

Sermons on Genesis-Lowell Johnson

“In the Beginning God” The Study of Genesis Lowell F. Johnson

January 2012

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- Fatal Attraction: The Test of Purity - Genesis 39:7-23
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- Resurrecting A Dead Conscience - Genesis 41:53-54,57; 42:1-8
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- Joseph and Crisis Management - Genesis 47:13-26
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- God Meant It For Good! - Genesis 50:15-26

Note: Related Resources are additions to Lowell Johnson's sermon and are from the excellent, conservative, biblicentric site Gotquestions.org

The Bible : An Introduction

Let me begin with a little Bible Trivia:

What was the first Old Testament book written and who was its human author? The first Old Testament book to be written was likely Job, written by Moses during the wilderness wanderings. Job knew about Adam (31:33) and the Noahic flood (12:15).

What was the first New Testament book written? James; about 49 A.D.

What is the longest Chapter in the Bible? Psalms 119, with 176 verses

What is the only book in the Bible which doesn't contain the name, God? Esther. Although the name of God is not mentioned in Esther, the providential hand of God is seen throughout the book.

Who is the only Bible writer who is not a Jew? Luke, who wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts.

The Bible is an Amazing book!

A. The Bible's Name or Title

We get the name "Bible" from the Greek word "Book" "Biblos"

-In Luke 3:3-4, we find the word "book" and again in Luke 4:16-17 we find the word "book" twice. It refers to the "scroll" since there were no such thing as a book in that day.

The Bible is one Book that contains 66 books. The Bible has some 40 human writers and was written over a period of some 1,600 years. In the KJV, it contains 66 books, 1,189 chapters, and 31,175 verses. It was written in different lands during the 1,600 years.

The 40 human authors wrote in three languages: Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic.

The Bible was first printed in book form in 1450 A.D. It sells about 30 million copies a year. Parts of the Bible have been translated into over 1,090 languages. The whole Bible has been translated into over 190 languages.

It was not until 1560 that the Bible was divided into books, chapters, and verses. Until 1560, the Bible was just a running sentence with no break between sentences. Imagine trying to find John 3:16 before then!

B. The Divisions of the Bible

The Bible is divided into two covenants or testaments. The Old Testament contains 39 books, written in Hebrew and containing the covenant God made with the Nation of Israel.

-The New Testament contains 27 books, written in Greek, and contains 27 books, and focuses on the church.

1.The Old Testament

In Jesus' day the Old Testament was divided into three parts: The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44). Today we divide the Old Testament into four sections:

a. The Law or the Pentateuch (5)

Genesis – Exodus – Leviticus – Numbers – Deuteronomy

b. The Historical Books (12)

Joshua – Esther

c. The Poetical Books or the Writings (5)

Job – Song of Solomon

d. The Prophetical Books (17)

Major Prophets (5) Isaiah – Daniel and the Minor Prophets (12) Hosea – Malachi.

In the Pentateuch, Israel was chosen, redeemed, disciplined, and instructed.

The twelve Historical Books with the five books of the Pentateuch, trace the entire history of Israel from its inception to the time of the Prophet Malachi:

-The twelve Historical Books (without the Pentateuch) record the conquest of the land, the period of the judges, the formation of a United Kingdom, and the division of that kingdom into the North (Israel) and the South (Judah). Each Kingdom was taken into captivity but many of the people eventually returned.

The five poetical books focus on a right relationship with God as the basis for a life of meaning , skill, and beauty.

The seventeen prophetical books have a two – pronged message of condemnation (because of Israel's iniquity and idolatry) and consolation(future hope in spite of present judgment.) often at great personal cost, these men refused to dilute God's strong words.

Between the Old Testament and the New Testament, there is a period of 400 years known as the "silent years", because there was no prophetic word from God. This period is known as the "Intertestamental Period."

2.The New Testament

The New Testament is divided into four sections:

a. Biographical: The Gospels

In these four Gospels we are given four views of Christ:

Mathew's Gospel presents Jesus as the Christ, Israel's Messianic King. Jesus fulfills Old Testament Prophecy concerning the Messiah. He emphasis the sermons and words of Jesus, and writes to the Jews.

Mark's Gospel presents Jesus as the Servant who came to give his life a ransom for many. He emphasizes the miracles and action of Jesus and writes to the Greeks.

John's Gospel presents Jesus as the eternal Son of God who offers eternal life to all who would believe on Him. He presents the deity of Christ and writes to all men.

b. Historical: Acts

c. Doctrinal: Romans – Jude (21 books written by Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude)

d. Prophetic: Revelation

e. The Central Theme of the Bible

The theme of the entire Bible is Jesus, and Salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

-If you miss seeing Jesus Christ in each book of the Bible, you have missed the meaning of the book. He's there – even in the shadows. Luke 24:27, 44-45

D. The Origin of the Bible

There are four doctrines we must understand if we are to get the most of our study of the Word of God.:

1.Revelation

Unless God willingly revealed Himself to man, we could know absolutely nothing about Him. He has chosen to reveal Himself so that we could know Him and so that we could communicate with Him.

-There are two forms of revelation described in the Bible: General and special revelation.

General revelation is truth about God revealed to us outside the Bible.

- Ps 19:1-6 God's creation reveals god
- Ro 1:18-21 God put within every man His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and the knowledge of His existence.
- Ro 2:15-16 God has put His law in the hearts of every man through their conscience.
- Eccl. 3:11 God has put the knowledge of eternity in the heart of every man.

Special Revelation comes through God's Son and His Word.

The sovereign Lord of history is intimately involved in the affairs of mankind. The uniqueness of God's

Word is seen in :

a. Its Production (Unity)

There is one great theme of the Bible : the Redemptive acts of God in Jesus Christ.

-There are some forty authors of the books in the Bible and they could hardly have been more diverse. Samuel was a judge; Amos was a sheep breeder; Ezra was a priest; Nehemiah was a statesman; others were scribes, kings, musicians, and farmers. Others were tax collectors, physicians, tent makers, fishermen, and carpenters. Some were highly educated, while others were unschooled. Some very poor while others were prosperous. Yet, they all presented God as loving, caring, and redemptive.

b. It's Preservation

In spite of persecution, perversion, criticism, abuse, and time, the Bible has survived intact. Jesus Himself has said that His Word will never pass away (Matt. 5:18).

c. It's Proclamations

One quarter of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written, and they stand alone in their accuracy. And the Bible is never out of date. It is as up-to-date now as the day it was written.

d. It's Production

No other book has so profoundly influenced the culture, thought, and history of the world. It has molded and shaped art, music, law, and politics. It has changed millions of lives.

Scripture is God – breathed - 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21

-God has even offered us the author of the book to help us to understand and interpret the Word aright. - John 16:13

God's Word will keep us from sin, or sin will keep us from the Word of God.

Related Resources: from Gotquestions.org

- [Old Testament vs. New Testament - What are the differences?](#)
- [What is general revelation and special revelation?](#)
- [What is natural revelation?](#)
- [How did people know about God before the Bible?](#)
- [New Testament Survey](#)
- [Old Testament Survey](#) [What is the story of the Old Testament?](#)
- [What was the Old Testament way of salvation?](#)
- [Why should we study the Old Testament?](#)
- [Is Jesus in the Old Testament?](#)
- [Where does the Old Testament predict the coming of Jesus Christ?](#)
- [How can I identify messianic prophecies in the Old Testament?](#)
- [What was the role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?](#)
- [Do Christians have to obey the Old Testament law?](#)
- [Where did Old Testament believers/saints go when they died?](#)
- [Why did God condone such terrible violence in the Old Testament?](#)
- [Does the Old Testament truly predict a second advent of the Messiah?](#)

In the Beginning God

Genesis 1:1

It was the custom in ancient times to name a book by its opening words, which is what the Hebrews did. The Hebrews named this first Bible book “Bereshith”, which means “in the beginning.” When the Old Testament was translated into Greek about 250 B.C., the Greek equivalent of the title was rendered Genesis, which is a perfect title because this book gives us the genesis (the beginning) of everything EXCEPT GOD!

The Book of Genesis gives us the doctrine of God, the doctrine of creation, the doctrine of man, the doctrine of salvation. Genesis provides the theological pillars on which the rest of the Bible stands. Jesus, the Messiah, has His prophet genesis in the third chapter of Genesis (3:15).

The Book of Genesis is a book of Firsts. In Genesis we find the first:

1. created man
2. marriage
3. murder
4. languages
5. sin
6. family
7. sacrifice
8. cities
9. Sabbath
10. culture
11. races
12. redemption

The Human Author of Genesis

While the human author does not identify himself in Genesis, internal evidence in the Bible tells us that the author was Moses, sometime between 1500 B.C. and 1400 B.C. Genesis was written after the Exodus (1445 B.C.), but before Moses's death (1405 B.C.), while Israel wandered in the wilderness.

-In the context of the wilderness journey, as God's people dreamed of the promised land, they would naturally ask about Abraham and the patriarchs who brought them down to Egypt. They no doubt asked about their ultimate origins (where did we come from?).

So God met Moses with His Word, giving him not only Genesis, but the first five books of the Bible.

Old Testament evidence that Moses was the author:

- Exo 17:14 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.
- Exo 24:4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Exo 34:28 And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.
- Num 33:2 And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD: and these are their journeys according to their goings out.
- Deu 31:9 And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.
- Deu 31:22 Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.
- Deu 31:24 And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,

New Testament evidence that Moses was the author:

- Joh 1:45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.
- Joh 1:46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.
- Rom 10:5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.
- 2Co 3:15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.
- Joh 5:45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.
- Joh 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.
- Joh 5:47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Some wonder how Moses could be the author and write about events that took place before his birth (the creation of the world and of Adam, the first sin, the flood, ect.) and also write about events after his death (like the fact that God Himself buried Moses and the people mourning and weeping for Moses thirty days after his death). If God can give His servants prophetic truths, then God could give Moses post-revelation or prophecy in reverse.

A General Analysis of the Book of Genesis

- -Generation – 1:1 – God created and Developed Something Good
- -De-generation – 3:1 – The Serpent, Satan, Destroyed the Good God Made
- -Re-generation – 12:1 – The Lord God Delivers what Satan Destroys

An Outline of Genesis

I. The Beginning of the Human Race – 1:1-11:9 (2,000 years – 20%)

- A. The Formation (creation) – 1-2
- B. The Fall – 3-5
- C. The Flood – 6-9
- D. The Folly – 10:1-11:9

II. The Beginning of the Hebrew Race – 11:10-50:26 (360 years – 80%)

- A. Abraham – 12 chapters
- B. Isaac – 3 chapters
- C. Jacob – 8 chapters
- D. Joseph – 14 chapters

The Book of Genesis isn't the beginning of everything. Genesis 1:1 reminds us, "In the beginning God." So what did God do BEFORE what's recorded in Genesis?

In the first chapter of Genesis we have:

1.The Revelation of God

In the first 31 verses of Genesis, God is mentioned 32 times. Add the personal pronouns referring God and God is mentioned no less than 43 times.

-The first statement in Genesis, and in the Bible, is a statement about God. God reveals Himself and makes Himself known to us. The entire Book of Genesis is about God from first to last.

-The Bible assumes certain truths are self-evident, so it never argues God's existence; it assumes the existence of God. It does not seek to prove the existence of God; it seeks to Proclaim the existence of God.

-The Bible says in Psalm 14:1, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." The so-called atheist cries, "Prove to me there is a God." I would say to the atheist, "Prove to me there is no God."

-We know only those things about God that He chooses to reveal about Himself. God is. Once you get that settled in your heart, a lot of other problems will be solved as well.

2.The Eternalness of God

- Isa 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place,
- Psa 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.
- Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

3.The Exclusiveness of God

- Genesis 1:1 answers the question of Atheism, but also Polytheism (the belief that there is more than one God. He is not one among many gods; He is the Only God.
- -Deu 4:35 Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.

Our God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere present. He is infinite and cannot be limited. He is perfect and cannot improve. He is immutable and cannot change.

The names of God also reveal something about God. The Hebrew name for God in Genesis 1:1 is "Elohim." The mystery of the Holy Trinity is embedded in Elohim.

-Elohim is in the plural. On the one hand the Bible teaches that God is a unity: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one" Deut. 6:4

-On the other hand, it is equally as explicit that God is three Persons (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14), and that all three Persons were active in creation (Gen. 1:1-2; John 1:1-3, 10; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:1-3).

This one true God exists as three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This doesn't mean that one God manifests Himself in three different forms, or that there are three gods; it means that one God exists in three Persons who are equal in their attributes and yet individual and distinct in their offices and ministries.

The Old Testament gives us glimpses and hints of the wonderful truth of the Trinity. The "let us" statements in Genesis (1:26; 3:22; 11:7) suggest that the Persons of the Godhead worked together in conference.

The divine Trinity planned man's redemption. It wasn't an afterthought, for God's people were chosen in Christ "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4; Rev. 17:8) and given by the Father to the Son, both to belong to His Kingdom (Matt. 25:34) and to share His glory (John 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24). The sacrificial death of the Son wasn't an accident, it was an appointment (Act 2:23; 4:27-28); for He was "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

The Godhead determined that the Son would come to earth and die for the sins of the world, and Jesus came to do the Father's will (John 10:17-18). The words Jesus spoke were from the Father (John 14:24) and the works He did were commissioned by the Father (5:17-21, 36) and empowered by the Spirit (10:38).

-The Son glorifies the Father (John 14:13, 17:1,4) and the Spirit glorifies the Son (16:14). The Persons of the

Holy Trinity work together to accomplish the divine will.

-In salvation, we are chosen by the Father (Eph. 1:3-6), purchased by the Son (7-12) and sealed by the Spirit (13-14), and all of this is to the praise of God's glory (6,12,14).

God was solely responsible for creating. He devised it and engineered it. No one else made any suggestions to God in creation (Job 38:3-6).

Gen. 1:1 The word "create" is found three times in Gen. 1. It is the Hebrew word "Bara and it means "to bring something out of nothing."

-Only God can create. Man can be creative, but only God can create. The word "create" contains the idea of complete effortlessness (Heb. 11:1-3; Rev. 4:11).

-The word "create" is used only of producing something new (1:1 – the primary act of creation; 1:21 – the creation of conscious life; and 1:27 – the creation of man.)

The only "tool" God used in creation was His voice!

An old preacher said that God came from nowhere, stood on a platform of nothing, reached back through nowhere, caught something while standing on nothing, slung it into existence, and the sun started shining, the moon started glowing and the stars started to glitter. Then God painted the sky blue without using a stepladder, took the rainbow and threw it over the shoulder of a dying storm. God gave the hyena its laugh, the worm its wiggle, and the bee its buzz. He put the stripes on the zebra, spots on the leopard, and taught the kangaroo how to hop. One day he walked down the middle of nowhere and spoke heaven and earth into existence.

Every time God speaks, something happens.

Well, what did God create in Ge 1:1?

1. Time

God brought into being, time. Up until creation there had been no such thing as time. Time is a creative word, for God is eternal.

On a time-line it would look something like:

Time
Eternity Past)-----+------(Eternity Future
Human History

Time was not always and there is coming a time when time will be no more. Rev. 10:5-6

2. Space (the heavens)

3. Matter : More than just soil, but all creative substance, used to "form", "make", and "develop" during the creation days.

Notice that this world was God's special focus in creation. The meaning of Genesis 1:1 is that in the beginning, God created the heavens and that especially He created the earth.

-God's interest was focused on our world and its inhabitants, the men and women whom He made in His image. The rest of Genesis chapter one and the remainder of the Bible concentrates on this unique planet of ours, the only living people in the whole universe, as far as we know. Our divinely created world has been planned, tested, spoken to, and visited by God's angels and by God the Son.

O, how He loves you and me!

Related Resources: These are additions from the excellent conservative, bibliocentric website Gotquestions.org

- [Book of Genesis - Bible Survey](#)
- [How do beliefs about creation impact the rest of theology?](#)
- [Why is biblical Creationism so important?](#)
- [What happened on each of the days of Creation?](#)

- [What is the biblical Creation story?](#)
- [What is young earth creationism?](#)
- [What is old earth creationism?](#)
- [What is the Day-Age Theory?](#)
- [What is the Intelligent Design Theory?](#)
- [What is historical creationism?](#)
- [What is theistic evolution?](#)
- [What is the Gap Theory? Did anything happen in between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2?](#)
- [What is the canopy theory?](#)
- [What happened on each of the days of Creation?](#)
- [What is the creation mandate / cultural mandate?](#)
- [Why are there two different Creation accounts in Genesis chapters 1-2?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about creation vs. evolution?](#)
- [What does it mean that God is the Creator?](#)
- [Old earth vs. young earth—what are the core issues in the debate?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about dinosaurs? Are there dinosaurs in the Bible?](#)
- [Do faith in God and science contradict?](#)
- [What is the age of the earth? How old is the earth?](#)
- [Who was Cain's wife?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about cavemen?](#)
- [Does Genesis chapter 1 literally mean 24 hour days?](#)
- [Did God use the "big bang" to create the universe?](#)
- [Why did God create such a vast universe and other planets if there is only life on earth?](#)
- [How can the light of stars billions of light years away from the earth have reached us if the earth is only thousands of years old?](#)
- [What is the location of the Garden of Eden?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about dragons?](#)
- [What happened at the Tower of Babel?](#)
- [In what way was the earth divided in Peleg's time?](#)
- [Did God create other people in addition to Adam and Eve?](#)
- [What was God doing before He created the universe?](#)
- [What does Creation "ex nihilo" mean?](#)
- [Why did God put the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden?](#)
- [How could there be light on the first day of Creation if the sun was not created until the fourth day?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about the ice age?](#)
- [Does the Bible say anything about a pre-Adamic race?](#)
- [What is Progressive Creationism and is it biblical?](#)
- [How does the geologic timescale fit with the view of a young earth?](#)
- [How does radiometric dating fit with the view of a young earth?](#)
- [Is there any evidence for the Bible's view of a young earth?](#)
- [Is creationism scientific? Is creationism compatible with the scientific method?](#)
- [How does creationism vs. evolution impact how a person views the world?](#)
- [Why is the science community so opposed to creationism?](#)
- [What caused the extinction of the dinosaurs?](#)
- [What are some flaws in the theory of evolution?](#)
- [Is the universe eternal?](#)
- [Is the universe expanding?](#)
- [The Missing Link - has it been found?](#)
- [Is the similarity in human/chimp DNA evidence for evolution?](#)
- [What is the best evidence/argument for intelligent design?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about uniformitarianism vs. catastrophism?](#)
- [What is the definition of *antediluvian*?](#)
- [How do beliefs about creation impact the rest of theology?](#)
- [What was the leviathan?](#)
- [What is the behemoth?](#)
- [Did God create the universe?](#)
- [What do creationists believe about natural selection?](#)

- [What is the breath of life?](#)
- [How does young earth creationism handle the evidence for millions of years in the fossil record?](#)
- [If Adam and Eve hadn't sinned, introducing death into creation, wouldn't the world have gotten overpopulated?](#)
- [What was the firmament in the Bible?](#)
- [What are the laws of thermodynamics and how do they provide evidence for creationism?](#)
- [What is the age of the universe?](#)
- [Is Jesus the Creator?](#)
- [What is the definition of Darwinism?](#)
- [Is carbon dating a reliable method for determining the age of things?](#)
- [Is belief in God compatible with quantum physics?](#)
- [What is laminin? Is there any significance to laminin being in the shape of a cross?](#)
- [What is the first earth age? Is the concept of a first earth age biblical?](#)
- [Why did God say, "Let there be light," during creation?](#)
- [What does it mean that the heavens declare the glory of God?](#)
- [What was the Scopes Monkey Trial?](#)
- [When was before the foundation of the world?](#)

The Days of Creation

Genesis 1

When God speaks, what He says happens.

- Psalm 33:6 - "By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."
- Psalm 33:9 "For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast."

When you consider the acts of God recorded in Genesis 1, you can't help but bow in reverent worship; for His creative acts reveal a God of power and wisdom whose word carries authority.

Three books of the Bible open with beginnings:

John 1:1 - "In the beginning was the word" takes us into eternity past when Jesus Christ, the Living Word of God, existed as the eternal Son of God. John wasn't suggesting that Jesus had a beginning. Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who existed before all things because He made all things (John 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2). Therefore, John's beginning antedates or precedes Genesis 1:1.

Mark 1:1 opens with "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." The message of the Gospel didn't start with the ministry of John the Baptist, because the good news of God's grace was announced in Genesis 3:15. As Hebrews 11 bears witness, God's promise was believed by people throughout Old Testament history, and those who believed were saved. The ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, was the beginning of the PROCLAMATION of the message concerning Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:1 - "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth refers to the dateless past when God brought the universe into existence out of nothing. Genesis 1:1-2 is the DECLARATION that God created the universe; the detailed EXPLANATION of the six days of God's creative work is given in the rest of the chapter. As we see in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created" time, space, and matter. "Matter" does not mean just soil. God created : "creative substance" - note Col 1:16-17.

In this passage, and others, we catch a glimpse of the active agents in creation: The Father willed it, the Son created it, the Spirit brooded over it or gave direction to it.

-The words "visible and invisible" (Col. 1:16-17) refers to all the laws (such as gravity). The government of the universe reside in Him. These laws are put into motion as needed on different days of creation.

-"Thrones", "dominions", "principalities", and "powers" are the ranks of angelic beings (Eph. 6:10-12).

The word "consist" (Genesis 1:7) means "to hold together or control." God holds drops of water in place and particles of soil together, ect. Think of what would happen if God were to release His control for one minute! There would be no order in soil, water, ect.

"Without form and void" (Genesis 1:1) have caused problems for some. Many have used these words to explain the conflict between

some scientist and the Bible, who believe that the earth is billions of years old and point to geology and fossils to “prove” their theories. Several theories have been submitted as to why the earth is billions of years old instead of less than Ten Million as the Bible states.

