

THE KING'S STORY (4)¹

The King Judges

A. Introduction

1. The Bible is a story.

It is a story that makes God's glory known.

It is a story about Jesus Christ.

It is a story of salvation achieved through judgment.

It is a story of the King who establishes kingdoms and rules over them by means of covenants.

2. The story of the Bible begins with the King creating.

God the King creates the kingdom of creation² and chose to rule over it through humans whom He made in His image.

"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female." (Genesis 1:26-27)

As God ruled over the kingdom of creation by forming and filling, so humans were to rule over creation by forming (subdue the earth) and filling (be fruitful and multiply) too.

"God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth." (Genesis 1:28)

It is the duty of all creatures to obey their Creator, and that was true for humans who did this by living within His boundaries (the moral law) and by ruling over His creation (the creation mandate) without expecting any reward.

Yet God was pleased to reward humans with the promise of eternal life by establishing a covenant with Adam on behalf of the entire human race.

In this covenant God promises Adam, and those he represents, eternal life if he obeys His commands by working and watching over Eden and not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If disobeys, he will die, and all humanity with him.

3. The King curses Adam because he broke the covenant by failing to take care of Eden and eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

"The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it." (Genesis 3:6)

Death came for Adam and all those he represents – spiritually, physically, eternally.

"So the LORD God sent him away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken." (Genesis 3:23)

"You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground, since you were taken from it. For you are dust, and you will return to dust." (Genesis 3:19)

¹ The titles for this series are taken from Biblical Theology by Nick Roark & Robert Cline

² Throughout this series I will refer to 3 kingdoms, the kingdom of creation, Israel, Christ, which is an idea taken from The Mystery of Christ by Samuel Renihan.

"He drove the man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life." (Genesis 3:24)

Though as creatures we are still obliged to obey our Creator by keeping the moral law and the creation mandate, the curse has made this harder.

But there is a glimmer of hope.

Before the King curses, He preaches the gospel.

Eternal life is still possible, but it won't come by the covenant of works.

An offspring of the woman will come to save them.

"I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." (Genesis 3:15)

The rest of the King's story is an outworking of Genesis 3:15.

B. A struggle is promised

1. God announces that there will be hostility (enmity) and hatred between the offspring of the serpent and the offspring of the woman.

It did not take long to find out who the offspring of the serpent and who the offspring of the woman was.

Outside of Eden, Adam and Eve began to be fruitful and multiply.

"The man was intimate with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, "I have had a male child with the LORD's help. She also gave birth to his brother Abel." (Genesis 4:1-2)

In the naming of Cain, it seems that they thought God might have kept His promise to send a Saviour who will crush the serpent right away.

As Cain let out his first cry, Eve says, "*I have brought forth the God-man.*"

But it turns out that Cain was an offspring of the serpent rather than an offspring of the woman.

Instead of offering the right offering (a blood sacrifice) with the right attitude (of faith) like his brother Abel did, he approached God trusting in his own efforts expecting to be accepted and was not.

"In the course of time Cain presented some of the land's produce as an offering to the LORD. And Abel also presented an offering—some of the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions. The LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but he did not have regard for Cain and his offering. Cain was furious, and he looked despondent." (Genesis 4:3-5)

Instead of crushing the head of the serpent, Cain crushes the head of his brother.

"Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him." (Genesis 4:8)

"You are of your father the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44)

"For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another, unlike Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous." (1 John 3:11-12)

2. Cain wasn't the offspring of the woman.

He was the first of many to strike the offspring of the woman's heel.

As more children were born, the majority of them sided with the serpent, until the earth was filled with wickedness and corruption and violence.

"When the LORD saw that human wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every inclination of the human mind was nothing but evil all the time, the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and he was deeply grieved." (Genesis 6:5-6)

"Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with wickedness. God saw how corrupt the earth was, for every creature had corrupted its way on the earth." (Genesis 6:11-12)

It looks like the offspring of the woman was going to be crushed as during this time only a remnant trusted in God's promise of a Saviour.

"Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, for she said, "God has given me another offspring in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." A son was born to Seth also, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD." (Genesis 4:25-26)

"Enoch was 65 years old when he fathered Methuselah. And after he fathered Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and fathered other sons and daughters. So Enoch's life lasted 365 years. Enoch walked with God; then he was not there because God took him." (Genesis 5:21-24)

Eventually the earth was so filled with wickedness, that there was only one family who was the offspring of the woman.

"Noah, however, found favour with the LORD. These are the family records of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among his contemporaries; Noah walked with God. And Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth." (Genesis 6:8-10)

It is at this point that God the King decides to start again by judging the earth and by wiping out the entire line of the serpent by means of a flood.

"Then the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I created, off the face of the earth, together with the animals, creatures that crawl, and birds of the sky—for I regret that I made them." (Genesis 6:7)

Only the offspring of the woman, Noah, and his family remained, were saved through judgment.

