

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 262

Exodus 3, Part 2b

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Episode Summary

This episode builds off Part 2a and our discussion of the Kenite Hypothesis. The episode essentially asks this question: How would a literate ancient Jew, with knowledge of 1 Enoch and the Hebrew Bible, understand the biblical writer's linkage of the Kenites (relatives of Abraham and Moses) to Cain the murderer, whom the writer of Enoch associated with the sins of the Watchers? The answer may surprise you, and even bless you.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 262: Exodus 3, Part 2b. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike, how are you?

MH: Pretty good. Can't complain, even though I might want to. [laughter]

TS: Yeah, well, we're finally getting to the Watchers and the weirder stuff here about Exodus 3. We teased it... We split it up into two parts, so we made people wait an extra week. But I think it'll be worth it.

MH: Yeah, that was my fault. I just went too long on the other one. So we had a little bit of mercy. [laughs] We have to file it under mercy.

TS: No, that's okay. It helps us, because the weekends we're gone or doing something, it helps us cover those weekends. So we had to do it, but another week to get into the Watchers. It's worth it.

MH: Yeah, sure. Why not?

TS: Alright, I'm excited. What are we going to be talking about today?

MH: It's basically going to focus on how a literate Israelite (somebody familiar with their Old Testament and with Second Temple Jewish texts) living in that intertestamental period would have thought about the connections in the Old Testament between Cain and the things that Cain's genealogy was known for (metallurgy is the obvious connection, but there are other ones) and how

intertestamental literature linked that stuff (those marks of civilization) to the Watchers.

So somebody who's familiar with Second Temple material (books like Enoch and the Old Testament) is going to wonder, "Why in the world would the guy who wrote Enoch connect Cain to all this? Because aren't the Kenites good guys? They preserve the knowledge of Yahweh, or the name, or something like that. There's something good going on there with the Kenites. Moses marries into that group. So why this negative connection?" How would they have perhaps thought about what the writers were doing?

For this, we need to go back to the genealogy of Cain and the Kenites. I'm going to refer to an article... I will put this in the protected folder. Actually, I don't have to, because this you can find online. It's by Phillip Esler. The title of the article is "Deus Victor: The Nature and Defeat of Evil in the Book of the Watchers." That is a chapter from a book called *The Blessing of Enoch: 1 Enoch and Contemporary Theology*. It's published by Wipf & Stock. This particular chapter of it is pages 166-190. So Esler... I just read you the subtitle ("The Nature and Defeat of Evil in the Book of the Watchers"). Esler is talking about how the Book of the Watchers (within the book of Enoch, the Book of the Watchers is chapters 1 through 36)... and how that material frames the problem of evil (where it comes from and God's victory over it). In the course of those chapters of Enoch, Cain is a player. And how the writer of 1 Enoch deals with Cain is interesting. It's instructive here. And once we see this, we have to wonder if the writer of 1 Enoch... He would have known biblically about the connection to the Kenites. He would have known that because it's transparently in Scripture. And for *us*, it gives us some real interesting things to think about, because here's the question: If the Kenites are sort of good guys (they preserve the worship of Yahweh—they know who Yahweh is), why in the world would the Bible connect them with a guy as bad as Cain? You say, "Well, it's because they were metalsmiths." Yeah, I get that. But then if you know the Book of the Watchers material... Think like a first century Jew here. Let's say you know all this material. You're sitting there thinking, "I get that metalsmith thing, but isn't that one of the things that the Watchers get blamed for teaching humankind, because it led to self-destruction? So if they're good guys, why do that? Why would the Bible writer do that?" Good question. So Esler on page 4 writes this:

5:00

To appreciate the nature of evil in the Book of the Watchers in a manner that is sensitive to the structure of the work, it is useful to draw a distinction between "dramatic time" and "narrative time." Here "dramatic time" refers to the time during which the plot of the work, involving the secession of the Watchers from heaven and the description of Enoch's activities, takes place. "Narrative time," on the other hand, means the (much larger) sweep of time that embraces all of the events referred to in the drama of the Watchers and Enoch, which actually extend

from the creation to the period of the final judgment (and beyond) [MH: Enoch runs the scope from creation to the second earth. It runs the gamut.]...