Theories about creation

1. Atheistic View

This view states that there is no supreme personal God and no single act of creation. But every created thing must have a beginning. It is impossible for living matter to come from something non-living. If evolution is true, then man is nothing more than an animal with nothing of God's image in him.

2.Theistic View

This view admits that there was an “Intelligence” which created the substance of the universe and then, like someone who would wind up a clock, took His hands off of it, and let it run itself. No, our God cares personally for His creation. He knows the number of hairs on our head and when one sparrow falls to the ground.

[What is theistic evolution?](#)

3.The Day-age Theory

These folks teach that the days of creation were not 24 hour days, but ages of days. The claim that God sees creation from His time frame. After all, doesn't the Bible say that “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter 3:8)? Yes, but God is careful to point out that these six days are 24 hour days. He says the “evening and morning were the first day.” These were 24 hour days, so that the earth is between seven and eight thousand years old. When God created, He created a full grown creation. There was no need for coal, gas, and oil to be formed under pressure, because God made this a full grown creation. So when people ask you which came first, the chicken or the egg, you can tell them that the chicken came first. God did not create Adam and Eve as babies, but full grown.

[What is the Day-Age Theory?](#)

4.Gap Theory

Some look at the words “without form and void” in Genesis 1:2 and remember Isaiah 45:18 (“For thus said the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord; and there is none else;” that is, He did not create it to REMAIN void. The gap theory requires the existence of a pre-Adam in order to explain the presence of

fossils or man who supposedly lived before Adam. This theory means that death came to someone before Adam was created. Yet, 1 Cor. 15:2 says that Adam was the first man to live and in Adam all die.

Others see between Gen. 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 the fall of Satan and the world that was then created, fell into chaos, and there had to be an act of recreation.

[What is the Gap Theory?](#)

5.The Christian View of Creation – Heb. 11:1-3; Gen. 1:1

“Without form and void” means “disordered and empty; formless and empty; chaotic and uninhabitable”, therefore uninhabitable and uninhabited – the very opposite of what the earth would be after six days of creation.

“Darkness was over the surface of the deep” (Genesis 1:2). Darkness implies the universe was neither formed or energized since light is a form of energy.

-“Darkness” served to emphasize the emptiness. Man can see nothing in darkness, but God can (Ps. 139:12). God was there.

Under the darkness and covering the earth was “the deep”, the primeval ocean.

-God first prepared for Himself the raw material with a view to giving afterwards order and life.

“And the Spirit of God moved” or “brooded. Like a mother hen, hovered or fluttered like a nurturing bird over the dark in preparation for day one. The Holy Spirit's creative breath hovered over the water.

Day One – Genesis 1:3-5

There's a pattern to God's activities during the creation week: first God FORMED and then HE FILLED.

There is a remarkable correspondence between the first three days and the last three.

Day four corresponds to day one. On day one the light was created. On the corresponding day four there came the sun and the moon to hold the light.

Day five corresponds to day two. On day two God created the expanse that He called the sky, separating the waters above from the waters below. And on paralleled day five, God filled the sky and waters with fowl and fish.

Day six corresponds to day three. On day three, God separated the water and dry land and created vegetation. On the matching day six, God filled the land with animal life and created man to rule over it all.

Form	Filling
Day 1 – Light	Day 4 – Luminaries: sun, moon, stars
Day 2 – Sky (waters below)	Day 5 – Birds and Fish
Day 3 – Land (plants)	Day 6 – Animals and man (plants for food)

Ten times in Genesis 1 we find the words, “And God said” - Genesis 1:3,6,9,11,14,21,24,26,28,29

The basic command for all living things was that each reproduce “after its kind.” The expression occurs ten times in Genesis 1. It is the rock upon which the whole theory of evolution is crushed. God has decreed that there be no change from one kind to another kind. There may be mutation or change within any given kind, but no kind to another kind. There may be mutation or change within any given kind, but no kind is changed into another kind. The principles of genetics have firmly established the fact that inherited life characteristics are implanted in the genes.

“Let there be light.” For the first three days light shone from a source other than the sun. God Himself is light. The Bible begins with light, but no sun and ends the same way.

“Light and darkness” and “evening and morning” in Genesis 1:4-5 indicate that the earth began to rotate on its axis at this time.

God surveyed all He had done and judged it, “Good!” Seven times in this chapter we find this word of approval by God.

Day Two – 1:6-8

On the second day of creation, God separated the atmospheric waters (or sky and clouds) from the terrestrial waters (or the oceans, sea and fresh water on the earth) by creating an expanse or firmament between the two. God produced a kind of canopy or an invisible expanse, consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, and other gases, extending to a height of about 22,000 miles and rotates with the earth. It produces a green house or hot-house effect which provides uniform temperatures by absorbing or deflecting and filtering out ultraviolet and cosmic rays to extend life. That is why men in the early days after creation lived to be 400, 500, or 600 years old.

-It was God's judgment upon sin that brought an end to this water canopy (Gen. 7:11). It took about 500-800 years for man to settle down to 70 years of life.

Why did God allow such long life for man during this time?

- 1.To promote speedy increase in population or reproduction (1:28).
- 2.So that man could have uninterrupted knowledge of the ways of life, work, ect.
- 3.To pass on redemptive knowledge of God (the knowledge of the garden, the fall, the promised Redeemer).

Day Three – Genesis 1:9-13

On the third day we see God's two-fold work: The acts of dividing the water from the land and the act of causing the dry land to bring forth all forms of vegetation.

In the first act is seen the birth of mountains and oceans – thus, the great basins had to be hallowed out in the earth so that the seas might be formed and other parts of the earth's surface had to be raised. Geologists tell us that this was the result of volcanic eruptions and the buckling of the earth's crust.

The second act produced vegetation. Notice the wisdom of God in that He first created light, atmosphere, soil, and water before He

brought forth vegetation.

-Notice the three classes of vegetation (Genesis 1:12), grass, herb yielding seeds (grains), and fruit trees.

Day Four – Genesis 1:14-19

These visible sources of light became visible from the earth's surface.

These light holders have a three-fold purpose:

- 1.To divide the day from the night.
- 2.To be for signs, seasons, days and years. Astrologers use the visible stars and planets for guidance and Psalm 19:1 tells us that, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.
- 3.To give light and warmth to the earth.

Fifth Day – Genesis 1:20-23

The word "create is used for the second time, which means that God is about to bring into existence something absolutely new.

-On the third day, God BROUGHT FORTH things which had unconscious Life -vegetation, herbs, trees. On the fifth day, God CREATED that which had conscious Life.

After creating everything necessary to sustain animal life, God created fish for the seas and fowl for the sky.

-This is the first time "creatures" are mentioned in the Bible. This word refers to consciousness or psychological life.

Genesis 1:22 is the first time the idea of being blessed occurs in the Bible. God's admonition to "be fruitful and multiply" was the substance of the blessing.

-Animals are not objects of God's love as man is, but Matthew 10:29 reveals that animals are objects of God's concern ("Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.")

Sixth Day –Genesis 1:24-31

God made the Animals, but He created Adam.

God brought forth:

- 1."Cattle" or all kinds of large, four – footed, domesticated land animals
- 2."Creeping things" or the smaller land animals, which move either without feet or with feet. This would include reptiles, worms, insects.
- 3."Beast of the earth" or what we would call wild animals.

Now God Creates Man – Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7

These are not two different accounts of the creation of man. Rather, the account in Chapter two is an amplified account. Someone put it like this: Genesis 1:26-27 is a view of man's creation with a Telescope; Genesis 2:7 is a view of man's creation with a Microscope.

The phrase "let us" indicates all the members of the trinity were involved in man's creation.

-“Let us” indicated divine dialogue. In other words, God addresses Himself.

Notice also that God became personally involved in the creation of man. In all the other creative acts of God, He simply spoke and it was so. With man, God became actively involved. He formed man in His own image from the dust of the earth.

-God did not create man from a clod from the earth, but from the finest particles of dust. Nor did God form a human figure from the dust and then breathed into his nostrils.

-By an act of divine omnipotence, man arose from the dust; and in the same moment in which the dust, by virtue of creative omnipotence shaped itself into a human form, it was permeated by divine breath of life, and created a living being, so that the body was not earlier than the soul or spirit.

The breath in man is different than the breath in animals. The animals arose at the creative Word of God with breath in him. With

man, God Himself puts His breath directly into the nostrils of man and man was created in the image of God.

What does it mean to be created in the image of God? Does it mean I look like God? No.

-The word "image" doesn't refer to appearance; it refers to likeness in nature. God created you and me in the image of His trinity.

-Humans are made up of three parts: Body, soul, spirit. The soul and the spirit may never be separated, and they do not operate independently of each other, but they can be differentiated and considered separate entities. Sometimes the words soul and spirit are used interchangeably, but in the Bible individually.

1 Thess. 5:23 describes the tri-unity of man. The word translated "soul" refers to the mind, emotions, and will – to the psychological life; our psyche. The word "spirit" refers to the spiritual part of man, the part that make us God conscious.

-God created us to fellowship with him. God speaks to us through our spirits. He speaks primarily through the Word of God, which is the only thing that is able to penetrate our being even to dividing soul and spirit – Heb. 4:12

-It is through our spirits that God gives us moral consciousness, so that the Holy Spirit can CONVICT us of sin. No animal can distinguish between good and evil or sense guilt or remorse.

Proverbs 20:27 tells us that God speaks to us through our spirits. "The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the inner depths of his heart."

God designed salvation in three parts to redeem the entire person – body, soul, and spirit. The first, called REGENERATION or being born again, saves our spirits instantaneously the moment we trust Christ. The second, called SANCTIFICATION, redeems our soul – our mind, emotions, and will – progressively as we read and live the Bible. The final part, called GLORIFICATION, occurs at the resurrection (Phil. 3:21 - "Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body..." -see 1 Cor. 15:49

Apparently Adam and Eve were initially vegetarians – Gen. 1:29-30

Because we are created in the image of God, we can hear and receive God's Word. Immediately after God had created man and woman in His image, He spoke to them – Genesis 1:28.

-This means that as image – bearers, we can hear and receive God's Word. No other creature can do that. This also means that we are responsible, moral, spiritual beings.

God also called man to rule over the earth – Genesis 1:26,28

Never be afraid to believe the Bible. It takes more faith to believe evolution. Someone put it like this:

Once I was a tadpole, beginning to begin,

Then I was a frog with my tail tucked in

Then I was a monkey in a banyan tree

And now I am a Professor with a PHD.

Three monkeys sat in a coconut tree,

Looking down on people like you and me.

Said one to the other, now listen you,

There's a certain rumor that can't be true,

That man descended from our noble race;

The very idea is a rank disgrace.

No monkey ever deserted his wife,

Starved her babies and ruined her life.

And you've never seen a mother monk

To leave her babies with others to bunk;

With baby sitters of one sort or another,
Till they scarcely know who is their mother.
And another thing you'll never see,
A monk build a fence round a coconut tree;
And let the coconuts go to waste,
Rather than let someone else have a taste;
Why, if I'd put a fence around my tree,
I'd only invite you to steal from me.
Here's another thing a monk won't do
Go out at night and come home in a stew.
Or use a gun, a club or a knife,
To take some other monkey's life.
Yes, man descended, the ornery cuss,
But he surely never descended from us.

The Day of Rest Genesis 2:1-3

In Genesis one we are told that God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in the universe in six days, all by the word of His mouth.

-The question is, why did God spread out His work over six whole days? He could have done all that He did in six days with one spoken word. So why did God spread out His creation over six days?

God capped off all of His creation by giving it His highest commendation: "it was very good." All that God made was worthy of Praise!

So, why did God spread out His creation over six whole days? It was in order to tie us to our Creator with the loving bonds of the Sabbath.

-Unlike the six creative days, the number of the day (the seventh day) is repeated three times.

What did God do on the seventh day of creation week? God rested, God blessed the seventh day, and God made it holy.

I. God Rested – Genesis 2:1-3

Why did God rest? Certainly not from fatigue. Omnipotence needs no rest because, regardless of the amount of power that goes from Him, His power is not depleted one whit. God's omnipotent power is infinite. God did not need a breather.

Actually the word "rest" means "to cease from." God simply stopped His creating activity.

-He was not tired; nor did He have to take a nap. God was satisfied with what He had created. So, He rested like a lawyer "rests" his case.

Four times we are told God finished or ended His work.

Of course, God continued to uphold everything that He had made, sustaining the world by His power, governing it by His providence, and insuring the propagation of its creatures. So, though God rested (ceased His creating activity), He still worked. In fact, if He had stopped working, everything would dissolve into nothing. Col. 1:16-17

II. God Blessed the Seventh Day

The seventh day was the only day to be blessed and made holy by God. God took such pleasure in the seventh day that he blessed it, which means He made it spiritually fruitful.

When God blessed the seventh day, He made it to be a happy day. Think about it this way: What is the opposite of “blessed”? It is to be cursed. To be cursed by God is to be out of His favor, outside of His friendship, subject to His judgment.

-To be blessed is to be in a special relationship with God, to be the subject of His love and grace. So God made this day a blessed day. The Trinity engaged in spiritual fellowship and communion on this day.

III. God Made the Seventh Day a Holy Day

The Seventh Day was the first thing to be hallowed in scripture. It was therefore elevated above the other days and set apart for God Himself.

God separates some things to Himself. There is nothing magical about the day and no physical change takes place, rather, the day is holy in being set apart and separated to Himself.

God made the creation over a period of six days, and then took a whole day off from labor. This is God's way of saying to all mankind, “This is a pattern for you.” There are certain patterns which God our creator has built into His creatures, and responding positively to those patterns are essential if we are to be real men and women, expressing our humanity and place in the world. Even if Adam and Eve had never sinned and fallen and the world developed in ever increasingly sinless beauty, there would still have been the need for man to give God a special time to focus on God to worship and honor Him.

-God made us for Himself and our hearts are restless until we find our rest in Him.

1. God included the keeping of the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments

It is the fourth and longest of the Commandments – Exodus 20:8-11

- Ex 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- Ex 20:9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:
- Ex 20:10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
- Ex 20:11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Notice that God says, “Remember the Sabbath Day.” It looks back; it assumes that the Sabbath Day was already in existence. Moses didn't invent the Sabbath Day. It went back to creation itself.

-God made special provisions for the Sabbath in the wilderness with the bread from heaven – manna (Exodus 16:22-26).

- Exo 16:22 And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.
- Exo 16:23 And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.
- Exo 16:24 And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein.
- Exo 16:25 And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field.
- Exo 16:26 Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.

“Keep it holy” It is set apart unto God. It is the Lord's Day; it is not my day; it is not the family's day; it is HIS day. He is so tremendous and mighty that it is not enough to give Him some time in the morning or in the evening. We must devote to Him one whole day every week.

-“Keep it holy” is the command. That means, guard it, preserve it, because there is going to be a fight over this day. Satan wants to destroy this day's purpose because he knows how much God's blessings on this day can revitalize and encourage the people of God.

Christians sometimes find Sunday rather busy. They join together in worship, listen to the Word of God being preached, teach in Sunday School, drive people to and from church. “Isn't this supposed to be a day of rest?” It is a day of rest from our normal labor, but this is the most satisfying activity in the world, for it is the work of the Lord.

The Sabbath instructs all humanity that there is more to life than work. It offers God's people the time to hear and meditate on God's Word, to think on eternal things, and to pray. Isaiah 58:13-14

Isa 58:13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Isa 58:14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

2.The Sabbath is the covenant sign with Israel – Exodus 31:12-13,16-17

- Exo 31:12 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- Exo 31:13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.
- Exo 31:16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.
- Exo 31:17 It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

No other people had the Sabbath. None but Israel has this blessed law, enforced by the gracious threat of death should one fail to keep it. God meant for Israel to be His people.

3.God changed the Day from the Seventh to the First Day

God could not rest on the first day of creation: He had to devote Himself to creating in order to rest from His own labors. One day in seven is to be a day of rest. That is the principle.

-When the Son of God became incarnate, He was faced with many disputes concerning what was right and wrong conduct on the Sabbath Day. He proclaimed by His own authority that the Sabbath was made for man – not just for Israel and the Jews, but for all of mankind. Jesus declared that He was the Lord of the Sabbath.

The Lord would change the day from the Seventh to the first. The Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the first day. On the first day of the week, Christ appeared to His disciples. The Lord appeared to the Apostle John on the isle of Patmos on the “the Lord's Day” (Rev. 1:10). It was on the first day of the week that the Holy Spirit was given.

Why should we honor and keep the Lord's Day? It is pleasing to the Lord. The Lord commands it of His children and if we love Him we will keep His commandments.

-What a witness it is to our neighbors to see us leaving our homes every Sunday and driving off to church. We should never be ashamed to gather with other Christians and worship God.

The Garden In Eden Genesis 2:4-17

Genesis 2:4-7 fills in details, especially of the sixth day, which were not included in Genesis 1:1-2:3.

-How did Moses obtain this account? (After all, the pagans had many fictitious stories of the creation that are so different from the account Moses gave.) The account didn't come from any human source, since no man was in existence to witness it. It was the Creator, God Himself, who revealed the account to Moses and it is through faith that we understand that the worlds were formed by the Word of God (Heb. 11:3).

In Gen. 2:4, the name for God switches from “Elohim”, the name of the Great Creator God, to “Jehovah Elohim – or “the Lord God.” “Jehovah” or “Lord” is the personal covenant name of God that reveals His role as the Redeemer and Protector of His people.

We are told in 2:5 that two kinds of plants had not yet appeared, the shrub of the field and the plant of the field. They could not appear yet because there was not yet any showers of rain; nor was there a man to cultivate the plants of the field. There were no crops yet because there was no man to tend them. There was a “mist” or “stream” that would rise up from the earth and water the ground.

The creation of man was distinctive from God's other creative acts.

1. God becomes involved personally in the creation of man.

In the earlier acts of creation, God simply gave the command: "Let there be...and there was." But when God created man, He deliberated with Himself, saying, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Everything else God formed was made after their kind; but what a change when God created man! Man's identity consists of God's own image. What dignity! Psalm 8:4-5.

"What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour."

Man was made in the image of God. Men have lost their original righteousness through the fall of their father Adam and their own sin, but the image has not been totally obliterated. Traces of the divine image remain.

Men have a mind and a conscience. The basic principles of God's law is written on their hearts (Rom. 2:14-15). Man has within him the knowledge that the world was made by an omnipotent and glorious God (Rom. 1:20).

Man possesses a free will. He has the freedom of choice and decision to obey God or to disobey Him. Man has a sense to responsibility.

Man has the capacity to experience close communion with other people and with God.

2. God gave man dominion over the creatures of the earth. 1:26,28

3. Man was made of the dust of the earth and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life – Genesis 2:7; Ecc.3:19-20

Someone said, "We are dust. We should not be surprised when we act like clods!"

-A little boy asked his mother if it was true that we came from dust and will return to dust. "Yes, sweetheart, it's true," she told him. "Mom, I just looked under my bed and saw a pile of dust. I think it's a man, but I can't tell if he's coming or going."

4. God prepared and placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful garden – Genesis 2:8,15

Eden is the first place mentioned in the Bible. The word "Eden" means "delight" or "paradise."

-Having placed Adam in the Garden, God gives him three commands: cultivate it (The beginning of agriculture on the earth). Guard, tend, and keep it (work was an important and dignified activity representing the image of God and serving Him, even before the fall), then God gives Adam a Permission and a Prohibition.

One of the great contrast between evolutionism and creationism lies in claim Christianity makes for the historic fall of man. Our first parents began their existence in a state of innocence, primitive integrity. For the evolutionist no such period of innocence ever existed or ever will.

-For the evolutionist the first men are pictured as living in caves; their homes damp and dirty. Their lives are portrayed as nasty and short, filled with dangers from wild animals, a harsh climate, hunger and violence.

-That is not how human life was from the beginning, according to the Bible, and that's not how human life is going to end. Ecc.7:29. "God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes." God made us upright and innocent, but man defied God and fell into sin and death. The results are that man, without God, spends his energies trying imaginable schemes. Man seeks salvation through the schemes of works, relationships, drugs, money, or entertainment.

Placing Adam in the beautiful Garden of Eden puts to rest the popular notion that a bad environment causes crimes and if we could just clean up the slums, people would stop doing drugs and stop killing each other and stop robbing each other. The basic problem of life is not what's on the outside, but what's on the inside. Here is a man with no sin nature who is placed in a perfect environment, and still he chooses sin. Don't be deceived in thinking environment is the problem. It's not. Adam had no reason to complain against God. He has everything he needs and soon he will be given a wife perfectly suited to him and he's about to mess up.

Eden was a Place of Rivers – Genesis 2:9-14

Four rivers are mentioned. We don't know the location of two of the rivers, but two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, runs parallel to each other in Assyria.

Eden was a place of Gold, Aromatic Resin, and Onyx – Genesis 2:12

Eden was a Place of Trees – Genesis 2:9

God gave both a Permission and a Prohibition.

-God did not put a jungle or even a forest in the Garden, but a Garden of many kinds of trees. It was a delightful place. These were trees FOR man, Good for food and a Delight to the eyes. The trees filled the Garden with Beauty to the eyes, Aromatic smell for the senses, delicious Taste to enjoy.

-This Garden had an abundance of nourishment, indescribable beautiful shade trees, crystal clear waters of the rivers, fruit hanging from the branches, the hum of the insects, the singing of the birds, and the fragrance of the flowers and leaves. Eden was a place of beauty and bounty.

-Eden was a place with no embarrassment, no guilt, no grief, no disease and no death.

Two trees stood out. In the middle of the Garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. One tree, its branches laden with fruit, promised life; the other equally laden with fruit, threatened death. God had taken an ordinary tree and made it a symbol of the promised life of blessing and fellowship with God. The other tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, was a test. The steady refusal to eat the fruit of that tree showed they were taking seriously a life of principled obedience.

