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Knowing God Personally

We all know the story of Adam and Eve eating from the wrong tree, which changed everything, and how that choice altered the path of mankind forever. Through the scripture, we can see how men walked with God before and after the fall. From this, there are many important lessons that we can learn. I believe we can explore their history and avoid making the same mistakes for us today.

Soon after the original sin, we learn how Cain murdered his brother Abel. We read about God's conversation with him in Genesis 4:10-13, *"And He said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. 'So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 'When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.' And Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear!'"*

As a consequence of Abel's murder, God banished Cain away from the rest of the family with the promise that there would be no revenge of death towards him. Adam and Eve had many more children, and the Bible focuses on two of the sons moving forward. Cain, the banished, and Seth, the son born after the death of Abel. The contrast between the two lineages is quite striking in that it shows how mankind developed. A few chapters into Genesis show how Cain's family found order through establishing a government and civil leadership. Seth's family went the opposite path by continuing in fellowship with God and following Him personally.

Let's look at Cain first as it says in Genesis 4:16-17, *"Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch."* From these verses, we discover the beginning of government, and it began with Cain. The establishment of a city shows the reliance on men leading others. This is a very human trait that came forth early on. It places a person in control of others, which is how Cain's family lived. His ancestral line was independent of God, and they were the beginning of a secular society of men ruling over other men. This ungodly line showed that humans could develop without being led by God, as they brought forth music, art, farming, and craftsmanship. Yet, they also brought forth fornication, polygamy, and murder. It birthed many men of great renown who became warriors and conquered others. They were the innovators of pleasure, prosperity, and power. This family developed outside God's influence and separated from the rest of Adam and Eve's family.

Then there was Seth, in Genesis 4:25-26, *"And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, 'For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.' And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named*

him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD.” Cain’s family began a city, but Seth’s called on the Lord.

What a contrast the scripture is laying out for us and what a warning it should show us for today. Seth’s family continued to practice the sacrifices and continue their relationship with God. They taught their children to seek God and build a relationship with Him. The Bible calls them the sons of God because they sought after God’s face and followed Him.

Both families grew separately, much like two different countries would, as they developed their own customs, practices, and, most likely, languages. The cursed family formed their traditions without God, with a structure of powerful men ruling others, while the family of Seth continued in relationship with God. This tells us that from the beginning, God’s heart has always been to lead His people personally. He walked in the garden with Adam; He led as the fire by night and cloud by day. And it is still the way He desires us to know Him and walk with Him today.

It is us humans that keep stacking structure between Him and us. It was the people of Israel who demanded a king to lead them, and even after Samuel warned them that a king would demand loyalty and service, they insisted that a man be placed as their leader. It is easier to submit to a system of men’s leadership to be told what to do and when to do it than to develop a relationship where we are responsible to hear and obey God. It is much easier to look to a person to represent God rather than to establish a personal, intimate relationship with Him.

We can see from Genesis 6:1-2, *“Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.”* Here is where we see the mingling of the two families. The sons of God (Seth’s family) married into the daughters of men (Cain’s family). The two separate cultures combined into one, causing a deformed culture to re-emerge as one that led to the judgment and the flood.

After seeing this pattern from Genesis, I am concerned that the modern church has succumbed to the same temptation to merge with the world’s system of leadership. Once again, placing a person as the voice of God rather than hearing God for themselves. There are too many celebrity leaders in our church world right now, and not because of them but because many would rather receive a “word” or a laying on of hands from a man instead of consecrating themselves to God.

We do have important positions that God calls men and women to, and their roles are always to bring the entire body closer to God. The role of all leaders should always be to protect and to hold the standard of God high. To help people develop their own relationship with God but never to allow anyone to put them in the place of God. The church structure of the five-fold callings is essential, but only if we stay pure of the world’s leadership structure.

The church system is to be a holy place and sanctified to help each person discover a personal relationship with their Heavenly Father. The entire body is vital, and each part of that body is necessary as you – you are necessary. God's calling for you will never be found in a system of men's leadership but in your own personal, intimate walk with your Father. Let us all know Him and love Him, for He is our Father who loves us, and let us be the ones who call on the name of the Lord.

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