"Then God said to Noah, "I have decided to put an end to every creature, for the earth is filled with wickedness because of them; therefore I am going to destroy them along with the earth. "Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch inside and outside." (Genesis 6:13-14)

3. But though the offspring of the serpent was destroyed by the flood, Noah carried the seeds of sin into the new world, and before long the offspring of the serpent was thriving again.

First, one of Noah's sons defected to the serpent's line.

"Noah, as a man of the soil, began by planting a vineyard. He drank some of the wine, became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took a cloak and placed it over both their shoulders, and walking backward, they covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father naked." (Genesis 9:20-24)

Soon, the earth was filled again with the serpent's offspring, who united together against God at Babel.

"The whole earth had the same language and vocabulary. As people migrated from the east, they found a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, "Come, let's make oven-fired bricks." (They used brick for stone and asphalt for mortar.) And they said, "Come, let's build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the sky. Let's make a name for ourselves; otherwise, we will be scattered throughout the earth." (Genesis 11:1-4)

Again, God responds in judgment as he scatters humanity over the face of the earth.

"Then the LORD came down to look over the city and the tower that the humans were building. The LORD said, "If they have begun to do this as one people all having the same language, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let's go down there and confuse their language so that they will not understand one another's speech." So from there the LORD scattered them throughout the earth, and they stopped building the city." (Genesis 11:5-6)

Where is the offspring of the woman now?

"Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran." (Genesis 11:26)

It doesn't look like there is one.

"Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Long ago your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River and worshiped other gods.'" (Joshua 24:2)

Has the offspring of the serpent finally crushed the head of the offspring of the woman?

C. A Saviour is promised

1. Since the announcement that eternal life won't come through the covenant of works but through an offspring of the woman, God's people have been wondering who He is?

Adam and Eve hoped it might be Cain, but it wasn't.

Abel was of the seed of the woman but not the serpent-crushing offspring, as he was killed.

Seth was a replacement for Abel, but he wasn't the promised Saviour.

"Seth was 105 years old when he fathered Enosh. Seth lived 807 years after he fathered Enosh, and he fathered other sons and daughters. So Seth's life lasted 912 years; then he died." (Genesis 5:6-8)

With the birth of Seth, though, people began to pray for God to send this Saviour.

"At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD." (Genesis 4:26)

Lamech hoped that Noah might be Him.

"Lamech was 182 years old when he fathered a son. And he named him Noah, saying, "This one will bring us relief from the agonizing labour of our hands, caused by the ground the LORD has cursed." (Genesis 5:28-29)

Even though Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and walked with God, he wasn't the promised Saviour.

"Noah, as a man of the soil, began by planting a vineyard. He drank some of the wine, became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent." (Genesis 9:20-21)

After Noah, it is not entirely clear who the Saviour might be, because his line ends with Terah and his three sons, who are worshipping other gods.

2. Yet the promise remains alive because of a covenant God made with Noah.

"But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark with your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives." (Genesis 6:18)

The Noachic covenant would join the covenant of works in establishing God's rule over the kingdom of creation.

This covenant promoted life as God renewed the cultural mandate with Noah and all his descendants.

"God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."
(Genesis 9:1)

"But you, be fruitful and multiply; spread out over the earth and multiply on it." (Genesis 9:7)

This covenant protected life as God gave explicit commands concerning the taking of another life.

"And I will require a penalty for your lifeblood; I will require it from any animal and from any human; if someone murders a fellow human, I will require that person's life. "Whoever sheds human blood, by humans his blood will be shed, for God made humans in his image." (Genesis 9:5-6)

This covenant preserved life by promising never to flood the world again.

"And I will never again strike down every living thing as I have done. "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night will not cease." (Genesis 8:21-22)

"Then God said to Noah and his sons with him, "Understand that I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you—birds, livestock, and all wildlife of the earth that are with you—all the animals of the earth that came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you that never again will every creature be wiped out by floodwaters; there will never again be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all future generations: I have placed my bow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I form clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all the living creatures: water will never again become a flood to destroy every creature. The bow will be in the clouds, and I will look at it and remember the permanent covenant between God and all the living creatures on earth." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and every creature on earth." (Genesis 9:8-17)

The Noahic covenant is not a covenant that saves. It did not give eternal life. People remained under the curse of the covenant of works.

The Noahic covenant by removing the threat of another flood, ensured that the world would not be destroyed because of human sin before the promised Saviour arrived, and before He had saved all His people.

3. We are today still living in the kingdom of creation where God rules through the covenant of works and the Noahic covenant.

The covenant of works curses us because of our sin.

The reward of eternal life is beyond our reach.

Our only hope of eternal life is the offspring of the woman.

And the Noahic covenant ensures that this world will continue, and God will restrain His wrath until the promised Saviour comes and saves all His people.