This passage does not mean that if Adam had not sinned that he would have been immortal. Only God is immortal (I Tim. 6:16). John Calvin explains this, saying of Adam, "His earthly life truly would have been temporal; yet he would have passed into heaven without death, and without injury." Perhaps the translation of Enoch, who "was taken up so that he should not see death" (Heb. 11:5) shows what God would have done with Adam.

Gen. 2:16-17 are wonderful verses. This is the first of the theophanies of God in the Old Testament where the Lord came before Adam and spoke directly to him. The Son of God, in preparation for the incarnation, took on the appearance of human flesh and drew near to Adam and Eve as He did with Abraham, Joshua, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and others.

-We are told, in Gen. 3:8, that God would often appear in the Garden to speak with Adam and Eve. I wonder what they talked about. I'll bet Adam had a lot of "why" and "how" questions. Did Adam and Eve sing God's praises:

This is my Father's world, And to my listening ears
All Nature sings and around me rings the music of the spheres,
This is my Father's world, the birds their carols raise
The morning light, the lily white, declare their Maker's praise.
This is my Father's world, He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass. He speaks to me everywhere.
This is my Father's world, I rest me in the thought, of rock and trees, of skies and seas,
His hands the wonders wrought.

What about the Tree of Life. Adam and Eve were told that they could eat of EVERY tree, if they wanted to, except for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

-Nothing is said about their eating from the Tree of Life. I don't believe Adam and Eve ever ate from the Tree of Life. After the Fall, God put cherubim with a flaming sword on duty as guardians to prevent man from approaching the Tree of Life. They had once and for all eaten of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and then God said that since Adam had taken the forbidden fruit, he must not take of the fruit of the Tree of Life.

-Rev. 2:7 says that the Tree of Life is planted now in the New Heaven and New Earth "in the midst of the Paradise of God" and He promises the fruit of life to those who overcome. Adam did not overcome; he was overcome by the serpent.

- [What is the meaning of the tree of life?](#)
- [What is the location of the Garden of Eden?](#)

Man was made upright by God. God had crowned Adam with glory and honor, but man exchanged the crown of glory for a traitor's mask. From what heights of glory to such depths of shame, Adam and Eve fell. It was the fall of all falls.

Only in Christ Jesus can paradise be regained. Through the mercies of the New Covenant in Christ can man find forgiveness and pardon.

Adam's Rib

Genesis 2:18-25

This text recounts the divine provision of a “help meet” for Adam and of the two becoming “one flesh”. As with everything else thus far in Genesis, all is from God. Divine initiative is at the root of everything.

-Notice the God – initiated verbs that are used: “the Lord God said, (Genesis 2:18), “the Lord God formed” (Genesis 2:19), “the Lord God caused” (Genesis 2:21), “the Lord God made” (Genesis 2:22). In each case the Lord God takes the initiative to shape man and woman in their relationship.

Four things can be drawn from this passage:

I. God's Declaration – Genesis 2:18

The six joyous refrains (“And God saw that it was good”) is capped off by the seventh refrain (“and it was very good”). So we are unprepared for what God says in Genesis 2:18: “It is not good.”

-That doesn't mean that something God had made up to this point is not good. God means that so far, there is a deficiency or the absence of something that man needed.

-The observation and declaration of Adam's need is all God's. God didn't consult Adam. At this point Adam had no idea that it was “not good” for him to be alone. God wasn't responding to Adam's complaint. “Not good” was God's sovereign assessment.

-God knew something that Adam did not know, and that is, that God had created Adam a sociable being. Adam could not be happy by himself. Adam needed someone to interact with and to love and to share his life with. Man was never intended to function alone. “It is not good that man should be alone.”

II. God's Decision – Genesis 2:18-20

Because it was not good that Adam should be alone, God said that He would make for Adam a “help meet”, “one suitable to him”, “one complementary to him”, “one to complete him”, “a corresponding counterpart to him”, “his matching opposite that would supply what was lacking in him.” God would make for Adam one who would be both like him and unlike him – one whose corresponding differences would make man complete for what God intended him to do.

The woman would make it possible for man to do what he could never do alone. And likewise for the woman. Something “very good” would fill man's aloneness.

I would point out that God didn't say, “I will create for him a helper – someone who does the housework while the man of the house sits in his soft recliner with the remote control in his hands, flipping from one channel to another.

-Nor does it mean that man has the right to boss his wife around because he is superior to her. She, too, was created in the image of God and is man's equal.

You would think that the next verse would say that God created woman, but not so. Instead, God gave Adam the task of naming all the animals. Why?

-God was preparing Adam to honor and value his help meet. God is preparing Adam for marriage. He is teaching him to be a leader. The power to name is the power of authority.

-God was also teaching and training Adam to be a lover. The animals came to Adam in pairs to be named – male and female. Each had a counterpart. But in all of creation Adam found no counterpart for himself. God was creating in Adam a gnawing hunger for a life partner. Naming the pairs of animals was Adam's premarital counseling session.

Without a woman, a man could never be in love or be a husband. He had no one to talk to, no one to laugh with, no one to taste the ripe peaches with, no one to nestle with him in the evening, no one to share his joys with.

What's the point of having dominion and climb to the top of the leap if you end up all alone?

III. God's Deliverance – Genesis 2:21-23

The Great Physician is about to perform His first operation. He is about to make (literally, “build”) a woman for Adam.

Folks have made all kinds of jokes about the creation of Eve and marriage.

Someone said that there are three stages to marriage: the ideal, the ordeal, and let's make a deal.”

Someone asked, “Why did God create man first and woman second?” Someone answered that it was because God didn't want any advice on how to create man. Of Course, that was a man's point of view.

A lady said that God created man first and then said, “I can do better than that,” so he created woman and God said, “Now that's a lots better!

At a wedding reception an older gentleman pulled the new groom to the side and said, “Young man, love is blind, but marriage is an eye-opener.”

A young preacher was to perform his first wedding ceremony and he was afraid he might forget something, so he sought counsel from an older preacher. The experienced pastor told the young preacher, “If you ever forget what you're supposed to say, it's always appropriate to quote scripture.” Everything went smoothly until he pronounced the happy couple husband and wife. At that point, his mind went blank. He remembered the advice of the older preacher and quoted the only scripture that came to his mind: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

The traditional wedding ceremony declares that marriage is “an honorable estate.” It is honorable because God created marriage and gave it as a gift to the human race. Marriage is holy because God is holy and marriage comes from God. It is far more than a legal act made possible because we bought a marriage license.

Marriage is a central part of God's plan for the human race. While not everyone will get married, and not everyone should get married, the fact remains that most people will be married at some point in life.

Marriage is meant to be a shared companionship between a husband and a wife. As they walk through life side by side, hand in hand, they share everything together.

-In a good marriage, everything is shared on a basis of honesty, openness, and love.

This passage conclusively refutes homosexual marriage. In God's eyes there is no such thing. The biblical pattern is one man with one woman for life. When God created Adam and Eve, He established the fundamental order of human society. He created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve. He didn't create two men or two women. The whole case against homosexuality begins right here. Homosexuality in all its forms is a perversion away from the pattern God established in the beginning.

Genesis 2:21-22 God took one of Adam's ribs from his side. That is, Eve is literally fashioned from Adam. She comes from the essence of who he is.

The fact that Eve was formed while Adam slept means that he had nothing to do with it other than supplying the raw materials. God didn't ask for Adam's input or allow him to place an order, which teaches us men that God doesn't need our help in designing a wife suitable for us. Blessed is the man who doesn't try to “improve” upon God's gift to him.

-The gift of a wife comes from God Himself. When God brought Eve to Adam, He showed His sovereignty over the most intimate areas of life. We learn that God can be trusted to provide a mate at the right time and in the right way. Anxious single men and women need to hear this word from the Lord.

Genesis 2:22 says that God “brought her to the man.” Today the father of the bride usually escorts the bride to be down the aisle. That is precisely what happened in Eden. God was the father of the bride and He personally brought her to Adam.

-There was no courtship and no dating. The first marriage was an Arranged marriage. God Himself performed the first ceremony.

Genesis 2:23 is Adam's celebration. This is the first “boy meets girl” story in history. The first three words, “This is now” actually mean something like “this is it!”

Image the scene. Adam is flat on the ground, just beginning to awake from the divine anesthesia. As he opens his eyes, he sees the Lord and next to Him a beautiful creature looking at him in wide – eyed anticipation. He can't connect her with any of the animals he has seen. She's definitely not a giraffe or rabbit or porcupine. Who or what is she? She looks a lot like him, but clearly she's very different in several important ways. Then his brain says, “This is it!” and he blurts out, “Oh, baby! Where have you been all my life?” or something like that. This is love at first sight.

This verse also reveals something about male headship in marriage. Eve was taken from Adam, not Adam from Eve. He is the head of the relationship by virtue of his being created first (1 Tim. 2:13-14; Eph 5:23). It's not that the husband "should be the head of his wife, he "is" the head. This speaks of responsibility and spiritual accountability and has nothing to do with bossing someone around.

One of the great problems in marriages comes when the man fails in his God-given role or when the woman decides she will be the head of the home. God has ordained that the man be the head of the home; sometimes the woman is determined to be the head, so you have two in the family trying to be the head. Anything with two heads is a freak.

Eve was taken out of Adam so that he might embrace with great love a part of himself. Matthew Henry put it this way: "Eve was not made out of Adam's head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved."

IV. God's Design – Genesis 2:24-25

Two things are a MUST for a good, healthy marriage. There must be a "leaving" and a "cleaving" (a joining to one another)

-We are to leave our parents emotionally, physically, and financially in order to form a new family with our mate.

-Leaving normally is a one-time event, but cleaving (which means "to glue oneself" to another person) is the work of a lifetime. It demands an exclusive commitment that removes the possibility of looking around to see if we can get a partner we like better.

In our culture we symbolize that commitment with a wedding ring.

-Someone has said that the wedding ring is a small piece of jewelry on your finger that cuts off your circulation.

"One flesh" is more than the sexual relationship, of course, but it isn't less than that. Out of the physical union comes a joining of two hearts, two minds, two bodies, two personalities until they so intertwine that it is hard to know where one ends and the other begins. And as couples live together for a long time, they begin to act alike and sound alike and even to look alike. They even begin to think alike.

A healthy marriage is the work of a lifetime. God has ordained that a good marriage gets better with age.

Proverbs 18:22 "He who finds a good and godly wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord."

May our marriages be the nearest thing to heaven on earth!

Related Resources: from Gotquestions.org

- [Why did God use Adam's rib to create Eve?](#)
- [Is the Adam and Eve story to be understood literally?](#)
- [Why weren't Adam and Eve created at the same time \(Genesis 2\)?](#)

The Invasion of Planet Earth

Genesis 3:1-7

When we come to the end of Genesis one, we read that everything so far is "very good." When we come to the end of Genesis two, which is for the most part an amplified account of the creation of man, everything is still good. Everything was healthy, happy and holy.

-There was no sorrow or sickness. There was no cancer or crime. There was no tears or tragedies. There was no pain or problems. Everything seemed perfect!

What went wrong?

You and I know what is going to happen in Genesis three. So far, everything is wonderful, but something is going to happen soon.

-God created the possibility for things to go wrong. He didn't make angels or men in such a way that they would be immune from temptation. Almost as soon as God had created the angels, there was a rebellion by one third of them and God had a great spring-cleaning of heaven, driving every single one of the rebels outside.

-Isaiah 14:12-15

Isa 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

Isa 14:13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

Isa 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Isa 14:15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

The great sin was rebellion against God and His will, as well as the sin of pride.

-Rev. 12:7-9

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

Rev 12:8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

This is the result of Satan's rebellion.

-Rev. 12:3-4

Rev 12:3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

Rev 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

Here we are told that a third of the angels were drawn away in rebellion by Satan.

With that same freedom in which God made the angels, the Lord created man. In other words, man was created with no built-in immunity to sin. God created Adam and Eve INNOCENT; not PERFECT. If God had created them perfect, they could not have sinned; but He created them innocent (blameless) with the power of choice.

This is the first appearance of Satan in the Word of God and at his first appearance, he disputes what God has said.

I. Satan's Appearance – Genesis 3:1

Words that appear at the beginning of Hebrew sentences are the emphatic words, and so, these three words, "now the serpent," puts this animal right into our face.

-Satan has come to the Garden for a purpose. He hates God. God has just spoiled his plan of being worshiped and has been kicked out of heaven. He is going to tempt Adam and Eve to follow him as a third of the angels in Heaven had done.

Is Adam going to obey God? God allowed Satan, the ringleader of the rebellion in heaven, to enter the Garden of Eden to confront Eve. God didn't make Paradise a Satan-free zone. Something is going to happen!

II. Satan's Approach – Genesis 3:1-3

Satan began speaking to Eve and in return got Eve talking to him.

-Had Adam and Eve ever heard of the devil? Had God told Adam and Eve about the rebellion and fall of Satan in Heaven? I can't help but feel that God did. Satan began to talk to Eve through the serpent.

-Animals don't talk. Animals cannot talk. Adam named the animals; they didn't name Adam. If you come home from church and your dog started talking to you and asked you how the services were, you'd have to sit down a while!

-Only Adam was made in the image of God and so could think and speak. Animals don't have that ability. So when the serpent opens its mouth and strikes up a conversation with Eve, something out of the ordinary was

taking place. Alarm bells should have started ringing for Eve.

-In the New Testament, we read where demon spirits possess not only people, but a herd of pigs. The demon spirits even speak when they possess the pigs. Eve is listening to the personal embodiment of evil as she listens to Satan.

When we read Genesis three, we see the result of the fall:

1. Because of the fall of Adam, a curse came upon mankind, that men toil and sweat all their days as they battle with the thorns of daily living.
2. Because Eve fell, women will suffer great pain as they give birth to babies. The good news is that the glorious seed of the woman will produce one who will crush the serpent's head.
3. The serpent was cursed. Before the fall, the serpent was a beautiful creature that walked at least somewhat upright. Now the serpent is a fearful creature to be avoided. It now crawls on its belly.

Because sin came into the world through Adam, "It is appointed unto men once to die", because death entered the world created by the Holy One through one man, Adam.

-In Romans 5, Paul compares the action Adam with the action of Christ. As Adam did one thing, Christ has done another.

Romans 5:15

Rom 5:15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

Has it overflowed to you?

Romans 5:18-19 "Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."

How many times did Adam have to sin to disobey God and bring death to himself and all of mankind? Once. How many times did Christ have to obey the Father to bring righteousness and life to those who believe? Once.

-Because of Adam's sin, we are joined to him. We were born in his likeness. You say that it is not fair to be held responsible for something Adam did 6,000 years ago. You would have done the same thing he did. You are just as guilty as Adam. How many sins do you have to commit sin against God before you are classified as a sinner in your own right? If we posted your actions, attitudes, desires and thoughts for just the past week, would we find one sin?

III. Satan's Appeal – Genesis 3:1b-5

The serpent's first move was brilliant. In essence, he challenges Eve to a game of Bible Trivia. Both, Satan and Eve, distort God's Word by both abbreviation and addition. Both wanted to make God's Word say what they wanted it to say rather than what God really said.

Genesis 3:1 "Has God really said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

-Satan flattered Eve that she possessed knowledge that he didn't have and she could help him. He also hints that God is mean to restrict them from eating from ANY fruit in the garden. He was trying to drive a wedge between them and their loving Father.

-Eve misquoted God when she said, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden" Genesis (3:2). We see from 2:16 that Eve omitted God's generous words "free" and "any".

-Eve adds the words, "nor shall you touch it" (Genesis 3:3).

-Eve also generalizes God's words because God had said to Adam, "In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." But Eve changes that warning and makes it broader - "you" is in the plural form rather than singular.

Satan then calls God a liar (Genesis 3:4); yet, Satan is the father of lies. It's interesting that the first doctrine Satan denies is the doctrine of God's judgment. Why deny this doctrine. Simple: If you are convinced that you can get away with sin, sooner or later you'll commit that sin.

Satan promises Eve greater knowledge – Genesis 3:5 who wouldn't want to “be like God?” The serpent's words were designed to cause Eve to feel deprived and cheated by God.

V. Sin's Aftermath – Genesis 3:6-7

The temptation was on:

- 1.The Practical Level. The fruit was good to eat. That's the lust of the flesh.
- 2.The Emotional Level. It looked beautiful to her. That's the lust of the eyes.
- 3.The Spiritual Level. It would make her wise. That's the pride of life.

How did Eve get the fruit? I don't think Satan picked it for her. I don't think Satan even urged Eve to pick it. I don't think he said, “Take the fruit...go on, take it.” He didn't persuade Eve to rebel, he simply sowed some seeds of doubt in her mind and offered her new knowledge. That's how Satan works. He's pretty cunning.

She probably took the fruit in her hands, felt it, even enjoyed the pleasant fragrance. But please remember this : When you start fondling forbidden fruit, you've committed the sin already in your heart long before you take that first bite. If you don't want to get trapped, don't stop to inspect the fruit. Don't spend time thinking about how nice it would be, how good it would feel, or how much you deserve it.

Notice the verbs in Genesis 3:6 “saw...took...gave...ate.” She doesn't hesitate and neither does he. Eve has now joined the serpent's team. By giving the fruit to Adam, she is doing the serpent's dirty work for him, and she is dragging her husband down with her. But that's what happens when we yield to temptation. We never fall alone; others are always hurt by our rebellion and disobedience.

Eve never dreamed what would happen next. She truly thought that she would gain enlightenment. But her eyes were opened and she suddenly knew she was naked. And Adam's eyes were open and he knew he was naked. Innocence was gone forever. Now the full impact of disobedience begins to hit home. Now they are ashamed to see each other naked. Quickly they made a pitiful covering of fig leaves. But sinners can never adequately cover their own sin. The fig leaves keep falling off. And you can never replace them fast enough.

The peace and joy they had known has disappeared. New feelings raged in their hearts: regret, sorrow, shame, remorse.

God is going to come to their rescue. You see, only God can free us from our sin. In grace and mercy, God extends his loving hand of forgiveness to us. Have you reached up to Him for forgiveness?

Related Resources: These are additions from the excellent conservative, bibliocentric website Gotquestions.org

- [Questions about Adam and Eve](#)
- [Who was Adam in the Bible?](#)
- [Who was Eve in the Bible?](#)
- [Did God literally and visibly walk in the garden \(Genesis 3:8\)?](#)
- [Did Adam and Eve know what death was when God commanded them not to eat from the tree of knowledge?](#)
- [Is the Adam and Eve story to be understood literally?](#)
- [Why weren't Adam and Eve created at the same time \(Genesis 2\)?](#)
- [Was Adam with Eve when she spoke to the serpent \(Genesis 3:6\)?](#)
- [Why didn't Adam and Eve immediately die for their sin \(Genesis 3\)?](#)
- [Why was it wrong for Adam and Eve to know good and evil \(Genesis 3:22\)?](#)
- [What is original sin?](#)
- [Was the forbidden fruit an apple?](#)
- [Why do I face the consequences of Adam's sin when I did not eat the fruit?](#)
- [Did Adam and Eve know what death was when God commanded them not to eat from the tree of knowledge?](#)
- [Why didn't Adam and Eve find it strange that a serpent was talking to them?](#)
- [If God knew that Adam and Eve would sin, why did He create them?](#)
- [What did God mean when He told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply?](#)
- [Did we all inherit sin from Adam and Eve? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [If Adam and Eve hadn't sinned, introducing death into creation, wouldn't the world have gotten overpopulated?](#)
- [Did God create other people in addition to Adam and Eve?](#)
- [Why did God use Adam's rib to create Eve?](#)

- [Why did God put the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden?](#)
- [Does the Bible say anything about a pre-Adamic race?](#)
- [How did the knowledge of good and evil make man like God \(Genesis 3:22\)?](#)
- [Why did God punish women with pain in childbirth \(Genesis 3:16\)?](#)
- [Was Adam and Eve's sin really about eating a piece of forbidden fruit?](#)
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- [What is the meaning of the Hebrew word adamah?](#)
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- [Was Satan the serpent in Genesis chapter 3?](#)
- [What does it mean for salvation to be a gift from God?](#)

The Blame Game

Genesis 3:8-19

Satan, through a Serpent, tempted Eve to partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and she yielded. Eve gave to Adam and he did eat. Immediately the eyes of both were open and they knew they were naked; “and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons” or coverings. Now what?

The Lord God had often visited Adam and Eve in the Garden to have fellowship with them. This seems to be a daily time of fellowship with God. God visited by means of a “theophany” (the-oph'-uh-nee), which means God clothed Himself in human form so He would be visible to humans. It was always a time of good fellowship together. But this time they were afraid when they heard God coming to them and they hid among the trees of the Garden.

-They weren't comfortable in God's presence. Their guilt made them afraid of God and ashamed. It had never been that way before, but now there had been a divorce – not between Adam and Eve, but between man and God. They didn't want God to see them.

-Man has been trying to hide from God ever since. They don't want to meet with God. Much like the prophet Jonah who tried to hide from God, boarded a ship going to the opposite way from which God told him to go, ended up being thrown overboard and swallowed by a great fish, God even knew where Jonah was in the fish, and He knew where Adam was.

-Psalm 139:7-12 declares that God knows where we are always, and there is no where we can hide from Him.

Adam's transgression of God's Word had greater blame because:

1. God's Word had been given directly to him before Eve's creation.
2. Adam was present with Eve during the temptation (as evidenced by Satan's consistent address of Eve with the plural, “you”).
3. Adam, in self-serving passivity, allowed his wife to partake while he looked on. Then, seeing that she did not die, he partook. Adam was not fooled, as was Eve (I Tim. 2:14). His rebellion was an informed, eyes-wide-open, self serving rejection of God and His Word.

Satan had deceived Eve by telling her, “Your eyes shall be open, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil”; but he left out a major truth: That they would know good without the power to do it, and that they would know evil without the power to avoid it.

