

12.15.24

Genesis

Chapter 4 - God's Grace Misconstrued Leniency is not License (vs. 16-24)

Genesis 4:16-24: Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son. Now to Enoch was born Irad, and Irad became the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael became the father of Methushael, and Methushael became the father of Lamech. Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah. Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister

of Tubal-cain was Naamah. Lamech said to his wives,
“Adah and Zillah,
Listen to my voice,
You wives of Lamech,
Give heed to my speech,
For I have killed a man for wounding me;
And a boy for striking me;
If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.”

We have within this particular passage the genealogy of Cain, which is really about the only place that you're going to read about the genealogy of Cain. After the flood, there will be no genealogy of Cain at all, because we know that only the genealogy of Shem follows through with the flood of Noah during that time. So, as we come into this passage, we realize that it seems like there are a lot more people on the earth than we thought there were going to be. So, I felt like I have to in some way deal with the elephant in the room. Where did all these people come

from? So, let's talk about that. Actually, somebody did a study on this, and it is important to realize that these people are living a long time. Adam lives some 930 years. That's a long time. Methuselah will live the longest, 969 years, but most of them are in kind of their nine hundreds when they pass away, which is telling us that that's a long time. What's also interesting is that it records the different ones having children way into their eight hundreds, so Seth will have a child at 807. So, we realize that within that period of time, the earth can populate quite extensively. To kind of give a parallel to how the earth can populate so rapidly, what we understand according to Genesis 47 is that when the children of Israel went into Egypt, there were just 70 of them. 70. 400 years later, conservatively, we estimate well over 2 million people. That's a pretty rapid growth, and according to the statistics, one feels that the Israelites growth rate at that time was higher than average. It was rated at 2.6%, which was actually causing a lot of worry with the Pharaoh, "These Jews are too many." So, they grew extremely rapidly. If we were to put that number down a little bit and put the number somewhere in the neighborhood of

1.3% growth rate, with the people living as long as they did from Adam to the flood, which would basically be 1,656 years. So, from Adam to the flood during that period of time, they figure at a very low rate of growth with people having children, as long as they were having children, they figure somewhere in the neighborhood of 3.9 billion people would be on the face of the earth by the time of the flood. If in fact they put the percentage up at 1.5% which is extremely lower than the children of Israel; if they were put at 1.5%, they figured that the population at the time of the flood would have been 102 billion people. It's an amazing amount because from what I understand, we're somewhere in the neighborhood of the world right now, 7.9 or 8.2 billion. So, it's possible that there are people on the earth is my point, and what we understand according to Genesis 5, that Adam had other sons and daughters. If you look at Genesis 5:4, it makes reference to this. Now, the ones that were focused on are given to us specifically, but there are clearly other sons and daughters.

So, here we get into an interesting discussion with people marrying their sister, and I oftentimes say, “Well, are you using Cain as a paragon?” Because if you're using Cain as a paragon, then ok, I get it; maybe he shouldn't have been doing that, but Cain has been doing wrong from day one. So, the fact that he's marrying his sister, there's no shock here in the repopulation. It's not till later that we see Seth marrying and by that time the world is populated quite extensively at this point. So, Cain is sinning. We're shocked. No, we're not shocked. Did God have something better for them? I do believe He did. I mean, quite frankly, God could have pulled another wife out of the rib, but the way that Cain is moving as the passage is telling us, is he's just moving on his own desires, and because of that, sin is extending and propagating throughout the world. So, as we come to this passage, hopefully some of those statements will in some way relieve some of the questions that we have as we come to the passage.

As we look into Genesis 4:16 at the very beginning, we see Cain's reaction to what I would say is God's grace. God has been gracious to him. Obviously, Cain is not

getting what he deserves. What Cain has done up to this point is jealousy, envy. His anger towards his brother has caused him to literally hold on to bitterness and ultimately murder his brother. In this state, God begins to counsel with him, and here again, the perception of God's counsel by Cain was something that Cain perceived, perhaps that he could take or leave, and he decided to leave it. Let me just say this, when God speaks, it's not rhetorical, and when God speaks, it's not optional. When God is speaking, it is something that is productive. There's never a moment when God speaks that it's unproductive. So, when man perceives what God says is an optional thing, he does himself harm by virtue of this. So, by the very fact that God gives a wise counsel and is beginning to direct Cain and then Cain rejects that, is showing the heart of man. Scripture reveals to us the goodness of God all the way through the pages. Man somehow comes up with this concept that God is not good, that God is vindictive, that He's evil, that He's brought horrible things on the earth. You didn't read the same Bible I did. But what is interesting to me is in James 1, when it refers to man going through the Old Testament, or more