It should be noted that the text does not always describe events in strictly chronological order, thus the Watchers descend to earth in 1 Enoch 6 (loosely based on Gen 6:1-4), whereas it is not until 1 Enoch 12 that we hear that “before these things” Enoch was taken (i. e. to heaven) which relates to the earlier period of Gen 5:24). This is one of several signs in the text that the author well understands the broad chronological course of universal and Israelite history, even though he is capable of jumping from one time to another.

On pages 10 to 11, Esler writes:

Cain must be understood, therefore, as the prototypical evil-doer on the earth, the first person to engage in what for the Enochic scribe is the worst kind of evil—acts of violence, in the case of Cain, and by necessary implication others after him, homicidal violence. Abel is the first, of many, to petition heaven on account of his murder.

On pages 13 and 14, Esler adds:

The next evil in chronological order is that of the Watchers desiring women and wanting to beget children from them (6:2). Their leader recognizes this as a great sin (6:3)

So even the leader of the Watchers... If you actually read Enoch, he admits this is a great sin.

When the Watchers do this, they are said to “defile” (μαίνεσθαι) themselves. The Watchers also impart knowledge to human beings...

And then Esler goes on to rabbit-trail on that. One of those false teachings was metallurgy, specifically fashioning weapons for war and bloodshed. That was one way that evil would proliferate in the world and destroy the image (destroy the imagers—destroy humans, the imagers of God). Esler continues, after he talks about the false teaching there:

...But the true horror of the Watchers’ secession from heaven emerges only [MH: afterward] in the actions of their progeny, the giants to which their wives give birth (1 En 7:4-5)... The core of the evil they produce is violence, to the extent of killing and then eating human beings, the creatures of the earth and even themselves [MH: cannibalism]. Thus violence, initiated by Cain, reappears in a most extreme form with the giants.

That's the end of Esler's selections, at least for right now. Let's think about this for a moment. In 1 Enoch (the Book of the Watchers), that material creates a conceptual link between Cain and the Watchers. The Watchers' crimes, which are various, reach a crescendo in the violence that ensues from their activity. Here's the question: is there any indication biblical writers might have been tracking along the same lines, that is, thinking of Cain as some sort of prototypical bad guy (a murderer) and then connecting him with the giants—connecting murder with the giants?

Is there any evidence, biblically, that biblical writers might have been tracking with this? If a biblical writer was here (Moses or whoever of the Torah) and I read him what I just read, would he say, "Oh, yeah, we know that; we get it"... Is there any evidence for that? Let's think about that. In the Old Testament, Cain's murder in Genesis 4 is, of course, famous. But who's the next murderer? Ask yourself the question. Who was the next murderer? It's Lamech. That's also in Genesis 4 (verses 17-24), where we read:

¹⁷ Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch.

Now I'm going to insert a note here. This is not the same Enoch as in Genesis 5 (the one that goes to heaven). That one (in Genesis 5) is the seventh from Adam, according to the New Testament and Second Temple literature. Cain's son is obviously not the seventh from Adam in the biblical story. So on to verse 18.

10:00

¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. ¹⁹ And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. ²⁰ Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. ²² Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives:

**“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say:
I have killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.**

**²⁴ If Cain's revenge is sevenfold,
then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold.”**

Some observations here. First, Lamech is a descendant of Cain. Second, Lamech is a murderer like his forefather, and he even references Cain's crime as some sort of badge of honor. Third, one of the sons of Lamech is Tubal-Cain, "the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron." Another son was "father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock." (In other words, people just like the Midianites.) HBD notes:

Tubal-cain is known as a forger of all implements of copper and iron. As descendants of the fugitive-wanderer Cain, Tubal-cain and his relatives, and later the Kenites (Cainites), typify nomadic tradesmen associated with the rise of urban life and commerce and with the sin and violence it occasioned (Gen. 4:21-24).

Lamech also had another son in chapter 5. He has these three sons in chapter 4. We have Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain. But he has another son in Genesis 5:28. Remember who that was? Noah. So here we go. Here we go with the "how do you get Nephilim after the flood" question. Because later on, we're going to have the giants. Think of Enoch now. The writer of 1 Enoch links the violence of the giants with Cain. Point blank it does that. We asked the question, "Would biblical writers make those connections?" Well, Cain is the prototypical murderer. You have Lamech next. One of Lamech's sons is Noah. We know what happens with Noah and the sons of God, and they have giants, and the giants... Well, here we go.