Both Adam and Eve died at the moment they tasted the fruit. To die does not mean to cease to be, but in biblical terms it means, “to cut off from the land of the living.” Since dying is existing, Adam and Eve's existence was now one of death. Sin immediately penetrated every sphere of their being. The couple passed from life to death.

We are about to see the personal consequences of sin. How they reacted to sin is the way we react to sin today.

Two things I want us to see:

I. The Arraignment – Genesis 3:9-13

God is about to confront Adam and Eve for their sin. Notice that Adam did not go looking for God to confess what he did. Rather, he

tried to hide from God.

-God seeks Adam. God is always seeking those who need him and need to be forgiven. God sought - they hid – and God found.

A. They Felt Shame – Genesis 3:7-10

The “where are you?” asks “Why are you there? Is that where you should be? Come out and face me.

-Shame entered the human heart for the very first time. Adam and Eve recognized their nakedness.

B. They Felt Fear – Genesis 3:8-10

They were afraid because they feared being exposed. Sinners always hide their sins. We lie about them, we cover them up, we change the subject, we shred documents, we destroy the evidence, we get angry and say, “How could you even think I would do something like that?”

C. They Blamed Someone Else and Used Excuses – Genesis 3:11-13

Adam blamed Eve. “It’s her fault. Don’t blame me!” Not long ago when God presented Eve to Adam, Adam said, “Wow! This is it! She completes me!”

-Now he blames Eve and even blames God for giving her to him. “The woman whom you gave to be with me. She wasn’t my idea. I’m not complaining, Lord, but I didn’t have this problem when it was just me and the animals. Lord, it was her fault!”

I’ve heard others blame God for their sin. I often hear the homosexual crowd saying, “God made me this way.”

-Adam had no one to blame but himself. Sin is always a choice. You either choose to do wrong or you choose to do right. People do not sin because they have to, but because they want to.

Some even blame the devil. “The devil made me do it.” But the devil cannot MAKE anyone do anything. It’s our choice.

D. They Felt Guilt

The first sin led to a cover-up. They tried to pass the buck, deny their guilt, shift the blame.

Disobedience leads to shame – Fear – Hiding – Blaming – Guilt.

-Adam doesn’t want to admit to what he’s done, but there is no forgiveness without repentance. In the end, they both have to own up to the truth. Adam finally says, “And I ate.” Eve finally says, “And I ate.” You can only hide so long, you can only lie so long, you can only make excuses so long. God gave us a conscience that will not let us rest until we confess our sins.

-Proverbs 28:13 When we sin, we have two options: conceal it or confess our sins and renounce them.

-”Confess” means “to own up to what you did.”

Someone said,

“Adam blamed Eve;

ve blamed the serpent

and the serpent didn’t have a leg to stand on.”

II. The Arbitration – Genesis 3:14-19

Satan is cursed (Genesis 3:14) and the ground is cursed (Genesis 3:17). “You are cursed” are the three saddest words in the Bible. That was and is the consequences of sin. The idea of this “curse” is banishment from the place of blessing.

There is judgment upon:

It is interesting God asked the serpent no questions as He does Adam and the woman. John 8:44 says that Satan was a murderer and a liar from the beginning and there is no truth in him. Therefore, God refused to enter into any kind of discussion with him.

The curse had two objects, first the snake itself (14) and then Satan who controlled the snake.

1.The Snake – Genesis 3:14

The cursing of the snake is consistent with the fate of other animals in scripture that caused injury to humans and were therefore put to death.

Ex. 21:28 “When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned.”

Beast used for immoral purposes were put to death, not because they were accountable, but because they were used to abuse men and women made in the image of God (Lev. 20:15-16). Every animal was made for man and was subject to him as head. Thus any abuse or perversion of the order called for strict judgment.

The curse is on the snake for being an accessory in the temptation. The Bible doesn't say what the serpent looked like before the curse, but it must have been a beautiful creature that walked upright.

-I wonder if Adam and Eve witnessed the terrifying transformation of that beautiful creature into a crawling, hissing, frightening creature we know today as a snake. They must have been petrified with fear as they thought about what God might do to them.

2.Satan – Genesis 3:15

This is the “first gospel”, the “[protoevangelium](#).” There will be unending warfare between the descendants of Eve and the offspring of Satan. This is the warfare between good and evil.

This is the first prediction of the coming of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. This verse predicts an ultimate showdown between Satan and Jesus. At the cross, Satan would “strike His heel”, a prophecy fulfilled literally when the nails were driven through His feet. But Jesus would crush the head of Satan by rising from the dead on the third day.

B. The Woman – Genesis 3:16

The judgment on Eve is also two-fold:

1.She will experience the pain of childbirth. Every contraction and every pain of giving birth to a child reminds us of the curse of sin.

2.God declares there will be continual conflict between the man and the woman. The phrase, “Your desire will be for your husband”, means something like, “Even though the man is to be the head of the home, something in the woman will rebel against that and make her try to usurp man's God-appointed authority. The woman will try to usurp the man's rule over her and the man will try to dominate.”

-The battle of the sexes began. Each now strives for control. The harmony of Eden has been replaced by an ugly competition. It has been that way since the fall and it continues to this day.

C. The Man – Genesis 3:17-19

At this point, God stops to list Adam's crimes.

1.“You listened and heeded to your wife. You should have intervened. You gave up your role as head of the home and consented without any resistance in her disobedience. She led you when you should have been leading her.”

2.“You disobeyed God's command.” Men, listen up. Adam sinned by failing to lead. The woman sinned because she acted independently of her husband, forsaking his counsel and protection. The man sinned because he abandoned his leadership role and followed his wife into sin. In the first sin, there is a total role reversal.

The judgment upon Adam is two-fold:

1.The man will suffer unending frustration in his work. His life will be marked by trouble, toil, pain, and difficulty. Nothing will come easy to him. He will work hard, but there will be many obstacles and little lasting satisfaction.

2.Physical death will become a reality for Adam. He came from dust and to dust he will return. Death came to Adam in two forms.

a.He ultimately died physically. Genesis 5:5 – Adam lived 930 years; “And he Died.”

b.He died spiritually immediately – He was separated from God.

But there is grace here. Jesus is called the Last Adam. He did what Adam could not do. He wholly obeyed His Father. He never sinned. He gave Himself a ransom for man's sin. He paid the price for our sins.

In Adam all die...In Christ are all made alive!

Have you trusted Him?

Farewell To Paradise Genesis 3:20-24

Before sin entered the world, there was beautiful intimacy between man and God as they walked together in the Garden of Eden. The familiar words from Austin Miles describe what Adam could have said as he described life in Eden:

"I come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses,
And the voice I hear falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses.
He speaks and the sound of his voice, is so sweet the birds hush their singing
And the melody that He gives to me, within my heart is ringing.

And He walks with me and He talks with me.
And He tells me that I am His own.

And the joys we share as we tarry there,
None other can ever know."

But sin spoiled that beautiful intimacy!

Have you ever said something or done something and the moment the words left your lips or the moment you did something, you said to yourself, "Oops, that was really dumb?" All of us have.

- "Oops" and "Oh, no" are a part of our vocabulary. I wonder if Eve said, "Oops" or "Oh, no" after Adam ate the fruit. Clearly, it didn't take long for the world to totally change. We don't know what kind of fruit Adam and Eve ate, but someone said, "If it was an apple, it must have been a crab apple."

The fact is that words once spoken can never be unspoken and deeds done can never be undone. Try as you might, you can't erase the record or make the words or deeds disappear. You can say, "I'm sorry", cry a river of tears and beg for forgiveness, and even if you are forgiven, nothing can alter the reality of what you said and what you did. It would be great if life had a "Delete" button that would erase what we said or did, but life doesn't work that way. We have to live with the consequences of what we say and do.

As we come to the closing verses of Genesis 3, we come to the end of the Garden of Eden. It will be referred to a few more times in the Old Testament, but the door has been slammed shut on paradise. Innocence is gone and the happy days in Eden are just a distant memory.

-I'm sure Adam and Eve must have told their children and grandchildren about the days of Eden. They also must have told them about the serpent, the temptation, the forbidden fruit and the first sin. They also told them about the judgment on the serpent and what God told each involved.

I want us to look at the final moments in the Garden. These verses speak of faith, grace, judgment and mercy.

I. Adam's Faith – Genesis 3:20

As the head and federal head of the human race, Adam rebelled and God has counted us all guilty as well as Adam. The new England Primer for children begins: "In Adam's fall, we sinned all." God reckons Adam's guilt as belonging to us as well. God has rightly imputed Adam's guilt to me and to all of you. Is that fair?

*Some argue that it is not fair to input Adam's sin to us. "He sinned in the garden; I didn't".

*Others have argued, "If any one of us were in Adam's place, we also would have sinned as he did, and the fact that we sin now against God demonstrates that."

*However, if you think it was unfair for you to be represented by Adam, then do you think it was unfair for you to be represented by Christ, for Him to live your life and die your death. Do you think it fair that His

righteousness was imputed to you by a just and a holy God?

-The procedure that God used was just the same in both cases, in condemnation as well as in justification. That's exactly Paul's parallelism in Rom. 5:12, 18-19.

Adam, our first representative, sinned – and God counted us guilty. But Christ, the representative of all who believe in Him, obeyed God perfectly – and God counted us righteous. That is simply the way in which God deals with the human race, by Adam and by Christ.

After all the talk about judgment, suffering, and death, in context verse 20 must be seen as a powerful statement of faith.

Adam gives his wife her second name. First, he called her “woman” because she was taken out of man. Now he calls her, “Eve,” which means “life”, “life giver”, “living”.

-To our first parents God has spoken the death sentence, “You will die”, but then, right on the heels of those words, Adam turns and calls his wife, “Eve!”, that is, “life.”

-The name signifies Adam's confidence that despite their sin and consequent judgment, despite the pain that they had brought into the world, all was not lost and the future was not bleak.

-Yes, sin and death abound, but grace and life much more abound. Adam has filled his mind with the promise of verse 15. There will be warfare or enmity between the serpent and the woman's seed. That means that a godly seed is going to come from Adam's wife. So, Adam calls her, Eve! She is life. Adam is no longer pinning the blame on Eve. He sees a source of life; not death. “Her seed will crush the serpent's head,” someday.

-Of course, they could not have dreamed how it all would eventually work out. They didn't need to see the big picture and they wouldn't have understood it if they had seen it. All that mattered was that Adam believed God's Word. Adam had faith in God and His Word.

What faith Adam had! One promise about the coming Deliverer; so little information; yet, Adam believed God.

II. God's Grace – Genesis 3:21

Adam and Eve had made fig-leaf loincloths in an attempt to cover themselves. But they were inadequate.

-Genesis 3:21 tells us that God became the first clothing designer.

If you think about it, fig leaves could never be a long-term solution. There are so many problems with fig leaves. They fall apart easily, they itch, it's hard to find the right size, and every day or two you have to get a new outfit.

-Man's puny attempt to cover his sin is always doomed to failure. We don't use fig leaves today to cover our sin and shame, but other than that, nothing has really changed. We use religion and good works to try and cover our guilt.

That's where God steps in. He will not send Adam and Eve naked out of the garden. God takes the initiative to meet the need of Adam and Eve. Without waiting to be asked, God provided some nice leather jackets made from animal's skins. In order to produce animal skins, animals have to die, which means that God had to put them to death. And that death involves suffering, sacrifice, and blood. This is the first example of the biblical doctrine of substitutionary atonement. Later, thousands of lambs would be put to death as a requirement for a part of their worship. Those little leather jackets pictured the grace of God at work to rescue fallen humanity through the death of Jesus Christ.

III. God's Judgment – Genesis 3:22-23

Sin must still be judged. That is why Adam and Eve were forcibly evicted from Eden. God really had no choice. If they stayed in Eden and ate from the Tree of Life, they would have lived forever in their sin, separated from God. What do you call a place where you live forever in sin, always separated from God? Hell! For them, Eden would be like hell itself. So, it was for their own good that they were cast out. If God lets them stay, they are doomed and damned.

IV. God's Mercy – Genesis 3:24

When you first look at this verse, it appears to be one final crushing blow. How can we find God's mercy in Genesis 3:24?

-We need to think carefully about the details. Cherubim are a particular class of heavenly angels. It appears from the rest of the Bible that they have a special assignment to guard the throne of God, preventing any unwanted person from coming near to God.

-When God gave the design for the tabernacle, He instructed that a thick veil be hung between the Holy Place and the Holy of

Holies. That veil contained figures of the cherubim woven into it.

-Inside the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant, with a golden lid called the Mercy Seat. Over the Mercy Seat were the golden cherubim whose wings almost touch. Once a year, and only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, one man, and only one man, the high priest, entered the Holy of Holies, carrying with him the blood of the sacrifice. When he sprinkled the blood on the Mercy Seat, it was consumed by fire from heaven, signifying that the Lord had covered the sins of the people.

So now Adam and Eve have been cast out of paradise. They are gone forever, never to return. The flaming sword flashed in all directions to remind them that the way back to paradise was blocked. As a result, man is now separated from God because of sin. The progress of the human race will move in two directions from this point. Man will make great strides in the realms of science and technology, and at the same time, he will be unable to conquer his own sinful heart.

All appears hopeless and lost until we consider that the Tree of Life is guarded, but is not destroyed. The whole truth of salvation hangs on that point. If God had destroyed the Tree of Life, none of us would ever be saved. We would live, die, and enter eternal punishment.

Eden as a place disappears after Genesis 3, apparently destroyed in the flood of Noah's day. But what happened to the Tree of Life? We have to go to Rev. 22:1-2 to find the answer to that question.

Rev 22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Rev 22:2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

When John gets his final glimpse of the heavenly City of God, he sees the throne of God, and from that throne a mighty river of water – the water of life – flowing through the midst of the city. And there on each side of the river stood the Tree of Life.

And where are the cherubim? They are gone; and there is no flaming sword. Now the Lord has opened the way to the Tree of Life. Anyone who is hungry or thirsty, come and eat and live forever.

How has this happened? When Jesus died on the cross, the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom. That veil – the one with the cherubim on it, constantly reminded the Jews that they could not come into God's presence on their own, was torn in two. The message? Through Jesus Christ, the way to God is now open to anyone, anywhere, any time.

The door to heaven is now open! Let all the sinners come.

Related Resources: from GotQuestions.org

- [What is paradise? Is paradise a different place than Heaven?](#)
- [What did Jesus mean when He said, "Today you will be with me in paradise"?](#)
- [Is "Paradise Lost" by John Milton biblical?](#)
- [What is the difference between Sheol, Hades, Hell, the lake of fire, Paradise, and Abraham's bosom?](#)
- [How can I, a Muslim, become assured of paradise?](#)
- [What will we be doing in Heaven? What will we do in Heaven?](#)
- [Can keeping the Five Pillars of Islam get me to heaven?](#)
- [Where did Old Testament believers/saints go when they died?](#)

Cain and Abel

Genesis 4:1-16

These verses give us the account of Cain and Abel. It is a story that is so well known that many people who never read the Bible know that Cain killed Abel. We even say that those who are misbehaving are "Raging Cain."

As we look at this passage of scripture, I want us to see:

I. The Conception Genesis 4:1-2

God had said to Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth." (Genesis 1:28) The incentive to have children was enhanced

by the promise of Genesis 3:15, that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. Through Eve, or the woman, would come the Messiah. Adam and Eve have been barred from Eden's garden and now are located somewhere East of Eden.

Genesis 4:1 says that Eve conceived and bore a son, Cain.

-All parents remember what it was like to wait for the birth of their first child. What hopes and dreams are wrapped up in that little baby who is your first born. I'm sure Adam and Eve had big dreams for Cain.

-Eve's pregnancy was the first to take place on earth and must have been a source of joyous wonder for the couple. Like millions of her daughters to follow, Eve likely placed Adam's hand on her tummy so he could feel the stirring of life. Perhaps he even listened in awe to the heartbeat within. But instead of fulfilling their dreams, the first baby broke their hearts and left a trail of blood and tears in his wake.

When Cain was born, Eve hoped that he was the Christ. The name "Cain" means, "I have gotten or acquired a man from the Lord." Eve would have been a cold-blooded atheist if she had believed anything else. Her exclamation demonstrates her saving faith in the promise of a coming redeemer. But she was wrong.

Cain's name reminds us that all life comes from God.

Eve bore a second son, Abel. "Abel" means "breath" and it is translated "vanity" at least 38 times in Ecclesiastes. His name signified a lack of permanence or meaning and alluded unwittingly to his life being cut short. His life will be brief.

As his sons grew older, Adam put them to work in the fields; and it became evident over the years that each boy had his own interest and skills. Cain became a farmer and Abel became a shepherd.

II. The Consecration Genesis 4:3-7

We don't know how old these boys are, but they are old enough to have their own work professions. Both were honorable and needed professions. Cain became a farmer and Abel became a shepherd.

This is not the first time that the brothers came to worship God. No doubt Adam and Eve had worshiped with their children. They had been to an altar and witnessed their own parents worshiping the Lord. God taught Adam and Eve the proper way to worship and why they were to offer a blood sacrifice. Even as God clothed Adam and Eve with the animal skins, He taught them about sacrifices and the shed blood, and they would have passed this truth on to their children. For all of his faults, Cain was no atheist. He came to worship.

Both brothers came to worship. God accepted one brother's worship and rejected the other. Why? It does matter how we worship and what we bring before the Lord. God is God and He is worthy of our worship. He also has a right to tell us what He will accept from us and what He will not accept. We must worship God His way and not the way that we want to worship Him.

Abel's offering was accepted. Why?

1. Abel came before God in faith – Hebrews 11:4 – Cain didn't. Abel believed God and offered the best he had; Cain lacked faith and apparently just went through the motions.

-Notice that Genesis 4:4 says that God looked with favor on Abel and his offering. The order is crucial: first the man, then the offering.

-Note 4:5 He did not look with respect upon Cain and his offering. Again, the order is crucial.

God always looks to the heart first and foremost. When He looked at Abel's heart, He found faith there, and it was faith God rewarded.

-Cain's absence of faith guaranteed that his offering would be rejected.

Sacrifice is acceptable to God only if it is offered in an acceptable spirit. Where there is no faith, even the finest offering cannot make up the difference.

2. Abel offered a blood sacrifice. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin" (Heb. 9:22). Moses makes it plain that Able offered the best, the fat portions from the firstborn of his flock. It was the healthiest, plumpest and of the choicest portions.

-Abel brought the best to God. Are you?

Cain offered of the fruit of the ground. You can't get blood out of a turnip or any other fruit. Cain's worship was unaccepted.

"Nothing can from sin atone; Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Naught of good that I have done, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”

Cain's anger and countenance was a dead giveaway to his sinful attitude (Genesis 4:5). Cain could have taken God's divine disapproval of his offering as the gracious communication that it was and humbly asked for God's forgiveness, promising never again to fall to such sin. But he did not.

God gently responded to Cain's anger – Genesis 4:6-7

-The questions are rhetorical. God knows the answer. God asks simply to force Cain to face his sin. Cain was so angry at Abel that he couldn't face his own personal failure. God's offer is genuine. If Cain would do right, and offer the right sacrifice in the right spirit, he too would be accepted. The door was open for both brothers, but it must be entered by faith.

The phrase, “**sin is crouching at your door**”, pictures sin as a lion waiting to pounce on Cain and destroy him. What started as sibling jealousy led to anger. If Cain is not careful, sin will overcome him and will master him. He is on the brink of destruction and God warns him so he can go another direction. There is a battle for his soul, and right now sin has the upper hand. But there is still time to change. What will Cain do? Will he realize his danger and turn from his anger or will it destroy him? The answer is quick in coming.

III. The Crime – Genesis 4:8

Cain rejected God's wisdom to do what was right so he could be accepted; he refused to repent, the crouching sin pounced and turned him into a killer.

Cain lures his brother to a field. How did Cain approach Abel? As a murderer? No, as a brother; “Let's go to the field.” It's the language of brothers. Abel trusted his brother and went with him. Do you see Cain's strategy? The murder was premeditated. His voice was the voice of a brother; his heart was the heart of a murderer.

There was a surprise attack upon Abel. Maybe it was done with a club or with Abel's sacrificial knife. There was certainly blood. After the first blow, maybe a cry of surprise, the question “Why?”, the fear, the shout for help, but there was none, the awful pain, the increasing darkness as the blows continue, and then, death. It started with the suggestion, “Let's go out together,” and it ends with murder.

-The first murder was murder in the first degree. It was not a beating that went too far. It was not an accident. It was not self-defense. It was not a sudden flare-up of temper. It was not retaliation. It was all planned carefully. It was deliberate, premeditated murder.

Why? Because Cain hated Abel? Yes, but also no. It was also out of hatred for God. He wanted to remove his competition and he wanted to get even with God. The only way to “hurt” God was to kill the man whose offering He accepted.

-The majority of murders are committed within the family. How easy it is to hurt those we love. No one can make us angry like members of our own family. The meanest things we say are said to those closest to us. We often show kindness to people we hardly know while we are treating our family as if they were the scum of the earth.

-Think of it. One minute you are making an offering to God; the next you are murdering your own flesh and blood. There is a little Cain in all of us and a lot of Cain in most of us.

Remember that God Himself had spoken to Cain personally. Isa. 1:18 The Lord had spoken to him passionately, clearly, lovingly, and personally, and still he went out from that meeting and killed his brother.

Related Resources: These are additions to Lowell Johnson's sermon and are from Gotquestions.org

- [Who was Abel in the Bible?](#)
 - [Who was Cain in the Bible?](#)
 - [Why did God accept Abel's offering but reject Cain's offering? Why did Cain then kill Abel?](#)
 - [Of whom was Cain afraid after he killed Abel?](#)
 - [Who was Cain's wife? Was Cain's wife his sister?](#)
 - [Why wasn't Cain's punishment death \(Genesis 4:14\)?](#)
 - [What was the mark that God put on Cain \(Genesis 4:15\)?](#)
 - [Am I my brother's keeper?](#)
-

IV. The Confrontation – Genesis 4:9-10

After this dastardly murder, God, in His mercy, didn't confront Cain with a sword of judgment, but with words. The Lord spoke to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" God wants to talk to Cain about what he has done. It's the last thing Cain wants to talk about.