specifically the Law, it says that it's a mirror. In many respects, your definition of God is not a reflection of who He is; it's a reflection of who you are. So, how you define God is going to come based on how you perceive things, and it reveals the heart. 1 Corinthians 10 tells us that all these things were written for our example, and in many cases that we might not do these things. But you begin to see the reaction of man as God begins to direct him. I mean, even when you consider at the very beginning of this chapter with Cain and Abel giving their offerings, that offering was a free will offering, and how Cain perceived the offering seemed to be in a way that was kind of ritualistic or maybe legalistic in his own mind. It became laborious as he comes to giving his offering before God. Much like the book of Malachi, as they say, "How tiresome it is that we have to come." That's a misperception of what offering is all about, because the offering at this juncture was not for the forgiveness of sins, but was something that man was giving because he was supposed to be thankful for what God has done for him. Nevertheless, it becomes ritualistic and legalistic in the eyes of many people when they begin to do it.

So, why are you giving? People from time to time ask me, “Why do I have to give?” I'm going, “Why are you asking me this question?” Giving is something that you should be doing. God loves a cheerful giver. It's very clear in Scripture what God is looking for, and it is that from the heart that He desires. It is not necessarily the gift. I mean, He doesn't need anything, and if he were hungry, He wouldn't tell you, as the psalmist says. So, it's very clear that we misperceive the very things that God is doing. When He gives us counsel, we misperceive His counsel, and say, “He's just trying to be mean.” But it really is an act of love in which He begins to counsel, and the same thing is true when God gives an admonition to Cain. Cain would clearly perceive it as something that was wrong or bad, or hurtful, or God just being vindictive, but it really is God's warning for the protection of our souls, and for those around us, as well as the actions that might follow by virtue of the things that we do. When God turns to Cain and He says, “What have you done?” What He's wanting Cain to do is reflect upon the actions that he had done. “Think about this, Cain. What are the ramifications of what you've just done?” Cain's not going to do that.

He's not going to have any of that. So, as we go through this, what we're seeing all the way through is misconception. Well, this would be true when God is gracious as well. So, obviously when trials come, when difficulty comes in our life, one of the first things we begin to do is cry, "This is unfair." Of course, part of the ramifications of Cain doing what he did, God begins to become corrective in His admonition, and Cain sees this as a punishment that he just can't bear. What God is doing is not giving him what he deserves; that goes back to Psalm 103:10, right? God doesn't give us what we deserve, but as a father has compassion on his children, it goes on to say. So, it really is God being merciful to us. I mean, quite frankly, if He would have given Cain what he deserved, He would have said, "Ok, you're dead." There wouldn't have been any discussion, but He talks to him, and He goes, "All right, this is what we're going to do. It's going to be really, really hard. In fact, the ground is really not going to yield any fruit for you and you're going to go on a vagabond and you're going to see what it's like to live in a world in which good is withheld from you because this is what you did to your brother. As a

vagabond and a wanderer, you're going to understand what it feels to have disdain and apathy for those around you; a sense of them not caring. Maybe you can learn from this.” Really, hopefully, through the difficulties of our life, we should be learning from these things. Is God giving us what we deserve? Absolutely not.

I think of Matthew 5, as you begin to go through that particular chapter and once again, I think if we're to defend ourselves before God, we'd just stand before God and say, “We're not murderers.” And God says, “Oh yes, you are. You've hated your brother.” So, as Jesus begins to go down this interesting list of hating your brother or even wandering eyes, you've committed adultery which is worthy of death. So, you go through this interesting list in Matthew 5, and you begin to realize just the thoughts that I have are bringing me into the realm of being guilty to the point of really deserving far worse than I've ever gotten. We rationalize and we in some way try to defend ourselves, but the fact of the matter is that we're not getting what we deserve. God is gracious to us. I mean, He lets us continue to breathe. That's an amazing

thought, and one I've oftentimes thought about when people were cursing Christ on the cross; that God was allowing them to breathe as they were cursing Him. So, God is gracious. He's merciful, but man doesn't perceive it as such. So, when he has trials and when he has difficulties come in his life, which oftentimes really are the consequences to the things that we do, it's God teaching them, teaching us not to go that way. We just start crying out, "This is unfair. This isn't right." We begin to grumble and complain.