Even though the biblical story doesn't have the cannibalism and all that stuff, it does say that the giants were lethal enemies of the people of God. So I'm not saying that this is the best way to look at Genesis 6 and the Nephilim and all that stuff. I'm not saying it's the best view. I'm just saying that you can see the logic. If someone either in antiquity or today wants to create a genealogical line back to Cain to the giants after the flood, you can actually do that, because Noah is a descendant of Lamech, who is a descendant of Cain. You could actually make that argument. I know a lot of people listening will say, "Noah was pure in all his generations." Well, if you actually do a word study on that, it's not the normal word for lineal descendants. This word *dor* is used of generations, as in the people living at your same time. Like the generation of the '60s—that kind of thing. Doesn't mean they're all related; it just means they're alive at the same time. In fairness, that word is used one time (in my knowledge) for lineal descent. So I guess it's possible. But one time versus a few dozen other times, where it's not used that way... eh, the odds are against you.

And in fact, this is why in antiquity you had some Second Temple Jews gravitate toward someone in Noah's lineage being responsible for the survival (in terms of genealogy) of the giants after the flood. This is why they went there. And if you do that... (And I'm not saying the writer of 1 Enoch did. He doesn't spell that out. We don't want to overstate the data here.) But he does connect them, at least conceptually. Frankly, I think that's the better way to connect them—these

conceptual connections. But anyway, I just want to make the comment here that if this was your predilection to come up with some kind of real biological genealogy, that's your explanation for giants after the flood. "Now we have Noah and Lamech and Cain, and that's the way the writer of Enoch saw it." Well, okay. He may well have seen it that way. It doesn't mean it's right. It's a workable thing, at least on a textual basis. Now if that's the way you want to go, you have it.

15:00 Now this takes us into the genealogies of Genesis 4. And I'm telling you, I know the genealogies are boring, but there's some crazy stuff in the genealogies. [laughs] If you understand how people were thinking about them... I'm going to give you a quote here from Wenham's Genesis commentary on Genesis 4. He's writing about the genealogy that we just read, the one that has Cain and Lamech. He says:

17–24 Here the genealogical structure of the account becomes apparent again. V 17 could have immediately followed v 2 had not the long digression about Abel's murder been included at this point. Vv 17–24 include several brief comments on the vocations of Cain's descendants (e.g., 17b, 20b, 21, 22), but the only lengthy digression is the song of Lamech (23–24) in which he shows that he has all the violent traits of his forefather Cain. It may be noted that these comments cluster around Enoch and Lamech, the only two men in this genealogy whose names reappear in the genealogy of Adam via Seth [MH: Which is interesting. We'll get to that in a moment.]. Apparently to make sure that the two Enochs and the two Lamechs are not confused, both genealogies give more detail about these individuals than the others in these lists. For the most part, the other antediluvians remain simply names. The general similarity of style with the rest of chap. 4 persuades most commentators that...

Without getting into all of Wenham's discussion here, it persuades most commentators that we have two separate genealogies.

Parallels with the Sumerian flood story have already been mentioned [MH: in his commentary]... Mesopotamian sources make occasional mention of seven *apkallus* who lived before the flood. The older texts are not explicit about the precise skills of these *apkallus*, but the oldest *apkallu* was called Adapa and is associated with Eridu, generally regarded in Mesopotamian tradition as the first city to be founded.

Remember the first city in the genealogy (Erad, Eridu)? Pretty much the same. So now we're getting into the Apkallu first city traditions in the genealogical line in Genesis 4. You have to think like an Israelite or like a Jewish reader. How would they have... What were the thoughts that they would have been thinking when they read that stuff? If you're a literate Jew (like these scribes were), they're seeing these sorts of connections. Now Wenham goes on. Here, he quotes R.R.

Wilson, who has a very well-known book on genealogy, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World*. It's out of print, but you could still get it used on Amazon. Wenham says this:

The parallels between Gen 4:17–26 and extrabiblical traditions are not close enough to suggest direct borrowing by Genesis from the extant sources. It is possible, though, that the biblical writer knew these old ideas and wanted to comment on them: he held that technology was a human achievement, not the gift of the gods (so Cassuto). Indeed, by linking urbanization and nomadism, music and metalworking to the genealogy of Cain, he seems to be suggesting that all aspects of human culture are in some way tainted by Cain's sin [MH: Now he quotes Wilson.]: "By virtue of being Cain's descendants, the people named in the genealogy all inherit his curse. Thus the Cainite genealogy becomes part of the Yahwist's account of man's increasing sin" (Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 155).