-Notice that God was immediately on the spot, just as he had been with Adam and Eve after the fall. When God challenged Adam, Adam told the truth, if not the whole truth. But Cain told an outright lie. "Where is your brother?" "I don't know."

-We all know where Abel was, and Cain knew where he was, and God knew where he was. It wasn't information God was seeking, it was conviction and confession. Abel was lying dead in a field.

There is a total denial of responsibility. Cain lies to God and then he denies that it should matter.

-Then he made a callous, flippant remark. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain's flippant, indifferent reference to his dead brother revealed a heart hardened in its depravity.

"Where is your brother?" "I don't know." He plead ignorance. Don't say, "I don't know" to God. We all know far more than we are prepared to acknowledge.

"What have you done?" (V. 10) God is working again for conviction and confession.

-Let me say here that one son is dead and the other is a murderer, so the seed of the serpent is quickly striking at the seed of the woman, trying to cut off the seed that would crush his head.

God says, "Cain, you can't deceive me. You can't hide anything from me. The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground." This is a figure of speech to indicate that Abel's death was well known to God.

-Abel's blood was crying out, "Vindicate me."

V. The Curse - Genesis 4:11-12

1. Cain was put under God's curse – Genesis 4:11

2. The ground was cursed for Cain's sake.

Cain was a farmer whose one vocation was to produce crops, but the ground was under a curse. Cain would continue to work the ground, but it will no longer yield its fruit to him. Instead, the ground he works will produce weeds and thorns and the heavens will withhold their rain.

-Cain faced an appalling future of barrenness, pain, despair, frustration, and finally, death – as do all men who defy God.

3. Cain would be a fugitive – Genesis 4:12,14

Cain would be on the run all his life, fearful that someone would seek revenge for Abel's death and try to kill him. All his life he was looking over his shoulder. He would live in constant fear.

4. Cain would be a vagabond – Genesis 4:12

He would be a wander, moving from place to place, drifting from place to place, with no fixed place to live.

5. Cain was hidden from God's presence – Genesis 4:14

Cain would have no Lord to turn to. There was no coming to the Lord.

VI. The Callousness – Genesis 4:13

Notice the selfishness of Cain. It's all about Cain and his fears. "I...me...my...me." The man who killed his brother cares only for himself. He doesn't express even the tiniest twinge of remorse, contrition, or repentance. If he feels bad about what happened, he hides it well. His only concern is that someone will try to kill him.

VII. The Compassion – Genesis 4:15

God promises protection amid punishment. No one will be able to touch Cain without facing seven-fold vengeance from the Lord. Whatever the mark was, it guaranteed Cain a long life.

-This is both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing in that no one will kill him. It is a curse in that he will now live a long, restless, unfulfilled life. His life ended like "The Man Without a Country."

This was the judgment Cain received. Was it not just? It perfectly fit Cain's guilt for taking away the life of his kid brother. It was a perfect judgment, righteous in its every detail, lasting his entire life. The Judge of all the earth does right, and He will do right when He judges you and me.

The blood of Abel spoke to God. There is another's blood that speaks to God. It is also the blood of a murdered Man, but one utterly innocent, wrongly condemned by men, one without spot or blemish; It is the blood of "Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel,"

Doesn't the death of Jesus speak to you? If you were to see your child covered in blood, wouldn't that sight cry out to you? Never did any Father love his Son as God loved Jesus, and one day He saw Jesus' blood running from hands and feet and side. He was the Lamb of God, laying down His life and taking away the sin of the world.

-What was that blood saying to the Father? "Can you be indifferent to this blood?" Isaac Watts looked at the wondrous cross and said, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."

Abel's blood called for vengeance, but Jesus' blood cries, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." We are forgiven through the blood of Christ.

"Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more."

Cain's Ungodly Line and Seth's Godly Line

Genesis 4:16-5:20

A period of some 1,500 years lies between the Fall and the Flood. Jesus, Himself, commented on this period "as the days of Noah were" (Matthew 24:37), so would be the days prior to His return.

Two ancestral lines are traced in Genesis 4 and 5. The line of Cain is described first, the line of the ungodly; that of Seth, the line of the godly, is reviewed next.

-The writer pauses with the seventh from Adam in both lines to give a view of how things have been developing.

It has been noted that "without God, the more power we have the sooner we destroy ourselves; without God, the richer we are, the sooner we rot."

I. The Canaanites: The Ungodly Line – Genesis 4:16-24

Notice: This is the Canaanite civilization; not the Canaanite civilization.

After he murdered Abel, Cain was sentenced by God to restlessly wander the earth. So when Cain went out from the Lord's presence to live in the land of Nod (Nod means "wandering" east of Eden, his head was "bloody but unbowed."

-He bore the gracious mark of protection, no one could kill him, but he would live forever with his guilty conscience, never feeling at home, never feeling entirely safe. He couldn't work the ground with success and he would not die for a long time.

-Cain is now running from the Lord! What will he do? Where will he go? He will begin a secular society; a society that lived apart from God and in the Absence of His guidance.

What happens to society when it rebels against God? Answer: It prospers! See Psalm 73:1-28 for more details. The prosperity of the wicked has troubled God's people since the beginning. Why do some people ignore God, mistreat others, commit overt acts of sin, and seem to prosper anyway? And why do those who love the Lord seem to take it on the chin?

Cain's ungodly line is marked by their Indifference to God and their Independence of God.

-This whole section shows the ever-widening divide between the two lines- believers and unbelievers. And it helps us see how we should live in a culture that has largely turned its back on God.

Let me give you some marks of secular society:

A. Construction – Genesis 4:17-18

Cain's response to his punishment by God is threefold: (1) He builds a family, (2) he builds a city, (3) he builds a legacy.

He builds a family: Let's stop and answer a familiar question: Where did Cain get his wife"? The answer is fairly simple. Since the human race descended from Adam and Eve, he must have married one of his sisters or one of his nieces. Later on, God would forbid marriage between close relatives (Lev. 18:7-17). But at this early date, no sin was involved.

He builds a city: Rapid growth in population took place. This was a self-protection measure since he lived in fear. At a deeper level, the desire to build a city is an act of rebellion against God, who sentenced him to wander the earth. Now Cain will defy the Lord and settle down with his own people and build his own city.

-Cain was the first city-planner and the first real estate developer. The early days of the human race were marked by growth, expansion, and continual construction of roads, homes, and buildings.

B. Corruption – Genesis 4:19

Lamech decided to marry two women and introduced a "new morality." He "jumped the fence" of God's original design for marriage and became the first polygamist. Now instead of one man with one woman for life, sexual desire overrules God's design and anything goes.

-The names of his wives suggest that he was motivated by sensual impulses. Adah means "beauty" or "ornamental" and Zillah means "tinkling" or "seductress".

Now, centuries later, we move to the present. What do we find on the contemporary scene? Divorce. Sexual Exploitation. Abortion. Internet Pornography. Gay Rights.

And the worst of it is that we are no longer shocked at these things. In some cases, we tolerate these sins.

C. Culture – Genesis 4:20-22

There is a positive progress in human culture in the line of Cain. There was some marvelous discoveries.

Jabal

From Jabal comes agriculture. He adapted to cattle ranching. He developed animal husbandry.

Jubal

His contribution was music – string instruments and wind instruments. It was entertainment. From Jubal came the fine arts.

Tubal – Cain

He introduced an industrial revolution into the ancient world. He discovered smelting and forging of brass (copper) and iron. He would make instruments for farming, but also for war.

The three of them founded an age of discovery and were the innovators of prosperity, pleasure, and power.

It is a mistake to read Genesis 4 and conclude that human culture is a bad thing or that unbelievers cannot produce works of enormous value. To the contrary, the entire world has benefited by modern agriculture, the flourishing of the arts, and by the incredible progress of technology in the last century. These things are possible because even sinful men and women still possess the image of God that allows them to think, to create, to grow, to develop, to experiment, to dream, and to explore new territory. As Christians, we ought to be thankful for the creature comforts we have because of the mind and skill given by the Lord even to the ungodly.

D. Crime – Genesis 4:23-24

This is the oldest song in the Bible. Lamech composes a little ditty in honor of himself for killing a young man who injured him. Like a typical thug, he believes no one dares to bring him to justice. He even thinks that he will get revenge seventy-seven times if anyone tries to attack him.

-Lamech's boast stands in sharp contrast with our Lord's teaching on forgiveness, to forgive seventy times seven.

II. The Sethites: The Godly Line – Genesis 4:25-26

The narrative now goes back to Adam. Eve's faith is seen because "another offspring" is literally "another seed", which references the promise of 3:15 about how her seed would crush the serpent's head.

-Seth's firstborn and successors "call upon the name of the Lord." They worshiped God and proclaimed the Lord to others. This is the distinctive of God's people. They proclaim the character of the Lord and sing His praises.

-Believers went public with their faith "in those days". God never leaves Himself without a witness. Sainly men lived in the world with the ungodly. In the days of Cain and his descendants, the Sethites openly confessed their faith while Lamech boasted of his sin, while men followed sensual pursuits, and while society began to spiral downward. In that day of growing darkness, the godly banded together openly and publicly to declare the name of the Lord. When the ungodly grow bold, it is time for the godly to be even bolder.

When you put Cain's family tree next to that of Seth (Genesis 5), you can't help but notice the similarity in names. You have Enoch and Enosh (Genesis 5:6) and Enoch (Genesis 5:18), Mehujael and Mahalael (Genesis 5:12), Methushael and Methuselah (Genesis 5:21), and Lamech and Lamech (Genesis 5:25).

-What does this similarity in names mean? Perhaps it's God's way of telling us that the godless line of Cain (which is still with us) does its best to imitate the godly line of Seth. There is an Enoch in both genealogies, but Cain's Enoch didn't walk with God.

Notice that it is recorded that the Sethites died. The narrative is significantly silent about the death of the Cainites. Heaven had no interest in their deaths. As their lives were empty, hollow, meaningless sham, so their deaths were an everlasting shame. But God took note of the death of the Sethites. The death of each saint was jubilee day in heaven (Ps. 116:15). Death for them was not the end, but the beginning.

The genealogy of Cain gives no ages, since his line, being cursed by God, would have no eternal history. But Seth's genealogy not only gives the age of each patriarch at the time of the firstborn (by whom the line would be continued), but the number of years he lived after the birth, and then the total years of life. Each individual is important to God's eternal economy.

Genesis 5 has been called "The Bible's Graveyard." Adam was 930 years of age when he died (5:5). It took that long for the death sentence of Eden to catch up with him. Only one other person's death had been recorded so far – that of Able the martyr. Thus, the first two people to die went to heaven. The third person to leave the scene would be Enoch, and he did not even die. God began to populate heaven before Satan began to populate hell.

- [Who was Seth in the Bible?](#)

Enoch Walked With God

Genesis 5:21-24

Genesis 5 is one of the genealogy chapters of the Bible. It is one of those chapters in the Bible that we often read through hastily, if not skip altogether. It starts with Adam and ends with Noah and his sons, a total of eleven generations. As you read the chapter, it is almost like walking through a morgue, hearing the death bell tolling time and time again, "and he died." The chapter reminds us over and over again that "It is appointed unto man once to die" (Heb.9:27).

The first six men, from Adam to Jared, or 5214 years, all died and then we come to Enoch, who lived 365 years, but he did not die, for "God took him away." (5,579 years of death; then Enoch "was translated that he should not see death.")

I. The Testimony of Enoch – Heb. 11:5

It's interesting that more is said about Enoch in the New Testament than in the Old Testament. He is described in 51 words in the Old and 94 words in the New.

-One of the things the New Testament highlights about his life is his testimony. He had the testimony that he pleased God.

Genesis 5 tells us how he pleased God. We read twice, Genesis 5:22, 24, that Enoch "walked with God." You could say that Enoch's only claim to fame was that he walked with God.

-We never read about him parting a sea, raising the dead, healing the sick, or leading an army. His entire life is summed up in the words, "He walked with God."

There is nothing greater that could be said about us than that we walked with God. The greatest thing a church could say about a

member is that he/she walks with God. The greatest thing the people you work with could ever say about you is that you live for God.

In the Old Testament, we find two related expressions: “to walk BEFORE God” and “to walk AFTER God.”

A soldier walks before the eyes of the sergeant-major on the parade ground. He walks just as he's been instructed, and so to walk before God suggest an upright life, and a sincere and God-pleasing life. God saved us that we may spend our life walking before God.

The other phrase, “to walk AFTER God, suggests submission. The sheep follow after the Shepherd – Deut. 13:4

The walk WITH God is surely more than being aware that God's eye is on us and following the Lord day by day. There is a life of communion with God, of lifting up our hearts to God often instinctively, as someone we rely on moment by moment.

A. The Direction of His Walk was God-appointed

Notice carefully that it is said that “Enoch walked with God.” It did not say that God walked with Enoch. It is Enoch walking with God. The idea is that Enoch was going in the direction that God was going.

-To walk with God means that we are going God's way. When a person walks with God they want to go where God is going and do what God is doing.

Walking with God implies: (1)You have to be in the same place at the same time; (2)You have to be going in the same direction; (3)You have to be going at the same pace.

Walking together implies a shared commitment to be at the same place at the same time, going in the same direction together.

Col. 2:6 “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.”

Micah 6:8 He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good; and what doeth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

B. The Duration of His Walk With God – Genesis 5:22

Enoch walked with God for 300 years.

When we walk with the Lord, In the Light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way;
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with those who will trust and obey.

II. The Transformation of Enoch – Genesis 5:21-22

Enoch's life was transformed by a baby. What was it about this baby that brought him to the place where he walked with God.

A. He Realized His Parental Responsibility

As Enoch held his little son in his arms, he realized the responsibility he had as a father and that he needed a godly example and a good influence. He realized that one day his little boy would go to heaven or hell and the way he lived would largely determine which one. How we live before our children has a great impact on our children.

In Daddy's Steps

There are little eyes upon you, and they are watching night and day;
There are little ears that quickly take in every word you say;
There are little hands all eager to do everything you do.
And a little boy who's dreaming of the day when he'll be like you.

You're the little fellow's idol, you're the wisest of the wise.
In his little mind about you, no suspicions ever rise;
He believes in you devoutly, holds to all you say and do.
He will say and do it your way when he's grown up to be like you.

There's a wide-eyed little fellow who believes you're always right,

And his ears are always open, and he watches you day and night;
You are setting an example everyday in all you do,
For the little boy who's waiting to grow up to be like you.

B. He Received a Prophetic Revelation

Methuselah means "When he is dead, it shall be sent or it shall come to pass." What was going to happen when he died? The message in the name of Enoch's boy was concerning the flood. When Methuselah died, the flood of God's judgment would come.

Let's do a little Math:

-Gen. 5:25 - "Methuselah lived 187 years and became the father of Lamech."

Gen. 5:28-29 "Lamech lived 182 years and begat Noah." Add 187 and 182 and you get 369.

-Methuselah was 369 when Noah was born. Gen. 7:11 says that Noah was 600 when the flood began. Now add 369 and 600 and you get 969. Note Gen. 5:27 The flood came when Methuselah died. I believe it began to rain the very moment Methuselah drew his last breath.

It's interesting that the oldest man who ever lived was Methuselah. Coincidence? Absolutely not! Everyday Methuselah lived was another opportunity for man to get right with God. God was merciful and longsuffering, not willing that any should perish.

Enoch received in his son a message from God. Judgment was coming. I believe that each time that boy had a fever or pain, Enoch thought that maybe this is the time. God has also told us what to look for before His Son returns for His own. We are getting close to our Lord's return. Jesus is coming soon! That's why we should walk with God. When He comes, we will be face to face with Him.

III. The Translation of Enoch – Genesis 5:23-24; Heb. 11:5

After walking with God for 300 years, Enoch was translated. What does this translation mean?

A. He was caught Away

Genesis says simply that "he was not." One day Enoch was walking along and suddenly, "he was not." He was caught away, raptured, if you please.

-One day there will be a great host that will be "was not." 1 Thess. 4:16-17 [What is the rapture of the church?](#)

B. He was carried Across

The word "translated" means to "carry over or across." Death is the river that divides this world from the world to come. Enoch didn't have to cross that river, but instead, God carried him across.

-There is a generation that will not have to cross over the river of death, but will be carried over by God.

Enoch was gone, but there is something wonderful that he left behind. He left behind a testimony. So shall we. For good or for bad, we will leave behind a testimony. Make sure your testimony is one that will bring glory and honor to God.

Related Resources:

- [Who was Enoch in the Bible?](#)
- [Why did God take Enoch and Elijah to heaven without them dying?](#)
- [Who was Methuselah in the Bible?](#)
- [Why did the people in Genesis live such long lives?](#)
- [Who was the oldest man in the Bible?](#)

The Days of Noah Genesis 6:1-8

People who have never read the Bible or attended church know of the account of Noah and the great flood and the Ark that saved Noah and his family and the animals of the earth.

-The great flood recorded in Genesis 6-9 covered the entire earth. It is the single greatest natural disaster in

the history of the world and no other event in earth's history comes close to it. It's number one and there really is no number two.

-The other disasters were all local in nature, but Genesis describes a vast flood that covered the entire earth.

Why would God send such a flood? We know that the flood was a judgment on human sin, but what could the people of the pre-flood world have done that was so horrendous that it made God decide to hit the "Delete" button and wipe out all humanity with the exception of Noah and his family? What sort of sin brings on a judgment like the flood?

I. The Words of Our Savior – Matt. 24:37-39

Jesus gave a private message to His disciples on the Mount of Olives two or three days before He was crucified. We call that discourse "The Olivet Discourse."

-The subject of the discourse is the return of our Lord to the earth at the end of age. In order to help His disciples understand that future event, Jesus draws a fascinating comparison with the days of Noah. He tells His disciples that the past is the key to the future.

-Study the days of Noah, because what happened in those days will happen again at the end of this age. The spiritual conditions of the pre-flood world will be replicated in the days preceding the return of Christ to the earth.

-And what do we find when we examine the world of Noah's day? Write over it this Phrase in large letters: Business As Usual. They were eating and drinking (nothing wrong with that), marrying and giving in marriage (nothing wrong with that). They were buying and selling and continuing in all the usual activities of human life. Children went to school each day, businessmen made deals, teachers taught, doctors dispensed healing, farmers tended their crops. They evidently paid no attention to "crazy Noah" and the big boat he was building in his backyard.

As Noah warned them of impending judgment, they paid him no mind whatsoever. But at last the day came when Noah entered the Ark. "The rains came down and the flood came up." I'm sure in that day the people started beating on the door, but it was too late.

One translation of verse 39 says, "they did not know". What a condemning indictment.

- It was an age of enlightenment, but they did not know.
- It was an age of great progress, but they did not know.
- It was an age of music, fine arts, and literature, but they did not know.
- It was an age of military might, but they did not know.
- It was the age when mighty men roamed the earth, but they did not know.

They knew so much, but understood so little. They knew more and more about less and less until they knew everything about nothing and nothing about what really mattered. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. They had no time for God until it was too late.

-That is the world of Noah's day. They were wise fools who did not heed the warnings of the preacher of righteousness. Then the flood came and took them all away.

II. The Wave of Sinfulness

So why did God send the flood? There was a rapid spiritual degeneration after the first sin. Once sin entered the human bloodstream, it quickly spread until it dominated humanity. At first the serpent had to talk Eve into sin, then Adam sinned deliberately, then God couldn't talk Cain out of sin, then Lamech boasted about his brutality. But now, with the passing of a few generations, the entire world has become a cesspool of sin. Things have become so evil that God decides to start all over again.

What happened to bring on such a drastic judgment? Five phrases help us grasp the reason God sent a worldwide flood.

A. An Abuse of Marriage – Genesis 6:1-2

All agree that this is the most debated text in Genesis. Before we consider the controversial aspects of these verses, note the last two phrases. These marriages were made on the basis of nothing more than pure physical attraction.

They took wives, not based on spiritual principles, but on what was physically appealing and sexually arousing.

-A man saw a woman and said, "I like her. She's beautiful. She's a babe. She's hot. I want her. She's mine."

And he took her for himself. Forget about wisdom or training or education or ability or character. Don't worry about personality, family background, or godliness. Those things just get in the way.

-Marriage is now little more than satisfaction of pure animal appetites. Man sees woman. Man wants woman. Man takes woman. The last phrase suggests a certain jumping of the boundaries God had established. We know from Genesis 4 that Lamech felt free to take more than one wife. What would stop a man who lives on the level of fleshly desire from having ten wives? Or 20? or 30?

2 Cor. 6:14, 17 Marrying non-believers prevents the fulfillment of God's plan for marriage that the two become one physically, psychologically, and spiritually.

-The home was the first institution God created for man. The home was developed before the government or the church. The home was designed by God to be a place of love, harmony, teaching, training in spiritual things. The home was designed to be the nearest thing to heaven on earth. Yet, today, the home is often neglected. Little work is done in the home to seek the best for one another or to learn godly purposes. If the home is not what it should be, the church cannot be what it should be and the government cannot be what it should be. God puts great emphasis on the home; couples today put little emphasis on the home. The result is shattered, fractured homes that end in divorce.

Now, let me give you the commonly accepted view of this passage, but, I think, the incorrect view.

The common view is this: The term "Sons of God" refers to fallen angels who rebelled against God (who we would call demons), inhabited human bodies, married human women, and gave birth to the "nephilim" or "giants...mighty men which were of old, men of renown" (Genesis 6:4). The daughters of men" represents, they say, the human women; resulting in them giving birth to the "nephilim."

The term "Sons of God" does refer to angels in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; but these are NOT fallen angels. These refer to the unfallen angels who faithfully served God.