You read James 5:9, and it's one of the things that James warns the people of during the time of him. He starts off, "Consider it all joy when you encounter various trials..." But in Chapter 5 verse 9, he says,

"Do not complain, brethren, against one another..."

Which is telling us that they we're fighting this knee-jerk reaction to complain when bad things happen. I mean, "Obviously, God is just doing this for no reason, and why would He hurt me? The only thing I did was hate my brother or have wandering eyes or maybe I didn't tell the

truth.” As the passage goes on to say, in Matthew 5. We begin to have ultimately what I would call a pity party.

There's an interesting passage in the Book of Lamentations, if you'll turn there with me. Lamentations 3. It reminds us of what God is doing in the time of grief or sorrow or trials or tribulation. Once again, are we getting what we deserve? Absolutely not. Is God directing? Yes, and that's the thing that we have to see in this, that what is actually being handed out to Cain is remedial. That is to say that God is remedying the problems. He's restoring. It's restorative; reformative. He's reforming. So, we realize that God through all of this is really correcting him. He's not giving him what he deserves. But Lamentations 3 kind of gives a clarity in this.

(Lamentations 3:32) “For if He causes grief,
Then He will have compassion

According to His abundant lovingkindness.

(Lamentations 3:33) For He does not afflict willingly
Or grieve the sons of men.

(Lamentations 3:34) To crush under His feet
All the prisoners of the land,

(Lamentations 3:35) To deprive a man of justice..."

People go, "That's unfair." What, do you think God's depriving you of justice? Do you think that's what He's doing?

"To deprive a man of justice

In the presence of the Most High,

(Lamentations 3:36) To defraud a man in his lawsuit—
Of these things the Lord does not approve.

(Lamentations 3:37) Who is there who speaks and it
comes to pass,

Unless the Lord has commanded it?"

In other words, how do you think these things happen? Do you think they happen by virtue of somebody being detached from the sovereignty of God, and they just spoke a judgment that was unfair to you and that God had nothing to do with it? You really believe that? I mean, in our lives, there is absolutely no such thing as fate or serendipitous moments or chance, because we actually believe that God is orchestrating everything.

Acts 17:28 puts it so perfectly,

“For in Him we live and move and exist...”

In other words, nothing would exist without Him.

(Colossians 1:17) “He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”

In Him, all things remain or endure. “Why is this problem enduring in my life?” In Him, all things remain. So, everything that's happening is happening by His sovereignty.

(Lamentations 3:38) “Is it not from the mouth of the Most High

That both good and ill go forth?”

A simple “yes” or “no” would work.

(Lamentations 3:39) “Why should any living mortal, or any man,

Offer complaint in view of his sins?”

I can just see us standing before God, and we offer a complaint. He goes, “Oh, so you're sinless?” We have no complaint. The very fact that He allows us to continue to exist is an act of His grace. What is extremely interesting within this passage that we're looking at in Genesis 4 is

that Cain now goes in the strength of God is letting him, in his perhaps mind, get away with something. You remember when he cried out and he says, “Ok, all this hardship that You're pointing me to, (i.e. discipline or corrective measures or remedial measures that God was given to him) all these things are too heavy for me to bear.” He says, “And by the way, if somebody sees me and recognizes who I am, they're going to kill me.” And by this time, we believe that the earth was fairly well populated. Well, God in His grace, says, “I'll make sure nobody kills you.” And He puts a mark on him.

Remember, the passage says,

(Genesis 4:15) “So the LORD said to him, “Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.”

And somehow the word got out and somehow God's presence was clear. Now, this is a gracious act once again, because obviously you know “an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth.” We understand what the law is, a life for a life. If somebody kills, they need to go, but God says, “Not

here.” What God was doing was multifaceted. One is, of course, that we're not dealing in the realm of Law yet, and God was being gracious in that sense. It's interesting that Acts 17 says that in the times of ignorance, God was overlooking many of man's sins. That's an interesting phrase, isn't it, “overlooking”? But it's also God being kind and gracious to humanity at this juncture because He is making sure that vengeance and vendettas aren't elevated; that the Law will take care of it so that the individuals won't be their own vindicators. So, He actually is rescuing humanity at this time as well as being gracious to Cain in his ignorance in the sense of no Law. So, as we come to this passage, we see God's grace, once again, going to be misconstrued because of man and who he is. So, he sees God's grace as any kind of leniency, any kind of good has to be a license to do something wrong, and this is the way that Cain begins to take it. The description that we're given is not really a description to follow the lineage of Cain because it actually fundamentally stops in this chapter, but the purpose of it is to show what happens in the mind of somebody whose heart is not right when he is shown mercy and grace.

