

Ron Armstrong • August 23, 2020

The Story: The “Before” Stories

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food ..., and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband ... and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

9 But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

Genesis 3:17 To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it, cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.’”

Genesis 4:2 ... Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. 3 In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. 4 And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

6 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”

8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.” While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Genesis 6:11 Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. 13 So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. 14 So make yourself an ark of cypress wood ...

22 Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

Genesis 7:1 The LORD then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation.

1. Major events help our minds organize life.
 - a. There is life before kids and life after kids.
 - b. Sometimes it’s a national event like 9/11.
2. Most people can tell you “where” they are in the Bible, but they can’t tell you “when” they are.
3. The first big Bible division is the antediluvian period. It means “before the flood.”
4. In this period you have three of the most prominent stories the world has ever heard.
 - a. Adam and Eve are disobedient.
 - b. Cain lets jealousy lead to violence.
 - c. Noah’s family is saved from the flood.

B. Perhaps these stories aren’t as separate as they seem.

1. We usually look at these stories individually, but there is a broader picture to see.
2. Let’s draw the connection of these stories and their resolutions.

Adam/Eve

Cain

Noah/Flood

Problem

Solution

a. Adam and Eve were self-conscious. This makes us think about ourselves too much.

b. Cain was self-centered. This is when we care only about ourselves.

c. Noah’s neighbors were self-willed. “I will do whatever I want, and no one else matters.”

3. Three problems but only one solution: Go do. Go till; go bring; go build. In the end, it always comes back to following God’s directions.

A. We all have “before-and-after” events.