-Furthermore, the emphasis in Genesis 6 is on the sin of MAN and not the rebellion of angels. The word "man" is used nine times in verses 1-7, and God states clearly that the judgment was coming because of what humans had done. (v.5).

-When God created both plant and animal life, He determined that there would be reproduction "according to its kind" (Gen. 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25).

-Matthew 22:30 declares that angels are deathless and do not propagate and therefore have no need for marriage.

Here is the sin as I see it: The "Sons of God" refers to the godly line of Seth and "the daughters of men" to the ungodly line of Cain. The men of Seth's line married the daughters of Cain because they were beautiful (Ge 6:1)..

-God was concerned about the behavior of His own people, of those who called upon His name for daily blessings, the line of Seth. God saw them entering into marriage with the seed of the ungodly. This intermarriage between the godly line and the ungodly line would disrupt the whole hope of the coming of the seed of the women.

-Right through the Old Testament, God forbade His people from marrying those who were not His people, and the same principle continues right down into the New Testament. We are instructed to marry only in the Lord.

Did you know that love is not the criteria for marriage? A godly person and an ungodly person can fall in love, but God forbids a saved person and a lost person to marry, no matter how much they love each other. To put it another way, you may be in love and yet the marriage may be wrong.

-Many Christian marriages are fragile because they never had any foundation other than they found a member of the opposite sex very attractive; found that person utterly irresistible, and married them.

ED: See also [Who were the sons of God and daughters of men in Genesis 6:1-4?](#)

B. An End to God Patience – Genesis 6:3

God's spirit will not always be patient to call and deal with man. God will postpone judgment to give men more time to repent. But God's patience will not last forever. Let those who walk in sin be warned. Judgment is coming. The day of grace will end.

-The 120-year limit expressed in verse 3 refers to the years until the Flood would come. Time will come when

enough is enough.

C. An Abundance of Charismatic, Corrupt Leaders – Genesis 6:4

The word “giant” refers not only to size, but to be great in wickedness and sin. God saw the people of that day as “fallen ones”, while men saw these people as mighty leaders.

-Even today, much of what is admired by the world is rejected by the Lord – Luke 16:15

-Highly gifted men who could be charming when they need to be, but are also filled with corruption, violence, and all manner of evil.

D. A Headlong Rush into Evil – Genesis 6:5

Nowhere else in the Bible will you find such a clear description of the doctrine of Total Depravity. Total Depravity doesn't mean that we are as bad as we can be; rather, it means that we are as BAD OFF as we can be, because we are sinners, separated from God.

In Genesis one, we are told that God saw what He had made and it was “good” and “very good.” By Genesis 6, when God looks on the earth, He sees His creation turned into a foul cesspool of evil.

If you want to know what sin is like, study this verse:

1.Sin is Internal. It is a matter of the heart first and foremost. “The thoughts of his heart.”

2.Sin is Pervasive. It touches every part of our existence. “Every intent of the thoughts of his heart.”

3.Sin is continual. It consumes man and controls him. “Every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

This is what you and I are apart from God's grace. Any “good” we may do is stained with the dirt of our sinful inclinations (Isa. 64:6).

E.A Shocking Judgment From Heaven – Genesis 6:6-7

Ponder these phrases carefully: “The Lord was sorry” and “He was grieved.” His heart breaks over the sin that covers the earth. God is not some unfeeling God in heaven who watches with disinterest as man destroys himself. He weeps over broken homes, suffering children, the pain, sadness, shame, and guilt of man. God declares judgment is coming.

What are the marks of Noah's day that we can look for in our day?

1.The world will be completely unprepared for the coming judgment.

2.There will be widespread moral perversion and the breakdown of the family.

3.There will be a sharp rise in satanic activity and growing interest in the occult.

4.The shocking failure of leaders we thought we could trust.

5.The rejection of God's authority in the name of “freedom”.

6.Believers will be standing alone against the world. As it was...So shall it be.

III. The Walk of a Saint –Genesis 6:8

This is the first mention of “grace” in the Bible. “Grace” means “Undeserved favor” and describes the blessing God gives to those who don't deserve it.

-Not only did “Noah find grace”, but “Grace also found Noah”. Grace found Noah and his whole family.

Learn two important truths:

1.Grace is available in the darkest hours. This is the day of grace.

2.Grace is the only means of escape. What Noah did, we can do.

Related Resources:

- [Who was Noah in the Bible?](#)
- [Why did Lamech think Noah would bring comfort \(Genesis 5:29\)?](#)

Noah's Ark: A Picture of Salvation

Genesis 6:9–7:24

A few years ago a man named Robert Fulghum wrote an essay called, "All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten." It was so popular that it spawned a number of spin-offs. I ran across one called, "All I need to know I learned from Noah's Ark." Here's the list:

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics, just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn't everything. The snails were on board with the Cheetahs.
9. When you're stressed, float awhile.
10. Remember: The Ark was built by amateurs. The Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

Two things I want us to focus on in this study:

I. Noah : The Man Who Built the Ark

Why did Noah and his family survive the flood while the rest of the human race perished?

A. Noah was a Believing man who walked with God. - Genesis 6:9-13

Noah wasn't a minor character in the story of redemption.. he is mentioned fifty times in nine different books of the Bible.

1. Noah was a righteous man –Genesis 6:9; 7:1

This is the first time "righteous" is used in the Bible, but Noah's righteousness is also mentioned in other places (Ezek. 14:14,20; Heb, 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5)

-Noah's righteousness didn't come from his good works; his good works came because of his righteousness.

-Noah believed God's Word "and it was counted to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:9ff; Gal. 3:1ff). That means he believed God and took His Word seriously. His faith produced in him a lifestyle that made him different from his contemporaries.

2. Noah was a blameless man –Genesis 6:9

This describes his moral conduct despite the evil day in which he lived. If "righteousness" describes Noah's standing before God, then "blameless" describes his conduct before people. "Blameless" doesn't mean "sinless" because only Jesus lived a sinless life, but it means "having integrity, whole unblemished." Noah's conduct was such that his neighbors couldn't find fault with him.

Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Php 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

Php 2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Php 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

3. Noah walked with God –Genesis 6:9

Noah and Enoch are the only two men in the Bible who are specifically said to have walked with God. They experienced a taste of the intimacy and obedience that pre-fallen Adam and Eve knew when God walked with them in the garden.

4. Noah was a family man – Genesis 6:10

We are told that Noah had three sons. We are never told Noah's wife's name or the names of his three daughter-in-laws. God's covenant with Noah included all the members of the household.

5. Noah was a unique man – Genesis 6:11-12

Focus is placed on the contrast between Noah and his generation. The word “corrupt” means rotten or putrid or utterly foul. It describes a world in the final stages of moral decomposition. In the darkness of those days, one man stood out from the crowd. In an impure world, he was pure. In an unrighteous world, he was righteous. In a world that dismissed God, he walked with God.

B. Noah was a Faithful man who worked for God. - Genesis 6:14-22

God's plan involved three responsibilities for Noah and his family.

1. Building an Ark -

A very specific design is given – Genesis 6:14-16

The word translated “ark” is used in only two places in the Old Testament. In both places it basically means “box” or “container.” The other reference is in Exodus 2 and refers to the basket in which the infant Moses was placed when his mother hid him in the bulrushes.

-Both were to be coated with “pitch” which was used to bond and to weather proof.

“Gopherwood” was cedar or cypress wood.

The ark was designed for flotation, not navigation. The Ark was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It had three decks, one door, and a series of small windows eighteen inches high right under the roof, providing light and ventilation. Three decks were divided into compartments where the various animals would be kept and where Noah and his family would live. It contained at least 100,000 square feet of floor space, equivalent to 20 full size basketball courts. Total storage space was over 1.5 million cubic feet, roughly the capacity of 569 standard railroad cars. Dr. Henry Morris calculated that the ark was large enough to provide space for about 125,000 animals. Of course, many of the animals would be very small and would not need much space; and when it came to the large animals, Noah no doubt collected younger and smaller representatives. There was plenty of room in the ark for food for both humans and animals (Genesis 6:21).

- A very specific reason – Genesis 6:17
- The flood was world-wide, covering the Mountains.
- A very specific promise given –Genesis 6:18
- A very specific passenger list – Genesis 6:19-20
- Some very specific cargo – Genesis 6:21

2. Trusting God's covenant – Genesis 6:18

This is the first use of the word covenant in the Bible. A covenant is an agreement that involves obligations and benefits for the parties involved. Sometimes the covenants were conditional and sometimes unconditional. The covenant included both Noah and his family.

3. Gathering the animals – Genesis 6:19-22

How was Noah to gather such a large number of animals, birds, and creeping things? God would cause these creatures to come to Noah – Genesis 6:20; 7:8,15. This included not only pairs of unclean animals who would be able to reproduce after the flood, but also seven pairs of clean animals, some of which would be used for sacrifice (Genesis 8:20; 9:3).

Can you imagine the ridicule Noah must have endured as he began building the ark? How many “Noah jokes” do you think people came up with in the 120 years it took Noah to build the ark? Yet, Noah maintained his

obedience, doing exactly what God said for 120 years.

- Heb. 11:7 and 2 Peter 2:5 tell us that Noah was a “preacher of righteousness” and that he “condemned the ways of the world” for 12 decades and not one person believed him.

-People have not changed, for even today people do not really believe God will punish sin. Some seem to believe that God's warnings in the Bible about judgment and punishment of all sin are just scare tactics.

Related Resources: (Added to the original text)

- [Who was Noah in the Bible?](#)
 - [What was it like in the days of Noah?](#)
 - [Was Noah's flood global or local?](#)
 - [Would the discovery of Noah's Ark be important?](#)
 - [Were there dinosaurs on Noah's ark?](#)
 - [What are some of the most common questions about Noah's Ark?](#)
 - [How did Noah fit all the animals on the Ark?](#)
 - [What is gopher wood?](#)
 - [Had it ever rained before the Flood in Noah's day?](#)
 - [How was the flood in the time of Noah just?](#)
 - [What similarities are there between the Gilgamesh flood account and the biblical flood account?](#)
 - [Why did God also destroy animals in the Flood \(Genesis 6-8\)?](#)
 - [Why did God send the flood when He knew sin would continue after the flood?](#)
 - [Can the flood mentioned in Genesis be proven?](#)
 - [What was the purpose of the flood in the time of Noah?](#)
 - [Did the Bible copy the Flood account from other myths and legends?](#)
 - [What does the Bible say about the ice age?](#)
-

C. Noah was a secure man who waited on God – Genesis 7:1-24

Noah labored, building the ark and preaching repentance, until God's grace was exhausted and His patience ran out.

1. A Week of Waiting – Genesis 7:1-10

Notice that the Lord did not say, “Go into the ark;” He said “Come into the Ark.” He would be with them in the ark. If the ark went down, God would have gone down.

-Noah was in the ark as we are in Christ. More than 60 times in the N.T. believers are referred to as being “in Christ.” Noah may have slipped and fallen IN the ark, but he never fell OUT. In the same way, we slip and fall in Christ, but we won't fall out, for those who are truly saved will confess their sins, get up, and continue to live in Christ.

Noah and his family go into the ark seven days (Genesis 7:4) before the rain starts to fall. For seven days after Noah enters the ark, the door remains open for anyone to enter, but no one else accepted God's invitation. Evidently, it took the animals seven days to make their way into the ark. You would think that the people who saw the animals gathering into the ark would have realized that this had to be of God, but not one turned to God.

2.The Day of Reckoning – Genesis 7:11-24

Notice that God shut the door of the ark – Genesis 7:16

-It rained 40 days and 40 nights – Genesis 7:12 We are told in Genesis 7:11 that the waters came from two sources: The “windows of heaven were opened” and “all the fountains of the great deep were broken up.” That is, there were gigantic upheavals and shiftings of the earth's crust which caused the ocean's floor to rise and break up their reservoirs of subterranean waters.

In other words, the heavy rains from heaven fell for 40 days and nights. But the waters continue to rise for 110 more days because of the break up of the fountains of the deep. The waters rose for 150 days until the waters rose some 24 feet above the highest mountains, at which time the ark rested on top of Mount Ararat. It took 150 days for the water to recede and another 70 days for the Earth to dry. So, Noah and his family were in the ark for over one year and 17 days.

II. Jesus Christ: The Ark of our Salvation

Let me leave us with some spiritual lessons from the flood account:

A. God Judges Sinfulness

This is the central message for those who perished. God is patient, but His patience must eventually come to an end. God will not always strive with men (Genesis 6:3). Sin will be judged sooner or later.

B. Even in Judgment, God Displays His Grace

Though the world perished, one man and his family were saved. Until the day the flood came, the door was open. Anyone could have entered.

C. Judgment will come when Jesus returns to the Earth

The Ark points to Jesus.

1. Just as the ark was provided by God, Christ was sent from heaven as the gracious provision for our salvation.
2. The ark was sealed inside and out with “pitch”. The Hebrew word for this resinous substance comes from the same root word translated elsewhere as “atonement” or “covering”. Just as the pitch sealed and covered the spaces between the planks of gopher wood, the blood of Christ covers our sins so that they cannot rise up and condemn us any longer.
3. There is only one ark provided and it had only one door – John 14:6
4. The ark saved everyone who entered. And everyone who comes to Christ is saved. No one who comes to him in faith will be turned away. John 6:37
5. The ark was a place of total security. No matter how high the waters rose, all inside the ark were safe.
6. Once God shut the door, no one else could enter. While the door was open, anyone could enter and be saved from the coming flood. Once the door was shut, it would not be opened again until the flood was over. Today is the day of grace. The door of salvation is open to all who will enter. Whosoever will may freely come.

God takes no delight in the death of the wicked. 2 Peter 3:9

Only one question remains. Are you in the Ark of safety? Are you In Christ? Jesus is the Ark of Salvation. Jesus alone can save you from your sins. He alone can rescue you from the judgment to come.

But God Remembered Noah Genesis 8:1-22

God gives us great details concerning Noah and the Flood because He wants us to know that there are always consequences to man's sin. God's judgment will always come against sin because He is a Holy God. Let me give you a brief summary of the details of the flood.

Enoch walked with God and was the first man to be taken out of the earth without experiencing death. He begat a son and was told by God to name his son, Methuselah, whose name means, “when he is dead, it shall come.” That is, when Methuselah dies, judgment from God would come to the earth.

Methuselah's grandson, Noah, found grace in the eyes of the Lord and was told to build an Ark for himself, his family and the animals. It took 120 years to build the ark.

Noah entered the ark when he was 600 years, 2 months, and 10 days old.

Seven days later the rain began to fall and fell for 40 days and 40 nights. The “fountains of the great deep” also burst forth with water and the flood waters spread across the entire earth, covering the mountains to a depth of 20 feet.

The flood covered the earth for 150 days. As the flood waters receded, the ark came to rest on Mount Ararat in eastern Turkey, near the border with Russia.

Seventy-four days later the tops of the mountains become visible. Forty days later, Noah sent out a raven. Noah then sent out a dove on three occasions and the third time it did not return. Noah stayed in the ark another 57 days until the Lord told him to leave.

If you add it all up, Noah spent one year and 17 days in the ark. That's a long time in a cramped space for eight people and lots of animals. The ark was no luxury cruise. The ark was not equipped with a swimming pool. There were no movies and no fancy buffets. There was nothing to do but stay in a boat while it floated on the surface of the waters.

Genesis 8 describes God's "mop-up" operation after the Flood. Genesis 8 gives us hope and encouragement when we find ourselves in a storm. The major theme of the chapter is renewal and rest after tribulation. The chapter records the end of a storm and the beginning of new life and hope for God's people and God's creation.

I .How God Remembered Noah –Genesis 8:1

Keep in mind that Genesis is concerned with who God is and how He acts.

"Then God remembered Noah". One of the greatest human fears is to be forgotten. We fear death because it means that ultimately we will be buried in a grave, the world will go on without us, and we will eventually be forgotten.

-If you doubt that, go to an old graveyard and study the tombstones of those who were buried in the early 1800's. Who are they? Where did they come from? What were they like? What did they do? And the greatest question: Does anyone remember them? In most cases the answer is "no". And if you go back far enough, you can find thousands of graves of forgotten people who lived and died and it's as if they were never here at all.

The word "remembered" doesn't mean to call something to mind that may have been forgotten. God can't forget anything because He knows the end from the beginning.

-It simply means that in the midst of the great flood, God stayed true to His promise. He promised to deliver Noah and his family and all those animals, and during the flood, with all its death and destruction, the Lord looked down on the earth and remembered to have mercy on eight people floating in the ark with all those animals.

Perhaps Noah felt forgotten by God. If so, he is in good company, because some of the greatest saints have felt the same way.

Psalm 10:1 "O Lord, why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?"

Psalm 42:9-10 "I say to God my Rock, why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, where is your God?"

2 Cor. 1:8 Paul confessed that his troubles in Asia had been so severe that he almost gave up on life.

On the cross, Jesus cried, "My God, my God, Why have you forsaken me?"

To remember means to act on behalf of another. God remembered Abraham and rescued Lot from destruction in Sodom (Gen. 19:29). The Lord remembered both Rachel and Hannah and enabled them to conceive and bear sons (30:22; I Sam. 1:11,19). The Lord remembered His covenant and delivered the Jews from bondage in Egypt (Ex. 2:24).

How did God remember Noah during the flood?

A. He sent a wind – Genesis 8:1

This speaks of God's authority over the forces of nature. He commanded the wind to blow and the wind blew.

Where did the flood waters go? The flood greatly altered the contours of the land and created new areas for the water to fill, both on the surface of the earth and underground. He gave new depth to the oceans. The winds also help evaporate the water and moved the water to the places God had provided.

Later, God's wind would bring the locusts into Egypt and later drive them into the sea. (Ex.10:10-20).

God's wind would also open up the Red Sea and make a dry path for the people of Israel as they left Egypt (Ex. 14:21-22; 15:10).

B. He gave Noah a sign – Genesis 8:2-14

Noah was looking for signs that the flood was coming to an end. So he sent out a raven. Since ravens feast on rotting flesh, it no doubt found plenty to eat on the surface of the waters.

-The first time Noah sent out a dove, it came back because the water wasn't low enough. The second time the

dove returned with an olive leaf, indicating that plants were beginning to grow. The third time he sent the dove out, it didn't come back at all. Noah knew then that the end of the flood must be very near.

But why did Noah send the birds in the first place? God had told him when the flood would start, but not when it would end. God never told him how long the flood would last because he did not need to know. We can endure almost anything if only we know when it will end. That applies to sickness, personal pain, broken relationships, trouble at work, financial stress of watching our loved ones suffer. Our chief question is always: "When will this end?" And the answer is always : "In God's time, not one day sooner, not one day later." Nothing can rush, change, or hinder God's design for His children. We can rest on this truth: God can make the dry ground appear anytime He chooses. We may feel forgotten and abandoned in the flood, but the dry land will appear in due time.

C. He spoke to Noah again – Genesis 8:16-17

God said to Noah, "Go forth from the ark." The last word Noah heard from God was, "Come into the ark." So God was the first to enter the ark, and He was the last to leave.

As far as we can tell, this is the first time God had spoken to Noah since He told him to enter the ark. The year in between had been a time of silence from heaven. What a long year it must have been inside the ark. As Noah watched and waited, he went about his duties, wondering when the Lord would speak to him again.

-You may come to a time in your life when you think that the heavens have become as brass and that your prayers are bouncing back to you. What do you do then? You must do as Noah did. Stay faithful to what you know to be true. Obey the Lord and follow the light you were given in the past.

Notice that the Lord gave Noah's family and the animals the same mandate that He had given at the beginning: "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 8:17; 1:22, 28).

II. How Noah Remembered God – Genesis 8:18-22

A. Noah Exited the Ark –Genesis 8:18-19

I don't think we appreciate how much courage it took for Noah to leave the ark. The ark had been crowded, cramped, and no doubt somewhat smelly, but it had been home and it was safe. Now they were leaving the known for the unknown. The world they had know was gone forever. Cities gone, roads gone, homes gone, people gone. Geography changed, landmarks all different. Nothing looked the same. Everything was new.

-It might have been easier to stay in the ark, uncomfortable though it was. It took great courage to step out of the ark into a brand-new world. It meant leaving behind safety and security. And it meant trusting God for a totally unknown future.

Faith means taking the next step and then trusting God with the results.

B. Noah Erected an Alter –Genesis 8:20-22

The first thing Noah did after leaving the ark was to build an alter to the Lord to publicly thank God for his deliverance. Noah emerged from the ark an "altered" man.

-Noah took time to build an alter and make sacrifices to the Lord. The offering represented his complete surrender and total dedication to the Lord. Noah recognized that he owned everything to the Lord. It was God who warned him. It was God who told him to build the ark. God who designed the ark. God who called the animals two by two to the ark. God who shut the door, God who preserved the ark through the flood, God who brought the ark to a safe place, and it was God who told Noah when it was safe to leave the ark. God did it all! Noah was just along for the ride.

Noah was a balanced believer. He WALKED WITH THE LORD in loving communion and enjoyed His presence. HE WORKED FOR THE LORD in building the ark, and he WITNESSED FOR THE LORD as "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5). While in the ark, he WAITED ON THE LORD for instructions concerning his leaving, and once he was standing on the earth, he WORSHIPED THE LORD.

The description of God "smelling the pleasant aroma" (Genesis 8:21) is a human way of stating a divine truth: God was satisfied with the sacrifice, accepted it, and was pleased with His people and their worship.

God spoke the words of Genesis 8:21-22 to Himself in His own heart. It was His gracious response to Noah's faith, obedience and worship. God had cursed the ground because of Adam's sin (Genesis 3:17) and had

added a further curse because of Cain's sins (Genesis 4:11-12). God's promise here didn't invalidate either of those curses, and they won't be removed until Jesus returns and God's people dwell in the holy city (Rev. 22:3). But in His grace, God decided not to add to man's affliction.