Again, these are conceptual connections. So if you don't prefer the, "Well, now I've got an argument to make for a literal genealogy back to Cain through the Watchers and the giants..." If that's not your cup of tea, then how else could we think about this? And this is what I'm angling for. This is where I'm at. I think that thinking about the material becomes more coherent (it makes more sense), at least it's more textually defensible if we think conceptually. And that is (follow me here) that Cain is the prototypical murderer. We're thinking like a Jew about what we're reading in Enoch and what we know from the Old Testament, and the interface there is Cain. Cain is the prototypical murderer—the archetypal human agent of chaos after Adam and Eve are driven from Eden.

20:00

Sure, Adam and Eve fell. They sinned. But Enoch and other Second Temple texts don't have them as the reason for depravity. (We've talked about this before on the podcast.) That (depravity) they assigned to the Watchers. What the Watchers did is cast as the catalyst for human self-destruction. Cain foreshadows human self-destruction. He typifies the havoc the Watchers and their spawn (the giants, from whom would come demons) would wreak on earth by means of their false teaching, which spread idolatry and, of course, violence.

And so these elements (Cain, Watchers, giants) are conceptually and textually connected, even without throwing a literal genealogy into the mix. Maybe a better question to ask is (and here's the relevance to our episode) why the Kenites are made part of this in the Bible. Aren't they good guys? Sure, they descend from the non-elect line of Abraham (Esau), but they still worship the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham. God brings Moses to *them* to re-introduce himself to Moses (or maybe for the first time—we'll talk about that next week). Why taint the Kenites with Cain? After all, if the Torah was edited during the exile at some point, why would an editor both telegraph the "good guy" stuff and the "hey, you guys are part of Cain's line" stuff? It just doesn't seem to go together.

But we have to ask ourselves if we're, in fact, reading the association with Cain the right way, or whether we're seeing the correct rationale behind the association. Does the biblical writer connect the Kenites to Cain to villainize the Kenites, or is there some other reason that he might be doing it? I would suggest there is another reason, one that you can communicate with one word, and that is: *reversal*.

So let's rethink what we've been talking about, starting with the boring genealogies. On the episode page, I have a graphic (a picture) of the genealogies in Genesis 4 and 5. So if you're listening to the episode now and you don't have it, just know that you can go back and look at it. There are three columns in this picture. There's the genealogy on the left-hand side from Genesis 5. It starts with Adam and it ends with Noah through Lamek. Then in the middle, there's Genesis 4, which is the real short fragmentary Sethite line (Adam, Seth, and Enosh). And then in the right-hand column, there's Genesis 4, which begins with Adam and doesn't end with Noah. It ends with Yabal, Yubal, Tubal-Cain through Lamek. So have a look at that. Maybe you'll want to re-listen to this.

Gen 5	Gen 4 Sethite line	Gen 4 Cainite line
1 Adam	25 Adam	1 Adam
6 Seth	26 Seth	
9 Enosh	26 Enosh	
12 Qenan קינן		17 Cain קין
15 Mahalalel מהללאל		17 Enoch
18 Yared ירד		18 Irad עירד
21 Enoch		18 Mehuyael מחויאל
25 Methuselah מתושלח		18 Methushael מתושאל
28 Lamek		18 Lamek
32 Noah		20 Yabal, Yubal, Tubal-Cain

But if you look at the picture, the genealogies actually telegraph some things. And you can add this to the dumpster of stuff that you never hear in church. It's basically all we do here. But here we go again.

So if you're thinking about the genealogies, Wenham writes this:

The three-member genealogy of Seth [MH: that's the middle one] in 4:25–26 acts as a trailer to the full ten-member genealogy in 5:1–32. It has also been observed that the last seven members of Sethite genealogy in 5:12–32 parallel the genealogy of Cain in 4:17–18.

To be precise: of the six names mentioned in [Gen] 4:17–18, two, Enoch and Lamek, reappear in 5:12–28, and only Lamek appears at the same point in the genealogy, i.e., as penultimate member. If, however, Mahalalel changes places with Enoch in Gen 5...