I'll give you an example of this, and of course the verse that we oftentimes quote dealing with this is found in Isaiah 26. Keep your finger here in Genesis, but in Isaiah 26, you'll see this clearly being spoken of. Of course, verse 26 starts off in Isaiah, God is saying, "I'm your protection." It's very interesting because we're going to see that Cain's going to be building up cities for protection, to guard himself. It's strange, when we have the grace of God, instead of turning to Him and believing Him to be our protection, we turn to our own ways.

(Isaiah 26:1) "In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

"We have a strong city..."

In other words, up to this point, what has really been said is that man is trusting in his own cities, but our city is God. This is why we get that wonderful verse out of this passage,

(Isaiah 26:3) "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace,

Because he trusts in You."

In other words, your trust is in the One who is our city, and that is God.

If you drop on down, it then goes into those who have not waited on Him. Clearly, contrasted with those who have waited for Him eagerly. Verse 8 will make reference to this,

“... Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of our souls.”

(Isaiah 26:9) At night my soul longs for You...”

But it says this about the wicked, in an interesting contrast,

(Isaiah 26:10) “Though the wicked is shown favor, He does not learn righteousness; He deals unjustly in the land of uprightness, And does not perceive the majesty of the LORD.”

Now, the text is actually showing us that man is receiving grace, the favor of God. When he does, he sees it as, obviously, a license to do more unjust acts.

You kind of see this as well, if you look with me in Ecclesiastes, just to kind of give you a couple of examples

of this; which really throughout you see the proclivity of man to act this way. You know God has done something good for you. What do you do? “Now, I'm free to do whatever I want to do.” Ok, so you don't understand why He was gracious.

(Ecclesiastes 8:11) “Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.”

And we blame God for all the mayhem, all the problems that come. It seems to me it's the heart of man because the graciousness of God when He begins to correct us, we complain and we say, “Poor me.” We have this pity party, and when He does good for us, you would think that it would beckon us to do the right thing, and unfortunately, no, no, it's actually a license.

When we were in the book of Galatians, what was interesting to me in particular in Galatians 5, was when Paul was talking about this freedom. I mean, it was for freedom that Christ came to set us free, and we go, “Wow. God granted us freedom.” He granted you freedom to make a choice. He grants you freedom

through Christ. Then, He still has to warn the Christians in this particular passage. In Galatians 5, the warning that he gives them is, “Ok, but don't turn your freedom into this license to do bad because you will devour each other in this.” So, he gives this interesting picture of, “God has been so gracious to give you this freedom that's now in Christ, but you will have a tendency to devour one another, consume one another.” It's like, “Now, I have opportunity to take advantage of people.” And the same thing is true when you look in (Matthew) Chapter 18, when Jesus is dealing with the whole concept of forgiveness, and of course, the statement of Peter, “How many times do I have to forgive? Seven times?” And of course, he feels like he's being magnanimous, and He says, “I tell you seventy times seven” which is actually going to be parallel to the passage that we're looking at today. But in the passage, He gives this interesting parable that reveals that though one was forgiven, he did not receive that sense of forgiveness as an act of charity so as to then pass it on to those that were beholding to him, but he takes it as an opportunity to then whip the other person into shape. So, what you have is somebody

receiving forgiveness, but we in turn then turn that into some kind of oppression and some kind of begrudgement. I mean, why would you take something that is such a wonderful gift such as forgiveness and misuse it, misperceive it in this way? God gives us patience.

Let me show you something in Romans 2. God gives us patience and His kindness, and one of the things that Paul was pointing out specifically to those that were in Rome is that they were having a tendency of being, I would say, a tad bit judgmental. I'm glad that none of us have this problem, but his fundamental point of this is that you know what the right thing is, and yet you go and do the wrong thing. Then, while you're doing the wrong thing, you're criticizing everybody else for doing the wrong thing. So, you've become a judge to everybody. It is amazing how we can literally see the speck in everybody else's eye so well and we become highly condescending and highly critical of those things.