The Flood had interrupted the normal cycle of the seasons for a year, but that would never be repeated (Genesis 8:22). Instead, God reaffirmed that the rhythm of days and weeks and seasons would continue as long as the earth endured. Without this guarantee, mankind could never be sure of having the necessities of life.

Living Under the Rainbow

Genesis 9:1-17

Let's suppose you are a reporter assigned by your editor to cover Noah's flood. It's the biggest story of the ancient world, and it's your story. So you research it and you write it up. When it's done, you turn it in, the editor reads it, and pays you the ultimate compliment, "Let's run this on page one." Then he asks a question you haven't thought about. "What do you want to use as the headline?" The flood has so many angles, how will you sum it all up in just a few gripping words?

-You could entitle the article, "God Destroys World in Flood"; and that would be true. Or, you could entitle the article, "God Gives Humans a Second Chance," which title is more biblically and historically accurate?

-Think about this: After the flood waters receded, after the animals left the ark, and after Noah and his family stood on dry land again, Noah and his family have the task of starting all over again. When Noah came out of the ark, he was like a "second Adam," about to usher in a new beginning for the human race. Faith in the Lord had saved Noah and his household from destruction, and his three sons would repopulate the whole earth.

-Keep in mind that this passage is all about God. He's the only Person who speaks or acts. Noah doesn't say a thing and he doesn't do a thing. God is the subject, the Actor, the Initiator. He establishes a new beginning, puts forth a new command, gives a new promise, and establishes a new covenant. Maybe a good title for the article would be, "Living Under the Rainbow."

In this passage God addresses the eight survivors of the Flood and gave them instructions concerning four areas of life.

I. Descendants: Multiplying Life – Genesis 9:1,7

If these two verses sound familiar, that's because they are a repeat of what God said to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. This is Eden all over again. God commissions Noah and his family to spread out across the earth and re-establish human civilization. Just as Adam was head of the human race in the beginning, Noah is now the head of the reconstituted human race after the flood.

All of Noah's descendants were important to the plan of God, but especially the line of Shem. From that line Abraham would be born, the man God chose to found the Jewish nation. From that nation would come the Redeemer who would fulfill 3:15 and crush the serpent's head.

II. Diet: Sustaining Life – Genesis 9:2-4

When God established Adam and Eve in their garden home, He gave them fruit and plants and grain to eat (1:29; 2:9,16); but after the Flood, He expanded the human diet to include meat. The harmony in nature that Adam and Eve had enjoyed was now gone, for Noah and his family didn't have "dominion" over animal life. Now the animals would fear humans and do everything possible to escape the threat of death.

-Since most animals reproduce rapidly and their young mature quickly, the beast could easily over – run the human population; so God put the fear of humans into animals. Noah and his sons became hunters. Following the Flood, man would no longer be a vegetarian.

However, God put one restriction on the eating of animal flesh: the meat must be free of blood. God said to Noah what He would later give in detail to Moses: the life is in the blood, and the life must be respected. In this restriction, God revealed again His concern for animal life. The life is in the blood, and that life comes from God and should be respected. Furthermore, the blood of animals would be important in most of the Mosaic sacrifices, so the blood must be treated with reverence. This shows respect for God also.

III. Discipline: Protecting Life – Genesis 9:5-6

From instructing Noah about the shedding of animal blood, the Lord proceeded to discuss an even more important topic: the shedding of human blood. Thus far, mankind didn't have a very good track record when it came to caring for one another.

- Cain had killed his brother Abel (Genesis 4:8).
- Lamech had killed a young man and bragged about it (Genesis 4:23-24).
- The earth had been filled with all kinds of violence (Genesis 6:11, 13).
- God had put the fear of humans into the animals, but now He had to put the fear of God in to the humans, lest they destroy one another.

Those who kill their fellow human beings will have to answer to God for their deeds, for men and women are made in the image of God. To attack a human being is to attack God, and the Lord will bring judgment on the offender. All life is the gift of God, and to take away life means to take the place of God. The Lord gives life and He alone has the right to authorize taking it away (Job 1:21).

According to the Law of Moses, if an animal killed a human, the animal was to be killed. If the animal was known to be dangerous but wasn't penned up, then the owner of the animal was in danger of losing his life. Yes, that would include dangerous dogs like pit bulls (Ex. 21:28-32).

Again, the Lord gives life and He alone has the right to authorize taking it away. This is the biblical foundation for capital punishment. In this passage, God delegates to human authority the right to take life in certain circumstances. Later on in the O.T., God will specify certain circumstances where the death penalty is justified. The death penalty was prescribed for murder (Ex. 21:12), working on the Sabbath (Ex. 35:2), cursing your father or mother (Lev. 20:9), adultery (Lev. 20:10), sodomy (Lev. 20:13), rape (Deut. 22:25), and kidnapping (Ex. 21:16). It should be observed that each of these crimes constitutes an assault on God's Law, or on one of God's institutions (such as marriage and family), or upon a person created in God's image. Note also that these Laws were given only to God's people, the Jews, and not to Gentiles. God gave these laws to the Jews for the sake of purity and holiness.

God arranged to punish murderers and see that justice is done and the law upheld by establishing human government on the earth. Human government and capital punishment go together – Rom. 13:1-7. Romans 13:4 tells us that when a civil authority (judge, police officer, soldier, ect.) acts to uphold righteousness and to punish evildoers, he does not bear the sword in vain. That sword of punishment, which includes capital punishment, is part of God's judgment against those who do evil, and especially against those who take innocent life.

Opponents of capital punishment ask, "Does capital punishment deter crime?" But does ANY Law deter crime? Perhaps not as much as we'd desire, but the punishment of offenders does help society to honor law and justice. Nobody knows how much a person learns when convicted and think twice before disobeying the Law. The law also helps to protect and compensate innocent people who are victims of lawless behavior.

-Not everything that's legal is biblical. Regardless of what some courts may say, God's mandate of capital punishment begins with "whoever". It was given by God to be respected and obeyed by all people.

IV. Declaration: Enjoying Life – Genesis 9:8-17

A. A Covenant with Creation

This section is what theologians call "The Noahic Covenant". In this covenant, God promised unconditionally that He would never send another flood to destroy all life on the earth. As though to make it emphatic, three times He said "Never again" (vv. 11, 15). He didn't lay down any conditions that men and women had to obey; He simply stated the fact that there would be no more universal floods.

At least four times in this covenant, the Lord mentioned "every living creature". He was speaking about the animals and birds that Noah had kept safe in the ark during the Flood (v.10). Once again, we're reminded of God's special concern for animal life.

B. A Covenant Sign

To help His people remember His covenants, God would give them a visible sign.

His covenant with Abraham was sealed with the sign of circumcision (Gen. 17:11; Rom. 4:9-12).

The Mosaic covenant at Sinai was sealed with the sign of the weekly Sabbath (Ex. 31:16-17).

God's covenant with Noah and the animal creation was sealed with the sign of the rainbow. Whenever people saw the rainbow, they would remember God's promise that no future storm would ever become a worldwide flood that would destroy humanity.

We make covenants today. In fact, most of you have entered into a covenant with someone. When I perform a marriage, I ask the bride and groom if they have rings to give each other to seal their marriage covenant. As husbands and wives, we need reminding of the covenant of marriage with each other before God. If one in the couple is tempted to become unfaithful, they only have to look at the ring to remind them of their vow.

As believers in Christ we need reminders of our new covenant in Christ. In 1 Cor. 11, we are told that the Lord gave us the Lord's Supper as a covenant sign since we belong to Christ. Christ gave His life for us so that we could live for and in Him.

- [What is the meaning of the rainbow?](#)

Noah's Sin and the Curse On Canaan

Genesis 9:18-29

What an amazing man Noah was!

-We are told that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and grace found Noah as well. Noah and his wife, three sons and their wives, were the only ones God would deliver from the judgment of the Flood.

-By faith, Noah walked with the Lord and faithfully built the Ark for 120 years, all that time preaching righteous, but not one person turned to the Lord.

-Noah, his family, and the animals were in the ark for 377 days and finally, they were able to leave the ark on dry ground and began to repopulate the earth.

How would this great man fare? After all the good things we have learned about Noah, 9:21 is shocking. You almost wish this verse wasn't in the Bible, but God always tells "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." The inclusion of things like Noah getting drunk and making a fool of himself convinces me the Bible is the inspired Word of God. If it were written by uninspired men, they would have covered up the sins of its heroes and not expose them.

The history of Noah and his family now moves from rainbows to shadows, and we behold the shameful sins of a great man of faith. Not every believer now in heaven ended the race hearing God's "Well done!"

-This verse reveals no one is above falling into sin. Noah was 600 years old when the Flood came, so he had lived a righteous life before God for centuries. But now, in his latter years, he mars his testimony.

-Noah is just one example of many biblical people who in their latter years fell into sin.

Moses had been a great leader of the people of God. As they went through the wilderness, they ran out of water and the people began to complain. God instructed Moses to strike a rock and from that rock came water. A second time the people needed water. This time God told Moses to SPEAK to the rock and water would come. Instead, in anger, Moses struck the rock. As a result, God told Moses he would not be able to enter the Promised Land (Num. 20:7-12).

David was a man after God's heart and, yet, later in his life he committed adultery and had Bathsheba's husband killed (2 Sam. 11:2-5).

Solomon turned from God in mid-life, married strange women who turned his heart to false gods, and as a result God said He would take the kingdom from him (1 Kings 11:2-4, 11).

At any age in our spiritual life we can fall into sin. What is a Christian to do when he or she falls into sin? The same Bible that condemns sin also tells us that we can confess our sin to the Lord and in repentance be forgiven. (1 John 1:9).

-Satan brought down Noah, Moses, David, and Solomon, and he can do the same to you and me in one way or another. It may be through being a workaholic, prideful, bitter, jealous, ect. When this happens, we need to remember our God not only saves but also restores.

-If God only used perfect people, who would He use? No one! None of us are perfect, but God can use us anyway if, when we sin, we take advantage of His promise for cleansing and restoration.

I. A Family Tragedy –Genesis 9:18-23

In Genesis 9:18-19, the main characters are listed – Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth – and the main theme of this section is

announced: Now Noah's family multiplied and scattered over the earth.

A. Disgrace – Genesis 9:20-21

In becoming a farmer, Noah followed the vocation of his father, Lamech (Genesis 5:28-29). While the Bible condemns drunkenness, it doesn't condemn the growing or eating of grapes or the drinking of wine in moderation. (For Christians, any drinking of wine could become a stumbling block to others, and, if that is the case, I believe we should abstain).

-Grapes, raisins, and wine were important elements in the diet of Eastern peoples. In fact, in O.T. Society, wine was considered a blessing from God (Ps. 104:14-15; Deut. 14:26) and was even used with the sacrifices (Lev. 23:13; Num. 28:7).

Righteous, rescued Noah lay passed out in a drunken stupor on the floor of his tent. Some try to exonerate Noah and say that Noah was ignorant of the fiery nature of wine, but people got drunk before the flood, so that defense is feeble.

This is the first mention of wine in scripture, but wine-making was practiced before the flood, and Noah certainly knew what too much wine would do to him. Sometimes smart people can do very dumb things. And they often hurt the people closest to them in the process.

-Both his drunkenness and his nakedness were disgraceful, and the two often go together.

- Gen. 19:30-38 After Lot and his two daughters escaped Sodom and Gomorrah, they went to Zoar and dwelt in a cave. The daughters got their father drunk and both lay with him, one night one and the other the next and “thus were both daughters of Lot with child by their father.”
- Hab. 2:15-16 “Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pressing him to your bottle, even to make him drunk that you might look on his nakedness. You are filled with shame instead of glory. You also drink!”
- Lam. 4:21 “The cup shall also pass over to you and you shall become drunk and make yourself naked.”

Drunkenness often leads to nakedness, exposure, humiliation, and immorality. No one can tell the number of young people, as well as adults, who because of drink and nakedness lead to immorality, the sacrifice of their purity and an unwanted pregnancy.

-Alcohol isn't a stimulant, it's a narcotic; and when the brain is affected by alcohol, the person loses self-control. At least Noah was in his own tent when this happened and not out in public. But when you consider who he was (a preacher of righteousness) and what he had done (saved his household from death), his sin becomes even more repulsive.

Noah didn't plan to get drunk and shamelessly expose himself, but it happened just the same. The Japanese have an appropriate proverb: “First the man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, and then the drink takes the man.”

B. Disrespect Genesis 9:22

Ham took a sniggering delight in the spectacle of his aged father sprawled naked in his tent. He also took perverse pleasure in exposing his father's sin to his brothers.

-Ham's greatest sin was in taking advantage of his father's weakness. One thing for sure and certain: Ham was disrespectful to his father in what he did, and he broke the fifth commandment to honor your father and mother.

Several years ago, a father was exposed of having an affair. That was shocking because the man was a faithful member of a church, but what was more shocking was the response of one of his sons. He told me when he found out about the affair, which broke his mother's heart, “I didn't think the old man had it in him!”

-How people respond to the sin and embarrassment of others is an indication of their character. Ham could have peeked into the tent, quickly sized up the situation, and covered his father's body, saying nothing about the incident to anyone. Instead, he seems to have enjoyed the sight and then told his two brothers about it in a rather disrespectful manner. He may even have suggested that they go take a look for themselves.

Why would a son show such disrespect for his father? By what he did, Ham revealed a weakness in his character that could show up in his descendants.

C. Decency – Genesis 9:23

Instead of laughing with Ham and going to see the humiliating sight, Shem and Japheth showed their love for their father by practicing Proverbs 10:12, “Love covers all sins.”

-The brothers stood together and held a garment behind them, backed into the tent with their eyes averted, and covered Noah's naked body. “He who covers a transgression seeks love” (Pr 17:9), and “a prudent man

covers shame (Pr 12:16).

Love doesn't cleanse sin, for only the blood of Christ can do that (1 John 1:7); Nor does love condone sin, for love wants God's very best for others. But love does cover sin and doesn't go around exposing sin and encouraging others to spread the bad news.

-When people sin and we know about it, our task is to help restore them in the spirit of meekness (Gal. 6:1-2).

-Before we condemn others, we'd better consider ourselves, for all of us are candidates for conduct unbecoming to a Christian.

Sin was clearly the exception, not the rule, in Noah's life, and though not recorded in this passage, Noah did repent of his sin, for God continued to use him to speak His word.

II. A Family Prophecy –Genesis 9:24-29

When Noah awakened from his drunken stupor, he was probably ashamed of what he had done, but he was also surprised to find himself covered by a garment. Naturally, he wondered what had happened in the tent while he was asleep. The logical thing would be speak to Japheth, his firstborn; and he and Shem must have told him what Ham had done.

-These words are Noah's only recorded speech found in scripture. It's too bad that this brief speech has been misunderstood and labeled a "curse", because what Noah said is more like a father's prophecy concerning his children and grandchildren. The word "curse" is used only once, but it's directed at Ham's youngest son, Canaan, and not at Ham himself. This suggest that Noah was describing the future of his sons and one grandson on the basis of what he saw in their character, not unlike what Jacob did before he died (Gen. 49).

A. Canaan: Enslavement – Genesis 9:25

Understand that Noah was reflecting God's judgment, not his own. Some say that Noah reacted in anger. May I say that most of us would be angry if one of our children did us the way Ham did Noah. If Noah was angry, he was justified. Dishonoring your parents is a serious sin, not to be taken lightly.

-The key to understanding the "curse" is to remember that Canaan became the father of a vast group called the Canaanites. In later generations they occupied the land of Israel (called Canaan) and developed an idolatrous religion based on gross sexual perversion. Leviticus 18 specifies the sins of the Canaanites in graphic detail.

Twenty-four times the word "nakedness" is used in Lev. 18 to describe the evil practices of the Canaanites.

The Canaanites are commanded to refrain from sexual relations with their kin – father, mother, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, ect. (Lev 18:6-21).

They are commanded to refrain from homosexuality (Lev 18:22).

They are commanded to refrain from having sexual relations with all types of animals.

It's important for us to see the connection: Ham was the father of Canaan and Canaan was the father of the Canaanites. The Canaanites were sexually perverted idol – worshipers who were the sworn enemies of the people of Israel. When the Israelites got ready to enter the Promised Land, God told them to utterly wipe out the Canaanites – destroy their cities, kill their animals, and kill all the people – men and women, adults and children. Their religion was so toxic it was like spiritual anthrax – so deadly it must be wiped out or the Israelites themselves would be infected.

That leads me to an important point: There is such a thing as spiritual DNA. Just as your physical traits are passed down to your children, even so your personal strengths and weaknesses are passed down as well.

-I would put it this way: under the leading of the Holy Spirit, Noah looked into the future and saw that Ham's deed was symptomatic of a deeper rebellion against God, against the family, against decency, and against morality. He knew that tendency would only get worse and so he pronounced a prophetic curse on Canaan and the Canaanites.

B. Shem: Enrichment – Genesis 9:26

Noah didn't bless Shem; he blessed "the Lord, the God of Shem." In so doing, Noah gave glory to God for what He will do with the descendants of Shem. Noah acknowledged before his sons that whatever Shem possessed would be God's gift, and whatever blessing Shem brought to the world in the future would be because of the grace of God.

-Shem, of course, is the ancestor of Abraham (11:10-32) who is the founder of the Hebrew nation; so Noah is talking about the Jewish people. That the Lord would enrich the Jewish people spiritually was promised to Abraham (12:1-3) and later explained by Paul (Rom. 3:1-4; 9:1-13). It's through Israel that we have the knowledge of the True God, the written Word of God, and the Savior, Jesus Christ, who was born in Bethlehem of the tribe of Judah. "Shem" means "name", and it's the people of Israel who have preserved the name of the Lord.

C. Japheth: Enlargement – Genesis 9:27

He was the ancestor of what we generally call the "Gentile Nations." The descendants of Japheth spread out much further than their relatives and even reached what we know as Asia Minor and Europe. They were a people who would multiply and move into new territory.

Noah lived another 350 years (950 years old) and we have every reason to believe that he walked with God and served Him faithfully. As far as the record is concerned, he fell greatly once; and certainly he repented and the Lord forgave him. In our walk with God, we climb the hills and sometimes we descend into the valleys.

Are there any contemporary applications from this passage? Absolutely!

1. Honor your parents.
2. Uphold the family.
3. Don't gossip about the weakness of others.
4. Remember that love covers a multitude of sins.
5. Beware of the dangers of alcohol.
6. Cover yourself up.
7. Remember that modesty is a godly virtue.
8. And especially this: Take God and His Word seriously. Play by the rules and you'll be blessed and your family will be blessed.

If you break the rules, especially the rules about the family and sexual purity, you and your family will pay a heavy price, sometimes for many years to come. As the Lord Himself said, "Those who honor Me, I will honor" (1 Sam. 2:30). And those who dishonor God will be judged by Him.

- [Why did Noah curse Ham / Canaan? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Canaanites?](#)

The Three Sons of Noah and Our Family Tree

Genesis 10:1-32

The world-wide Flood is over; the water has receded; Noah and his family along with the animals that were on the ark are now on dry land, and the Sons of Noah are obeying God's Word to "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." Noah has died.

Notice Genesis 10:32. Genesis 10 describes what happened when Noah and his family left the ark and reestablished civilization.

-Before the flood, there was one huge land – mass. After the flood, God caused the different continents to be formed. Noah's three sons moved in different directions. Their descendants formed families, clans, tribes, and nations. Some were friendly to Israel; others became bitter enemies of the Jews.

-Seventy names are given in Genesis 10. Some of those are names of people, some are names of cities, and others are names of tribes or nations or people groups. This is where we all came from. This is our family tree. That includes all six billion people who presently inhabit planet earth. We all descended from the three sons of Noah.

-The human race is diverse in geography, language, culture, skin color, physical capabilities, dress, habits, diet, and so on. We are all branches from the same family tree, and every person is related to every other person on earth. Here's the proof: you can take the blood of an Irishman and transfuse it into the body of a woman from Japan and his blood will save her life. Or, you can take her blood and transfuse it in to a man from Brazil, and her blood will save his life.

From the eight people, who survived the Flood, came the entire population of the world. Genesis 10 tells us how it happened.

- The Descendants of Japheth, Genesis 10:2-5.
- The Descendants of Ham, Genesis 10:6-20.
- The Descendants of Shem, Genesis 10:21-31.

A. The Descendants of Japheth – Genesis 10:2-5

These verses list 14 names.

Less is said about Japheth and his descendants because his descendants settled fartherest from the Promised Land. They would not be as significant because Palestine, and Jerusalem in particular, is the heart of Bible geography. The events and people there are far removed and are not major players.

Japheth's descendants begin with Gomer who settled on the shores of the Black Sea and Southwest Russia. They expanded into Germany and spread into France, Spain, Great Britain and includes England, Scotland, and Wales. This would include Gog and Magog.

Madai (Mad-i) settled the land of the Medes, which is now Northwestern Iran.

Javan (ja-van) is father of the Greeks and includes Crete, Corinth, Asia, and India.

The Japhethites do not largely figure into the O.T. story, but they will figure prominently in the expansion of the gospel in the N.T.

[Who was Japheth in the Bible?](#)

B. The Descendants of Ham – Genesis 10:6-20

These verses list 30 names. These were vigorous, aggressive people.

Cush settled in Ethiopia; Mizraim (miz'ra-im) settled Egypt and North Africa; Put is the founder of Libya in North Africa; and Canaan settled in Palestine and Turkey – including the Hittites, Jebusites, and the Amorites.

Cush had a son named Nimrod, the Rambo of the O.T. His name means "rebel." Nimrod was a mighty hunter before (against) the Lord. He had a spirit of defiance. His empire was founded at Babel (Babylon). His wife was the woman who first introduced idolatry on the earth.

- [Who was Ham in the Bible?](#)
- [Why did Noah curse Ham / Canaan?](#)

C. The Descendants of Shem – Genesis 10:21-31

These verses list 26 names.

From Shem comes the Assyrians, the Hebrews and some of the Arab tribes.

