

Week 3: EARLY WORLD Part 2 Genesis 4 – 11**Week 4 READINGS: Gen 12:15-22, (Optional: Chapters 12-24), CCC-143-147, 154-155**

Objective: Overview to better understand the *Big Picture*; treat it like a preliminary walk through by reading
A - Review the Context and B – Read the Story

1. This section uses **figurative language**; Earth populated by two types of people: those who make attempt to know and serve God and those who go their own way First mention of angels - **Nephilim** were the offspring of the "sons of God" and "daughters of men" before the Deluge, according to Gen 6:1-4
2. John Paul II reference: Crossing the **Threshold of Hope** stated "the root of the fall (of Adam and Eve) was a failure to grasp the *nature* of God's *Fatherhood*; they preferred their way to God's way thus destroying the relationship; go into exile just as Israelites went into exile when preferred their way over God's way – lost **trust in God and became selfish-turning in on self.**
3. Difference between Abel's offering and Cain's offering - Abel offered God his best; Cain saved best for himself. All sacrifice important not for what it is but for what it represents – all good things come from God and heart filled with gratitude is most import.
4. Book of Genesis focused on particular family line; Cain and Seth (third son of Adam and Eve) Seth's descendants known for their character (Enoch, Lamech, Noah, etc.) Cain's descendants are polygamists, violent, vengeful, built on self-serving and conquering others.
- NOTE: Focus on not how long people lived but the shock that people were dying due to sin; Living for a long time is not un-natural but dying IS un-natural; not the way God wanted us to be**
5. Noah is descendant of Seth, but Cain's descendants rule the world; Rather than start over with new Adam and Eve, God saves one righteous man and his family – Noah (Gen 6:19)
6. The Ark is a type of church to come; place of safety in midst of storms of life; note numbers used 7 days of rain (back to creation), 40 days in Ark.
7. **(Second Covenant)** God commissions Noah and his family with same authority as Adam and Eve - rule over creation and be fruitful BUT do not eat meat that still has blood in it and MUST not kill; mankind is made in God's image and every person is precious; Covenant Sign: God's weapon in the sky for all to see – Rainbow); Moved from Adam and Eve as *One Holy Couple* to Noah's family as *One Holy Family*.
8. **God's first punishment was remedial; not about vengeance.** With flood, God demonstrated that the problem lies deep within human nature and affects all of us. Full restoration of ruptured relationship between man and God required something different- New Covenant in Jesus Christ, the Church and baptism was solution- "drown" sinful nature within people, purify them and restore them to new life for God's family which is the Church.
9. **Explanation of Gen 9:20-28** – possible incest; Noah's curse on Ham (Canaan) his family will serve his brothers families; blessings given to Shem and Japheth.
10. **Tower of Babel:** Whole world = same language. People were proud, wanted to be equal to God, lost their identity as children of God; Pentecost was opposite of Babel-brought people together; heard in one's native language.
11. **Significance of Babel:** Trying to be equal to God and "*make a name for ourselves*" in other words "*let's make a dynasty for ourselves*"- not as *family of God* (their identity) but like Adam and Eve, do our own thing. NOTE: One of three promises God made to Abraham was "***I will make your name great***". (Third Covenant)

Choirs of Angels

Seraphim: These are the highest order or choir of angels. They are the angels who are ***attendants or guardians before God's throne***. They praise God, calling, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts". (Isaiah 6:1-7). One of them touched Isaiah's lips with a live coal from the altar, cleansing him from sin. Seraphim have six wings, two cover their faces, two cover their feet, and two are for flying.

Cherubim: Cherubim rank after the seraphim and are the second highest in the nine choirs of angels. They

were closely linked in God's glory. They are manlike in appearance and double-winged and were **guardians of God's glory**. Symbolized God's power and mobility. In the NT, they are alluded to as celestial attendants in the Apocalypse (Rev 4-6). Catholic tradition describes them as angels who have an intimate knowledge of God and continually praise Him.

Thrones: Angels of pure Humility, Peace and Submission. They reside in the area of the cosmos where material form begins to take shape. The lower Choir of Angels needs the Thrones to access God.

Dominions: Angels of Leadership. They regulate the duties of the angels, making known the commands of God.

Virtues: Known as the **Spirits of Motion** and control the elements. They are sometimes referred to as "the shining ones." They govern all nature. They have control over seasons, stars, moon; even the sun is subject to their command. They are also in charge of miracles and provide courage, grace, and valor.

Powers: Warrior Angels against evil defending the cosmos and humans. They are known as potentates. They fight against evil spirits who attempt to wreak chaos through human beings. The chief is said to be either Samael or Cameel, both angels of darkness.

Archangels: Archangels are generally taken to mean "**chief or leading angel**" (Jude 9; 1 Thes 4:16) and are the most frequently mentioned throughout the Bible. They may be of this or other hierarchies as is St. Michael the Archangel, who is a princely Seraph. The Archangels have a unique role as God's messenger to the people at critical times in history and salvation (Tb 12:6, 15; Jn 5:4; Rv 12:7-9) as in The Annunciation and Apocalypse. A feast day celebrating the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael is celebrated throughout the Church Sep 29. A special part of the Byzantine Liturgy invokes the "Cherubic Hymn" which celebrates these archangels and the guardian angels particularly. Of special significance is **St. Michael** as he has been invoked as patron and protector by the Church from the time of the Apostles. The Eastern Rite and many others place him over all the angels, as Prince of the Seraphim. He is described as the "chief of princes" and as the leader of the forces of heaven in their triumph over Satan and his followers. The angel **Gabriel** first appeared in the OT in the prophesies of Daniel, he announced the prophecy of 70 weeks (Dn 9:21-27). He appeared to Zechariah to announce the birth of St. John the Baptist (Lk 1:11). It was also Gabriel which proclaimed the Annunciation of Mary to be the mother of our Lord and Savior. (Lk 1:26) The angel **Raphael** first appeared in the book of Tobit (Tobias) Tb 3:25, 5:5-28, 6-12). He announces, "I am the Angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the throne of God." (Tb 12:15)

Principalities: In the NT Principalities refers to one type of spiritual (metaphysical) being which are now quite hostile to God and human beings. (Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 15:24; Eph 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:10, 15) Along with the principalities are the powers (Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 15:24; Eph 1:21; 1 Pt 3:22; 2 Thes 1:7); and cosmological powers (1 Cor 15:24; Eph 1:21; 3:10; Col 2:15); Dominions (Eph 1:21; Col 1:16) and thrones (Col 1:16). The clarity of the NT witness helps see that these beings were created through Christ and for Him (Col 1:16). Given their hostility to God and humans due to sin, Christ's ultimate rule over them (ibid) expresses the reign of the Lord over all in the cosmos. This is the Lordship of Christ, which reveals God's tremendous salvation in conquering sin and death at the cross, and now takes place in the Church. (Eph 3:10)

Angels: These angels are closest to the material world and human beings. They are the **messengers** who deliver the prayers to God and returns God's answers and other messages to humans. Angels have the capacity to access any and all other Angels at any time. They are the most caring and social to assist those who ask for help. (Guardian Angels?)