His point is,

(Romans 2:1) “Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another...”

Ok, this is obviously evidence that you know what the right thing is.

He goes on, he says,

(Romans 2:2) “And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things.

(Romans 2:3) But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?

(Romans 2:4) Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?”

His point is that the purpose of God's kindness is to lead you to repentance. It is not to give you license to criticize somebody else. “I’ve received the grace of God. Isn't the world a terrible place and aren't those people just terrible sinners?” Well, we already know that. That's why you

need a Savior, but that's not your job to point that out. It is bizarre how we've become so condescending and critical and that's not the reason for God's patience, His kindness, and the gifts that He clearly gives you. The kindness of God is there to lead you to repentance.

Paul was dealing with the same thing throughout the Book of Romans, and it continued to show its ugly head, in particular in Romans 6. You don't need to necessarily go there, but in verse 1 as well as verse 15, he'll use this particular phrase, "Should you sin, that grace would abound? God forbid." Yeah, but man sees God's grace as a license to do whatever he wants to do. The same thing is true here in Genesis with Cain, and it's actually the beginning. So, if you've ever wondered, "Where did this concept begin?" Thank Cain for that.

If you go with me to Genesis 4, we will see how this kind of unfolds. It is also interesting at the very beginning of this paragraph that it actually starts off this way,

(Genesis 4:16) "Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden."

It's a very interesting phrase because we understand that Adam and Eve are still alive and there are other people still alive. They're not leaving the presence of the Lord. The "presence" would be facing the garden because His presence still seems to be in that arena. So, he goes away from the presence. Now, the interesting point is that when God tells Cain, "Ok, these are going to be the directives that I give you, by virtue of what you've done" and He gives him those corrective measures that begin to come into his life. Cain adds to them.

If you back up, it says,

(Genesis 4:13) "Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is too great to bear!"

(Genesis 4:14) "Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground..."

And he'll add this,

"... and from Your face I will be hidden..."

God didn't say that. Cain did. Here again, you know when something happens that we don't like or we perceive that perhaps God was unfair, what do we do? It's not God that

was hiding from us. We left Him. Same thing with Adam and Eve, they left him.

So, it says in verse 16, "Cain went out from the presence of the LORD." Now, we're not exactly sure where Nod is. They say that if you take the vowels out of it, which ancient Hebrew had absolutely no vowels, it just had the consonants, that it actually refers to India. I don't know if that's true or not, but he goes a long way east according to what the passage is making reference to.

"Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

(Genesis 4:17) Cain had relations..."

Once again, it seems as if going from the presence of the LORD, his choice of a wife was not godly. Why? How do we know that? He went out from the presence of the Lord. It doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure that one out. Things are not going to go well and you're not going to choose the right things. I mean, if in fact your desire is to be in the presence of the Lord, the ones that you choose in your life are going to be the ones that love the Lord too.

So, “Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch...”

Now, the name itself refers to one that is dedicated. There's actually a spiritual Enoch that is dedicated to the Lord, but we're going to see this one is dedicated as unto Cain. You begin to realize that a person that doesn't feel good about themselves begins to bolster themselves. This is one of the reasons why in James it talks about the fact that, “I know you're angry. I know you're going through all these things.” And he goes, “And you want to make sure that you don't do this; you want to make sure that you don't go bragging to people that you're going to go from this city to that city and do this business and that business. All such boasting is evil.” Now, why does he interject that? Because that's one of the things that man begins to do when he doesn't feel good about himself. He begins to brag and boast and tell everybody how wonderful he is, and he begins to build edifices. “I'm powerful.” So, why are you building those walls? “Because I'm powerful.” So, he dedicates his son Enoch, and he goes, “I'm going to make a city.” So, this is actually

the first time we've seen a city, and just to let you know, the word "city" there literally means to have walls of defense built up. "So, we're going to build walls of defense and we're going to name it after my son." You would think that Cain would go, "I've messed up. I need to get right with God." No, no, no. He just begins to run in the realm of pleasure and power, and we're going to see this as you look at his. So, he built a city, called the name after his son, Enoch, which is dedicated obviously not to the Lord, but after the name of his son.

(Genesis 4:18) "Now to Enoch was born Irad..."