He says, “You can line these up just by personal name. It doesn’t mean they’re the same person, but the same personal names if you just flip a few around. They’re all there, just in different order. But it doesn’t necessarily mean they’re the same people. Except for Lamech and his kids. That’s the interesting point. Now Wilson (that quote where Wenham had quoted Wilson) has pointed out... Wenham says:

However, R. R. Wilson (*Genealogy and History*, 166–204) has pointed out that peoples often retain variant genealogies alongside each other without sensing any contradiction between them. Certainly the editor of Genesis did not regard these genealogies as identical: not only do both have different starting points (Cain and Seth) and different conclusions (Tubal-Cain and Noah), but Enoch and Lamek, the only identical names within the two genealogies, are distinguished by additional biographical details which show that they were regarded as different people. The morphological similarity of the other names could be explained [MH: by grammatical stuff—assimilation; that’s what he’s talking about here]...

Comparison of the genealogies in the present setting in Genesis indicates that the editor saw them as distinct. The different style suggests that they probably derive from distinct sources. But this is not to say that they must have been first brought together by the editor of Genesis, for once again the Sumerian flood story may have discussed similar topics to Gen 4 and 5 in the same order.

25:00

So when he talks about topics here, he’s getting into this idea that the names in the genealogies (even if they’re different) can convey certain concepts (certain topics) in the flow of primeval history. I would suggest to you something. If you look at the genealogies, here’s what’s interesting if you look at them side by side. In the left-hand column, you have the “good guy” line (Adam to Noah, incorporating Seth). Of course, Seth replaced Abel, because Abel was killed. It’s a “good guy” line because it leads to a deliverer God calls in the days of the flood (Noah). God will preserve humanity through this line. Maybe we should call it the “God’s Plan” line. Genesis 4 (in the right-hand column) is the chaos line (the “bad guy” line). It doesn’t include Seth. It skips from Adam to Cain on up to Lamech (Noah’s father in the other genealogy). But instead of having Noah as Lamech’s son, who do we get? Yabal, Yubal, and Tubal-cain. Tents and livestock, lyre and pipe players, and then the metal-working thing.

“Big deal,” you say. Well, it is kind of a big deal when you realize that those things (dwelling in tents, having livestock, dwelling in cities)... That’s also in chapter 5 in the genealogical section. It’s also in chapter 4, in the “bad guy” line. That’s how I want to say it. It’s also in chapter 4 after Cain has to leave. He builds a city (or somebody builds a city; that’s a subject for another episode). But the building of a city is also in the “bad guy” line. All of those things (the formation of civilization, the fashioning of weapons, metallurgy, all that stuff—and music—is part of what civilization broadly encompasses) are the stock elements of the Prometheus myth from classical Greece. Remember Prometheus, one of the Titans that gives this knowledge to human beings? And, of course, it’s not viewed as a good thing? [laughs] They are all elements of settled civilization.

So there are actually some scholars (this is a rabbit trail we won’t take) that wonder if the Prometheus story actually borrows or reflects some of the older biblical and ancient Near Eastern material about how we get civilization (either the Watchers or the Apkallu or something like that). But these are the elements of the Prometheus story, which is really interesting. What you have here is the “good guy” line (the line of the plan of God) being set against the line that produces not only depravity and murder and chaos, but also civilization. You say, “Why would that be bad? Why would those things be connected?”

Think about what it means to pit the genealogies against one another and then loop the Kenites into this. Think *reversal*. The “good guy” line marks the line God will use to reverse the “bad guy” line (the chaos line). In fact, if the Torah links the Midianites back to Cain, it’s a bit interesting that those Kenites or Midianites will wind up in territory associated with the non-elect line of Abraham (the Edomites—Esau). The Edomites and Kenites (both on the outs with God’s plan, as it were) wind up in the same area. And it is to that area that God directs Moses to confront him with his mission of not only delivering Jacob’s line from Egypt, but of rejoining the family strands back together. Remember Moses marries into the Midianite line, and plenty of Midianites join the ranks with Israel.

