

### 1 III. What Can God Do About Evil?

#### A. God's actions in the Old Testament

##### a. Evil in the Garden of Eden

- i. The Bible does not tell us why the serpent works its mischief, why it seeks to oppose God's will. In a similar fashion, the Bible does not really explain why there is moral evil.
- ii. God's response is swift and severe.
  1. The man and the woman will be exiled from the Garden-this limits evil.
  2. The earth will be cursed because of the man's sin and he will struggle to obtain the earth's blessing
  3. The relationship between the man and the woman will be stressed and distorted.
  4. The woman will give birth in pain
  5. The couple can still "be fruitful and multiply, but it will be difficult and their first offspring will be a murderer, their second a victim of murder.
  6. And yet, there will be Seth and Enos who will call upon the name of the Lord.

##### b. Evil at the time of the Flood

- i. The sin of Adam and Eve has spread like the plague across the earth, infecting and corrupting everything
- ii. God grieves, regrets creating and vows to uncreate, destroying the evil; God hates evil.
- iii. God relents and saves Noah and his family
- iv. Now there is the possibility for new good, but evil can once again spring forth and spread

##### c. Evil at the time of the City/Tower Builders

- i. Man is now openly in total rebellion
  - 1. They refuse their God-given task to spread out across the earth and "subdue it".
  - 2. Instead they will re-define who they are, that is to say make a name for themselves.
    - a. They will build a city and stay in one place
    - b. They will build a tower to glorify themselves rather than God.
  - 3. God thwarts their plans by making it impossible for them to work together.
  - 4. Ironically, now they are forced to spread out across the earth.
  - 5. Once again God has acted to limit the scope of evil.
- d. The New Way God will deal with Evil
  - i. In the past God has dealt with evil through exile, destructive forces of nature, and through scattering evil doers.
  - ii. Now God calls Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 12 and promises to in some way "bless" the cursed world through their offspring.
  - iii. Abraham is viewed as the polar opposite of Adam.
    - 1. He trusts God no matter how difficult that is.
    - 2. He obeys God no matter how terrible the command.
    - 3. In all things he trusts that "God will provide."
  - iv. This new way of dealing with evil promises to be costly and painful for God.