And seems to be in some way, Cain, boasting about his status because his son's name here, Irad, means fugitive. In fact, if you put two words together that would describe his name, it would be "wild fugitive". It's man actually elevating the things of evil. So, his defenses, he's going to show that as something marvelous to dedicate. He's going to have a son and he's going to say, "Being a fugitive is not a bad thing. It's a wild thing. It's a good thing." You look at many of the things that people are doing today, and people begin to applaud evil. Then you go, "Why are

people applauding evil?” Because they're making themselves feel good about what they did. That's why they're doing it. So, the same thing is true within this passage.

“... Irada became the father of Mehujael...”

And he seems to be, once again, a name that defines what had happened to Cain, and that is “struck by God.” Of course, his next son begins to deal with “man, God,” and then, Lamech, who was born, is just another name for, I would say, powerful, and great strength. You have all these names that are given, which are really kind of defense names and ways to bolster his sense of maybe perhaps covering up his feelings of inadequacy. Obviously, it's clearly within the passage.

So, Lamech comes out of this in verse 19,

(Genesis 4:19) “Lamech took to himself two wives...”

So, where did polygamy come from? Thank Lamech for that one. Once again, at the beginning of all things, and I would say, when you begin to boast in how powerful you are, then you begin to use that power. You see, I wonder

why it is that God gives gifts, and He gives strength to us? Romans 15 says, you who are strong, ought to bear the weakness of those without strength and not just please yourself, but man takes the gift of power, and he goes, “This is a way that I can grab more for myself.”

“Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah...”

Which seems to be “ornament,” which obviously seems to be his going after, I would say, pleasure and beauty.

“... and the name of the other, Zillah.”

Which means “shade,” and that would seem to have a reference to defense. So, those two things seem to be the things that we go after.

It goes, and it says,

(Genesis 4:20) “Adah gave birth to Jabal...”

Which means “streams of water.”

“... he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.

(Genesis 4:21) His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.”

So, music starts here now. It is interesting that you would almost think that the whole music thing would begin with maybe Seth's genealogy, but it begins with Cain, which might be a warning to us. It's not that music is bad, but music does play on emotions and the whole purpose of music is emotions. Just to let you know. Emotions aren't bad, but if emotions are leading you, then it becomes bad. This is why I remember growing up and going, "Man, I really like that song" and then as you get older, you go, "The words of that song were terrible." But you begin to realize you were drawn to the song because of the emotions that it stirred, and it caused you to like things that maybe you shouldn't like.

So, really, within the passages, you have these abilities, and you have as well pleasures that come in.

(Genesis 4:22) "As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain..."

which is another way of just basically saying that he's going to carry on the name of Cain, which would, I guess, fundamentally say that he was a chip off the old block. So, he became a forger. Oh, maybe this shouldn't surprise us

at all, this is where weapons came from. The chip off the old block just starts forging weapons, right.

“... all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah (“lovely”).”

So, in the passage you either have the extreme of pleasures, or you have the extreme of war.

What's interesting is, verse 23 and 24, in many settings, seems to be interpreted and translated as a song. This is what's so interesting to me, because here God gives ability to be strong or he gives talent to play wonderful music, and what does man do? Well, he invents a song that oppresses people. Read the song with me.

(Genesis 4:23) “Lamech said to his wives,

“Adah and Zillah,

Listen to my voice,

You wives of Lamech,

Give heed to my speech,

For I have killed a man for wounding me;

And a boy for striking me;

(Genesis 4:24) If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.””

Which is interesting that God would say to forgive that many times.

The passage gives this interesting parallel, but also if you look at the passage, you begin to realize what man does with the abilities and gifts that God gives him. I mean, once you leave the presence of God, then you begin thinking in terms of what's gratifying to you. So, all of the things that you're given, which are really grace gifts, when you think about it, you begin to misuse. How bizarre it is that you would write a song about killing somebody? I suppose it was really great music. I mean, he's got a harp there, right? He's got a pipe. I mean, you've got just about everything that's necessary to really play some pretty good music. I mean, I'm just talking off the top of my head here, but if you're living 900 and some odd years, you're probably pretty good by the time you maybe hit 700. So, you've been practicing. The point obviously within the text is how we perceive things and how we take the very things that God gives us in His grace, and we misuse

them. One set of people would say, "Well, if God would just show me where I was wrong, then I would change." That's not true. And another group of people would say, "If God was just more gracious to me than I would change." And that's not true. So, the fact is that God has done both and that when you read in Scripture, you have first, the Law, which is corrective, but then you have Christ. Sometimes you might ask yourself, "Well, why didn't Christ come first?" Because the correction came first; then the grace. What correction does is it helps you realize that not only are you a sinner, but you ultimately come to the conclusion, "I can't do this." And that's why you come to the point of, "I need Your favor." And you could hear Cain saying, "This is too much. I can't handle this." And God goes, "I'm going to be gracious to you." But then he takes the grace (to sin).