God, of course, has been trying to bring the two lines back together and blunt the power of depravity for a long time before we get to Moses. He’s been trying to restore the nations. God called Abraham out of paganism. He divorced the nations. But not so that the nations would be forever excluded from his family. God made a covenant with Abram that through his seed all nations would be blessed, and those nations include places that would later become known as Midian and Edom. They’re actually in Genesis 10. They’re included in Canaan as a whole place plus Aram, Uz, and Hul (descendants of Shem—the Semites). These places are included; they’re just not called Midian and Edom yet. Genesis 10’s promise even includes the land of a city-builder and civilizer: Nimrod. Babylon is not exempt from redemption in God’s overall picture. The covenant is a compassionate one.

Later, the Angel of Yahweh wrestles with Jacob on the eve of his reunion with Esau. It’s through Moses, of course, that God gives the law “added because of

transgressions” (Galatians 3:19) to restrain human evil until the messiah would come, die, rise again, and ascend, triggering the coming of the Spirit—the primary agent in believers to reverse depravity, which was in turn laid at the feet of the Watchers in Second Temple Judaism. And when we get to Exodus, God sends Moses into the land of the prodigal line, where God has been present (though largely unnoticed) for a very long time. It’s time to call a man (Moses) whose life’s ministry will work to reverse the chaos of the world through the promise-plan line of Jacob (the Israelites), whose descendants are supposed to be a kingdom of priests and through whom the ultimate Reverser (the messiah) will come. And of course, the reclaiming of the nations. We even get a foreshadowing of all of this.

Just to summarize all that... Think about when you pit the “good guy” line (the line of deliverance—Noah)... We could throw in right here the fact that in Jewish tradition (as I’ve talked about with Revelation 12—the birth of the messiah)... Jewish tradition had Noah and the one born on September 11th (on Tishrei 1 of 3, B.C)... Jesus and Noah would have a shared birthday (just using Jewish tradition). So you have this deliverance line. It’s set over against the line of chaos. And the line of chaos actually works its way into biblical history, and the lines converge in the Moses story. The nonelect line of Abraham is there. The Midianites and the Kenites are there. The ones who are linked back to this awful guy, Cain—symbols of chaos...

Why is civilization, why is urbanization, why is human technology and invention viewed as a bad thing, generally? Because it’s not Edenic. It’s of human origin. Everything of human origin is less than Eden in biblical thinking. Now it can be used for good or it can be used for self-destruction. And of course, in the Enochian mind, it’s the Watchers that give this to humanity deliberately—intentionally—to encourage the destruction of the imagers of God—human beings.

So on the one hand, yes, technology and civilization are neutral in terms of the way they’re used, but in the course of the big picture of the biblical story, it was viewed negatively. They were viewed as something un-Eden, anti-Eden, less than Eden. It just reflects life not... It’s putting in human hands the restoration of Eden, and that is not God’s plan. God’s plan is to restore Eden through a single person—the messiah, Christ, the seed of Abraham—who will unite all nations, and he will unite the disparate strands of Abraham’s own family (his genealogy). There’s God’s method for restoring paradise (restoring utopia, restoring Eden) and then there’s everything else. And everything else is of human origin. This is what’s working through the mind of the biblical writer, of the Enochian writer. This is how they’re thinking about their world and about the whole situation of the world. We have lost Eden. We cannot restore it ourselves. Any attempt to restore it ourselves is going to fail. And in fact, as we learn, as we build, as we do things, we are dependent on our own devices. And if left to ourselves in a non-Edenic world, humanity will turn these things against humanity. This is our world today.

These categories of thought should not be unfamiliar. Everything that humans set their hand to is a two-edged sword. Everything. It's either brought into captivity to the Lord or it's not.

35:00

So they're thinking along these same lines. But they're communicating the ideas through genealogy and through the violence of the Watchers to Genesis 6, through books like Enoch and even just the simple concept of civilization. It's less than Eden because we're doing it—because God is not doing it. Only when God is at the helm can Eden be restored the way it should be. That is the only path to restore things as they should be, as God originally wanted them. So they're trying to communicate these ideas through (to us) strange means—these episodes, these stories, genealogies. It's just interesting that when you get to Moses and you get the Kenites... If you're a literate Jew, you know about the Kenites. They're from Cain. Isn't it kind of ironic... Irony is a reversal. Isn't it interesting that God would have Moses go to the place where these descendants are and that God would use them in some way to save Moses' life, and Moses would become the deliverer? Through him the knowledge of Yahweh would either be restored or would proliferate itself through this man, Moses, that the Kenites (the Midianites) are instrumental in saving and preserving this guy. God is using the unfavored line to do what he wants to do. He is using those who have fallen by the wayside to accomplish his plan. It's really a significant theological lesson. And the more you dig down into it, you see the ironic reversal of this.

