except from the standpoint of God's word. We have not seen this, and yet this is something that we are called upon to warn men concerning.

[Comment from the audience]

[Johnson] Of his rocker, gone around the bend. [Laughter] They did, just as today when we say that there is coming eternal judgment; they have heard the words of the false prophets so much that they are not willing to believe the revelation of God.

[Comment from audience]

[Johnson] Well, of course, the whole testimony of the word of God from beginning to end is that the world had never understood men who walked by faith. It's just like a man who's marching to a different drum beat. He seems to be out of step, but he's listening to a different sound. And so, the Christian, being a man of the Spirit, moves according to a different nature, and according to different direction, and the world does not understand, never has understood, and never will understand. Jesus Christ, of course, is a supreme example. And of course, the supreme revelation of our sin, for we crucified him. We can take comfort in that; it doesn't help us much day by day as far as men understand this. Any other questions?

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] In 1 Peter chapter 3, you know, it's definitely mentioned, eight souls that was all, just eight. Not a very big church was it? [Laughter] So it was a very humbling thing. You know, Robert Morrison is one of the great missionaries of the modern missionary era. He was called to China back in the early 1800's when China began to open up. He worked for seven years in China, or ten years I've forgotten which, without a single convert. He finally baptized his first convert after either seven or ten years. And after thirty-four years in China, I think he had won twelve people to the Lord, and yet he was the means for the opening up of the continent. Ultimately he gave the Chinese the Bible and so on, and many were won through him, but only just a handful so to speak.

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] I don't know about what happened, of course...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]