There's a warning in all this and I just want to have you read in Hebrews 2, if you turn with me in the New Testament. Hebrews 2. A wonderful text in which in Hebrews 1 the writer is clearly saying, "We have a better message." The message is not coming simply through

angels, it's coming through the Son of God, and what a wonderful message this.

(Hebrews 1:2) "in these last days (God) has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things..."

But in verse 1, it says,

(Hebrews 1:1) "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

(Hebrews 1:2) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son..."

You realize that, ok, He'd been speaking to us through the laws and the commandments and all these things, and He's been really warning us as well as correcting us in these things. We weren't listening, but in these last days, He says, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to wipe out your sins. Come to Me." Man has pushed himself as far away from God as he could, and God goes, "You don't have to be afraid of Me." And He shows himself on that cross, which demonstrates the severity of

man's sin as well as the extensiveness of God's grace as He begins to show His kindness towards us.

So, the writer will write this in Chapter 2,

(Hebrews 2:1) “For this reason we must pay much closer attention...”

Now, our thought is that if we have grace, we have more license to do wrong, and He goes, “No, grace is a reason to pay much closer attention.”

“For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.

(Hebrews 2:2) For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty,

(Hebrews 2:3) how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard.”

In other words, this is the message of grace. How will you escape the judgment of God if you trample under foot His grace? This He's going to hit upon in Chapter 10.

(Hebrews 10:26) “For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

(Hebrews 10:27) but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.

(Hebrews 10:28) Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

We go, “Yeah, that's the Law.” And He goes, “Yeah, and you didn't do what I told you to do because you were afraid of Me, right?” We say, “Yeah.” “So, I showed you grace, and then you still trampled Me.”

Look at the passage

(Hebrews 10:29) “How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?”

I mean, it fundamentally is your Matthew 21 where Jesus is talking with this parable and He goes, “Look, this guy had a vineyard, and he rented it out. He sends his servants to go and say, ‘Ok, you need to pay up.’ And they began to beat, they stoned, and they murdered his servants. He sent another group of servants. They did the same thing to them again. He says, ‘I’m going to tell you what I’m going to do. I’m going to send my son. They won’t do that to my son.’ And they did. They murdered his son.” Christ turns and He goes, “What do you think He’s going to do?”

When we perceive grace, we take it as license. When you perceive grace, you should think this is a greater responsibility that you and I have. As God has showered His grace upon us. He’s given us this opportunity. He’s taken away all of the reasons why you shouldn’t, and He’s giving you every reason why you should. Now if you neglect this, how shall you escape? Cain decided that what God was saying was basically rhetorical and optional, and quite frankly, something that was unproductive in his life. God never does that. Everything

that God is telling us and doing in our life is for our good, and the way we perceive things is not because of who God is, it's because of who we are. When we misperceive Him in so many ways, and we do that, we're just telling on ourselves, but how wonderful it is that God gives us, as James will say, a mirror to look into that begins to reveal who we are and there's a little bit of Cain in all of us.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today and we ask that You would put that mirror upon us so we would see who we really are and that we wouldn't walk away forgetting what manner of person we are, but we would also look into the perfect law of liberty and begin to see how wonderful You are. That we would see in this wonderful book the love of God and Your consistency in demonstrating us loving kindness. Even in the midst of our hatred, our rebelliousness, even in the midst of our unwillingness to listen, to care, even when we began to bolster ourselves, brag, build walls, You in the midst of

this will continue to show kindness. We would construe this as something that would just perhaps be a weakness of Yours. You would tell us there is an end to this. Grace is beckoning you now. There is no greater call.

Your head's bowed and your eyes, what we are asking you to do is listen to the voice of grace. Don't think for one moment this is license, this is opportunity, and it's the kindness of God that is calling you to repent.