We even get it telegraphed in messianic prophecy. I'll end with this. We get a foreshadowing of this. If you're into the birth narratives of Jesus, I would recommend Father Raymond Brown's book. Raymond Brown was a famous New Testament scholar. He's deceased now. He wrote some massive stuff on the Gospels, and he wrote a really thick book on the birth narratives of Jesus. But he writes that the gold and frankincense gifts bestowed upon Jesus and his family derive from Isa 60:6 and Ps 72:15:

Those items associate with the desert camel trains coming from Midian (NW Arabia) and from Sheba (the kingdom of the Sabeans in SW Arabia).

You could add Jeremiah 6:20 to that mix as well. What about the myrrh? Remember the Ishmaelite/Midianite traders from the Joseph story? Let's read Genesis 37:25 and following and you're going to hear something interesting.

²⁵ As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt.

²⁶ Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? ²⁷ Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands

on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed.

Who says that? Judah... You know, that tribe from which the messiah would come?

²⁸ So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

Back to van der Toorn, I think it's entirely possible that the name of Yahweh does go to Egypt through Joseph. And it comes back and forth. You have these traders, you have Semites running around all over the place. I think what van der Toorn says is really worth considering. I don't know that it solves anything, but it's worth considering. And here you have *all* the elements. In Jesus' day, where does myrrh come from especially? It comes from the Nabateans. There's an *Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* article on the Nabateans. They're from south Arabia. It's the same thing as in these other two references.

My overall point in the foray to wrap this up is the guy who wrote 1 Enoch (a Second Temple Jew) saw the genealogies pitted against each other (God's plan versus chaos) and he saw Cain as a prototypical murderer—the archetypal human agent of chaos—and so that author aligned Cain with the Watchers and the harm they did. The New Testament kind of does something similar in 1 John 3 when it links Cain to Satan. My view is that these are conceptual and not literary links, though, and ultimately the teaching point is that the chaos genealogy expresses the idea that human civilization is invariably anti-Eden or less than Eden. It's human, as opposed to what could have been. So it's a biblical theological rationale that, in my mind, tells us why utopia always fails. Nothing we can do measures up to Eden. We can't recreate it on our own terms. We can't reverse Babel through our own plans and our own tactics on the way to building our own Eden. Only God can do this, and he inaugurated his own remedy through Christ who fulfills the law of Moses and the covenants and is the key to uniting all the lines of Abraham and the nations.

40:00

So this is big-picture archetypal thinking. And the reason I wanted to include the Enoch stuff in here is, there's just stuff lurking around in the Bible that if you read later texts (like Second Temple Jewish literature), they are tracking on ideas that wouldn't normally occur to you, but when you listen to their idea and then you go back into the Old Testament, you think, “Oh, yeah. I see where you could get that. I see why you could connect those dots the way you did.” It's just instructive. It's just another way to think about the material. And frankly, we've all wondered, “What in the world is Genesis 4 doing in the Old Testament anyway? The whole Cain story seems kind of interruptive.” He is an agent of chaos. Lamech is an

agent of chaos. What Cain does... Even the building of the city points to the futility (because Cain does it) of trying to restore order and Eden. Only God can do these things. And it's big-picture level thinking. But I think (for our purposes) it just gets us into it a little bit so that we can understand how people of Jesus' day (Second Temple Period) would have been thinking about their material (their Bible), and in this case it leaches out to us through a book like 1 Enoch.

TS: We're going to have to listen to this episode several times, Mike. There's a lot to unpack.

MH: It is.

TS: Alright, Mike, we've got Part 3 coming next week. And I want to remind our listeners, please, if you are an iTunes listener, go, go, go, go rate us, even give us a review if you can take time to do that. Every single one of you that listens to us through iTunes, please do that and help other people discover us. Alright, Mike, we'll look forward to Part 3 next week. Finally wrapping up chapter 3.

MH: Yep. I promise. [laughter]

TS: Well, with that, we want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.