"Uz" is where Job was from; Elam settled on the Persian Gulf; Eber gives us the general title "Hebrew" which was first used of Abraham; and Peleg (Genesis 10:25) means "divided" and may refer to the division of languages at the tower of Babel.

The most important fact about Shem is that the Messiah will be his direct descendant.

- [Who was Shem in the Bible?](#)
- [Who are Semites?](#)

Some important spiritual lessons to be learned from Gen. 10:

A. The Unity of the Human Race

This may seem like an odd lesson when I have just emphasized the division of humanity, but the point I am making is that we are all made in God's image; all are sinners who have fallen short of God's glory; we are all highly valued and greatly loved by God; and all of us can be saved because of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. The Sovereignty of God Over Every Nation – Deut. 32:8

God is in charge of where men and nations end up. He appoints their places and boundaries.

Acts 17:26-28 How God preserved the unbroken line to Christ is one of the great themes of Genesis, as evidenced in a series of dramas where the covenant line was almost wiped out and then saved through the providence of God.

History really is HIS STORY! He is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus.

- [What is the biblical account of Shem, Ham, and Japheth?](#)
- [Who were the sons of Noah, and what happened to them and their descendants?](#)

The Tower of Babel: Why God Stopped the Building Program

Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9

In order to understand this story, there are a few background facts we need to know.

1. The story of the Tower of Babel occurred just a few generations after Noah's flood; some 100 to 150 years later. By this time the population of the world had expanded considerably from just eight people. One writer suggest that there were more than 30,000 people living on the earth at the time.

2. In those days everyone spoke the same language (Genesis 11:1). This fact is crucial to understanding this passage of scripture.

A careful student of scripture may wonder how the whole earth was divided into competing tribes and nations, each with its own language or dialect (see Genesis 10:5).

-The answer is that Moses has flip-flopped the narrative in order to highlight the essential problem of the human race.

Chronologically, the Tower of Babel comes before the scattering of the nations in Genesis 10, but Moses reversed the order to emphasize the high cost of rebelling against God. Events are arranged THEMATICALLY rather than CHRONOLOGICALLY. We are told in 10:31-32 that the people were divided by clans and languages and spread out over the earth after the Flood. So, the events in Genesis 11:1-9 proceed some sections of Genesis 10, and now the Bible goes back and gives details about a certain part. (Remember that in a similar way, Genesis 2 went back to explain details of the sixth day of creation recorded in Genesis 1.

Genesis 10 tells us WHERE the descendants of Noah scattered, and Genesis 11 tells us WHY.

3. The people of Genesis 11 lived in Shinar, another name for Babylon which is around the area of modern Baghdad, Iraq.

4. The tower they built was religious in nature. Sometimes, when this passage is taught, it is implied that the people were trying to build a tower all the way to heaven. That's probably not accurate. It seems more likely that they were building a tower that would bring heaven down to earth.

The "tower" that they built at Babel was what was known as a "ziggurat," which were built primarily for religious purposes. A ziggurat was like a pyramid except that the successive levels were recessed so that you could walk to the top on "steps." At the top was a special shrine dedicated to a god or goddess.

-Archeologists have excavated several of these large structures, many of them are tied to the early development of astrology. At the top of many of the towers was an alter surrounded by the signs of the Zodiac, making it an enormous symbol of man's attempt to control the universe apart from God.

-The word "Babel" means in part, "the gate of the gods".

I. Man's Rebellion – Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-4

The man behind this effort was Nimrod, a descendant of Ham. Nimrod was a "mighty champion." In 10:10, we are told that he has a "kingdom". Up to this time we do not read about anyone having a kingdom. He seems to be the first ruler and dictator in history. He made himself a one-world ruler. He was the first Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and Saddam Hussein in history.

-The name Nimrod means "we shall rebel." He was a mighty hunter before the Lord (10:9). The word "before" literally means "against". He was a mighty hunter against the Lord. He was a man in defiance of God. He wasn't a hunter for animals. He was "a hunter of the souls of men". He was a rebel against God and sought to turn those he ruled over away from God as well. He is a type of the work and aim of Satan.

The word “Babel” means “confusion”. So, it was a tower, but it was more than a tower. It was a massive, united effort to bring humanity together wholly apart from God. The builders of the tower had two purposes: (1) To make a name for ourselves; (2) that we might not be scattered.

- [What is the Table of Nations?](#)
- [Who was Nimrod in the Bible?](#)
- [Who was Semiramis?](#)
- [Who was Tammuz?](#)

1. “To make a name for ourselves”

The tower builders were very clear about what drove them - “let us make a name for ourselves”. We want to be remembered for our accomplishments. We say, “He’s made a name for himself.”

-They wanted to make a name for themselves so that others would admire them. In their pride, they wanted a monument to their own greatness. They wanted to leave a legacy to their greatness. They thought they were Big Shots, but they were only Little Squirrels.

Every generation builds its own towers. Whether these are actual skyscrapers (the Sears Tower, the Twin Towers, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Trump Tower in New York City), or mega – corporations or the mega – church, often say the same: “We will make a name for ourselves.

We are all tempted to build monuments to ourselves, such as prestigious titles, impressive assets, a business, or anything we do to impress people. These are not wrong in themselves, but when we get involved in anything that draws us away from God and draws attention to ourselves, we are building our own Tower of Babel. When we draw attention to our self rather than to God, we do the opposite of what God told us to do.

Mt 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

2. The people were resisting God's command to scatter and repopulate the earth.

They not only tried to DEFY God; they tried to DEIFY themselves.

Three times in this passage we find the words “Go to, (Come) let us.”

-“Let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly” Again we see the pride and desire for greatness in the use of the word “us.”

-“Let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens.” There was no divine blueprint because Babel wasn’t of the Lord.

First, there was disobedience; then pride; then rebellion; then a desire to create another religion; an alternative to Jehovah.

II. God's Response – Genesis 11:5-9

We come to the third, “Come, let us”, and the speaker is the triune God. God knows all things and is present in all places. So He doesn’t literally have to leave one place in order to check what’s happening somewhere else. Moses says that God actually had to “come down”, or swing low, to see their tower. They thought they were scaling the heights. The fact was that they were still so far below God’s height, that it was a very long descent from God’s level to theirs. Some of our modern skyscrapers may look impressive from the ground, but if we flew over them in a plane, they would look like Lego buildings. The tower of Babel may have impressed its builders, but they and their tower remained puny in God’s eyes.

God was not threatened by man’s corporate potential - “Oh no, if they band together, what shall I do?” Instead, He was troubled by what would happen to humanity if the human family was left unchecked. They would build up a delusion of self – sufficiency through their false religion. They would throw off God and attempt to rule the universe. So the hammer of God fell (Genesis 11:7-8).

-God decided to confuse their language so they couldn’t communicate and thus sabotage their defiant plans. That is why it was called Babel, which means confusion of voices or languages. It was God’s love, mercy, and grace that caused Him to bring judgment upon the people. God said, “If I do not stop them now, their sin will become greater and thus their punishment will be greater. Therefore, God “confounded their language” and scattered them abroad.”

After the flood, human history focused on two cities: Babylon and Jerusalem. Babylon was the city of confusion, while Jerusalem was the city of peace. These two cities represent two systems:

Jerusalem is mentioned about 350 times in the Bible and represents the godly system. From Jerusalem the temple was built and the worship of the Israelites was directed to God. When Christ returns to earth to establish His world Kingdom, He will rule the world from the city of Jerusalem.

Isa 2:2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

Isa 2:3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Isa 2:4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Babylon is mentioned about 125 times in the Bible and refers to the satanic system. Throughout scripture, Babylon appears hostile against everyone and anything representing God.

The Day of Pentecost was a reversal of Babel. One language was spoken, but every man heard in their own language.

A parallel may be seen between this incident in the O.T. and one in the N.T. In the N.T., the people of God are told to "fill the earth" with children of God (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). But after believers received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they still didn't leave the city of Jerusalem. They were enjoying the spiritual unity and felt no urge to leave. Because they refused to scatter into the world as God had commanded, He permitted a persecution to come upon the church, which caused them to scatter (Acts 8:1,4).

We must be faithful to carry the Gospel to every person in every place.

- [What happened at the Tower of Babel?](#)
- [What is the significance of the Babylonian Empire in biblical history?](#)
- [In what way was the earth divided in Peleg's time?](#)

Abraham: Taking the Step of Faith

Genesis 11:27- 12:9

Following the confusion of language at the tower of Babel, wave after wave of warriors, shepherds, and builders leave the plain of Mesopotamia. Like swarms of humanity they push one another further west, as well as east, and as they went, they took their Babylonian hearts with them. The scattered human race were estranged from God much as they were before the flood.

Genesis 11:10-32 takes us from Noah's son Shem to Abram and reveals how God took steps to save a people.

-Moses here records the genealogy of Shem and is meant to be a counterpart to the earlier genealogy of Seth in Chapter 5, which names the ten generations from Adam's son Seth to Noah. Here in chapter 11, we also have ten generations, extending from Noah's son Shem to Abraham. The two parallel generations together record a total of twenty generations from Adam to Abram.

-The obvious differences between the generations is the absence of the refrain "and he died", which occurs eight times in chapter 5, and the shrinking life span of the patriarchs after the flood. Man's sin diminished his longevity to about 120 years. By the time of David, man's life span would be shortened to 70 years.

Genesis 11:27-32 focuses on Terah, the father of Abraham. Terah actually had three sons – Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

-Haran died while his father, Terah, was alive. The whole family moved to the city of Haran, perhaps named by Terah in memory of his son, where they stayed until the death of Terah. "Haran fathered Lot", Abram's nephew who would give Abram much worry in the future. Terah took care of Lot until he died and then Abraham took care of him.

Nahor also played a significant part in Abraham's life. His granddaughter, Rebekah, became the bride of Abraham's son, Isaac (Gen. 24). Then his great-granddaughters, Rachel and Leah, became the wives of Abraham's grandson, Jacob (29).

Two things we learn about Sarai, Abram's wife:

- There is the omission of any information about her being a daughter of Terah and thus the half-sister of Abraham. Moses withholds this information so as not to ruin the suspense in chapter 20 when Abraham, in order to save his own skin, reveals to

Abimelech that Sarai is his half-sister.

- We also learn that Sarai was barren, which would set up the huge challenges that would come to Abraham's faith. This challenge of barrenness will occur again for the matriarchs Rebekah and Rachel.

I. The Call of Abram – Genesis 11:31-12:1

The life of Abraham marks a new division in Genesis. The first eleven chapters of Genesis cover about 2,000 years and move in a rapid pace. The first eleven chapters cover the creation, the fall, the flood, and the Tower of Babel.

Then beginning in the last few verses of Gen. 11, the pace slows down dramatically. It takes the rest of the O.T. to cover another 2,000 years. It takes 13 chapters in Genesis to cover the next 100 years of Abram's life.

Why the change in pace? Primarily because God wants to focus on the line from whom the Messiah would come and the nation through which He would come. That nation begins with Abram.

Joshua 24:2 tells us that Terah, the father of Abram, served other gods in Ur. He and his family were idolaters who worshiped the moon god. Abraham was also an idolater when God called him. God called Abram to follow Him while he was living in Ur. He was ordered to leave his Region, his Religion, and his Relatives behind. He was called to leave everything he loved and everything that had shaped his life up to that point. He was to leave his home, not knowing where he was going, or when he would get there.

Sadly, Abram compromised and didn't fully obey. Notice 12:1—"The LORD HAD said to Abram, Get THEE out of THY country...kindred..father's house." Now notice 11:31: It was "THEY" who went and stopped or dwelt there. Abram didn't separate from his family. His father, two brothers, and nephew were with him. God called Abram when he was 60. He dwelt with his father and brothers at Haran until his father died. God called him again to leave at age 75. That means he wasted 15 years by not following God.

Act 7:2-4 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, 3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. 4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

This call to forsake all is very much like the call of the gospel.

- Mat 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.
- Mark 8:34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

Abraham and his story is told in Genesis 12-25. He is one of the greatest men in the Bible. I am not exaggerating in the least. Outside the Lord Jesus Christ, you could make a pretty good argument that he is the most important person in the Bible.

Consider these facts:

1. He is revered by the followers of three world religions: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.
2. He is the founder of the nation of Israel.
3. He is mentioned by name 308 times in the O.T. and N.T. He is found in at least 10 N.T. books and is mentioned 74 times. He is found in all four Gospels; in Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, Acts, James, and 2 Corinthians.
- The first verse of the first chapter of Matthew's gospel: "A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." Matthew links Jesus to the greatest King, David, and with the founder of Israel, Abraham.
4. He is called the Friend of God in three books of the Bible:
 - Isa. 41:8 God calls him "my (personal) Friend"
 - 2 Chron. 20:7 He is called "God's friend forever."
 - James 2:23 He is called The Friend of God.
5. God knew He could trust Abraham

- God calls Himself, “The God of Abraham”.
- Gen. 18:17 “Shall I hide anything from Abraham?”
- Gen 18:19 “For I know Abraham, that he will command his children that they shall keep the way of the Lord.”

Abraham was not a great lawgiver like Moses – or a great military leader like Joshua – or a great king like David – or a great prophet like Amos – or a great statesman like Daniel or a great theologian like Paul. He was not a priest or preacher. He was a layman who was a man of faith who walked with God. Every one of us can do that!

Remember : God's call always involves separation – from places, people, and practices that are unholy influences.

As far as we know, Abraham was not looking for God, but God was looking for him.

II. The Covenant to Abram – Genesis 12:1-3

Five times God said, “I will”. Everything is from God, Himself.

Look at all the things God promised to give this great man:

- A new home
- Many offspring
- Great blessings
- A great name (That's what the people at Babal wanted)
- Abram will be a blessing
- God will protect him from his enemies
- God will bless his friends
- All the world will be blessed through Abram's Faith

III. The Conformation of Abram – 12:7-9

Two things symbolized Abram's life as long as he was in the will of God:

A. A Tent

This spoke of Abram's Detachment from the world. He was Among the people but not OF the people.

-A tent has no foundation. You can erect and strike a tent in an hour. His tent pegs were never deep. His

faith was not in this world. His love was not for this world. His heart was not in this world. His final Home was not in this world.

This world is not my home,
I'm just a passing through.

My treasure is laid up somewhere beyond the blue.”

B. An Alter

This speaks of his Attachment to God. He would pitch a tent and build an alter. Long after the tent was removed, the alter stood to show where the man of God had been. The alter was the place of communion and cleansing.

“Be still and know I am God.” It calls for thought and preparation of one's self before God.

When we met Abram, he was worshiping idols in Ur. As we leave him, he is worshiping God in Canaan. God called, he obeyed and stepped out in faith, not knowing where he was going. When he arrived, he worshiped God. This is the pattern for the life of faith. God calls, we respond, we move out, we arrive, and we worship God when we get there.

The same God who called Abram calls today. The call of all calls is the call of God to your life. The saved of all ages have one thing in common: They have all responded to the call of God.

When Your Faith Goes South Genesis 12:10-13:4

I remind you that Abram was called by God, “The Friend of God.” In fact, Abraham is called “my (personal) friend” (Isa. 41:8). “God's friend forever” (2 Chron. 20:7) and “The friend of God” (James 2:23).

Abraham is also called “the father of the faithful”. Faith was his special grace; his highest achievement; and the secret of all his triumphs. Yet, it was by unfaithfulness that he sinned and failed.

-He did not fail in the area of passion or lust or pride or idolatry, but he was tempted to be unfaithful and he yielded.

These verses before us record what is probably the saddest event in the entire life of Abraham. We see him making a decision that will bring tremendous trouble into his life and into ours as well. Our text tells us that during a time of famine in Canaan, Abram took his family and moved to the land of Egypt.

Have you ever known someone that you thought was a real man or woman of God; someone that you really looked up to and someone that you had put your confidence in and trusted, and watched as that person fell into sin? How did it make you feel? Maybe it was a pastor or a minister of music or someone you thought was a special saint of God, and now, they have fallen into gross sin. They have hurt themselves, destroyed their reputation, ripped their family apart, disappointed many people, but most of all, caused the name of Christ to be blasphemed among the lost. How did it make you feel when their sin was brought to light? Stunned? Disbelief? Crushed? You almost felt like you had been betrayed, not only God, but you, too!

There is a real danger of putting any man too high on a “spiritual pedestal”, because men are men and we all have that old nature within us and all of us are capable of falling into sin. The only one that we can safely put on a “spiritual pedestal” is the Lord Jesus. He will never disappoint us!

Two things I want to share with you:

I. The Problem of Abraham's Faith

Faith is always tested, and God is going to test Abraham's faith. I think God used that famine as a tool to test Abram's faith. Abram is going to fail this test.

A famine comes in Canaan, so Abram and his family head for Egypt.

Understand that God allowed the famine to come in Canaan. Famines occurred often in Bible times. That fact in and of itself is not unusual. But the timing of this famine is meant to catch our attention.

Our text says that Abraham “went down” to Egypt. That's more than just a geographical note. Egypt in the Bible represents the way of the world. Going down to Egypt meant leaving the Promised Land, the place of victory, blessings, and God's best, for the wicked ways of Paganism. Again and again the people of God fled to Egypt in the O.T. for protection, but it always cost them dearly in the end. Abraham is a case in point.

Notice, also, that Abram intended to “sojourn” or to stay in Egypt for a little while. Sin always carries you further than you meant to go and keeps you longer than you meant to stay.

Notice what really caused Abram to go to Egypt. He panicked. Faced with a crisis and out of fear, Abram made some bad decisions.

In every circumstance each of us has the opportunity to choose how we will respond. Sometimes we will foolishly make the wrong choice and pay a heavy price for our mistake. Often we won't learn the right lessons until we can look back and see how God was at work even in our foolish decisions.

When hard times come, we always have two choices. We can be a student or we can be a victim.

- A victim says, “Why did this happen to me?”

A student says, “What can I learn from this?”

- A victim complains he is being treated unfairly.
A student thanks God that he is not being treated as he really deserves.
- A victim believes the game of life is stacked against him.
A student believes that God is at work even in the worst situations.

In Genesis 12:1-9 Abram had taken a mighty step of faith, but now his faith is about to be tested and he is about to fall backwards. Abram doesn't seek God's will in the matter, but he's about to go to Egypt. He is about to push the panic button. The famine had created the fear of starvation. Many of our sins come as a result of fear. Fear has caused a lot of sin.

- At Kadesh Barnea, it was fear at the report of ten of the twelve spies that kept that generation from the Promised Land.
- It was fear that caused Peter to deny his Lord.
- We lie because of fear of being found out.

- We cheat because of the fear of failure.

Now, because of fear, Abram leaves the Promised Land because of a famine and goes to Egypt. God used that famine as a tool to test Abram's faith and he is going to fail the test.

The whole problem was that Abraham left God out. It's interesting to compare the two halves of Genesis 12. In the first half, God is the reason for everything Abraham does. God calls and he leaves Ur; God promises and he travels to the Promised Land. God speaks again and he builds an altar.

-But where is God in the second half of Genesis 12? Abraham journeys to Egypt on his own, he concocts a scheme on his own, he gets rich on his own. Abraham leaves God out, and that is always a mistake.

How like Abram we are! Trials or difficulty come and we automatically go into survival mode. We scheme. We deceive. We run through the "what ifs." Our first thought is to do whatever it takes to save our hide whatever it takes. That's the NATURAL thing to do!

-The fundamental problem was that Abraham was unwilling to trust God in a moment of great personal crisis. He refused to seek direction from the Lord and devised his own scheme to get him out of trouble, but that scheme only got him deeper in trouble.

We find Abram's scheming plan in Genesis 12:11-13. Abram decides to follow a dishonest plan.

-Abram birthed a lie. It's a sad day when the believer turns away from the truth to embrace a lie. We have all had those times when we birth a lie in our hearts to try and justify the things we do or the way we live, and it's a sad day when it happens!

Abram became the lie. After he told the lie, he began to live the lie! One lie always leads to another.

Abram believed the lie. Verse 12 tells us that Abram was worried about something that could never happen. He could not die because God's promise to him had not been fulfilled.

By the way, how do you think Sarah felt about all this? His deception meant that she would become part of Pharaoh's harem. Here is a man willing to sacrifice his wife's purity in order to save himself. Not only that, he was also interfering in God's plan to bless the world by giving them a child. Abraham is willing to risk everything God has promised him just to save his own neck.

II. The Products of Abraham's Unfaithfulness

You expect the text to say, "As soon as Abram compromised his faith, everything came unglued and he lost everything." That's what happened to the Prodigal son. He ran out of money and even desired to eat the pigs food. Finally, in brokenness and repentance, he went back to ask his father to forgive him. But not everyone who gets out of God's will loses everything.

-Abram left Egypt with more than he had when he entered Egypt. However, those things that people think are gain are really often loss.

Don't miss the larger lesson. Sin brings plenty of short term rewards. But if that's where you are right now, you might as well enjoy it, because that's all you're going to get. Sin only works if there is no tomorrow. But tomorrow always comes sooner or later.

At first, everything seems to be working out exactly as Abraham planned. The Egyptians quickly noticed Sarah's beauty and she was taken to Pharaoh's palace. That meant she was chosen as one of the select women to join Pharaoh's personal harem. This had several advantages.

1. It meant that Sarah would be well cared for, with the best of food, the finest of wines, the most expensive clothing, jewelry, and perfumes.
2. Abraham received a rather large dowry from Pharaoh. All those animals and servants simply add to his wealth.

However, those things that people think are gain are really often loss! Among the servants Abram acquired while there was an Egyptian girl named Hagar (16:1-3). She became a problem for Abraham and Sarah and Abraham's sin with her still has consequences in the world today.

Notice the first three words of Genesis 12:17 "But the Lord..." This is the first time the Lord appears in our story. The Lord sends "plagues" or painful physical ailments on Pharaoh and his house, and He sent them "because of Sarah."

-Somehow Pharaoh connected the disease with Sarah. Some Bible students believe God sent some kind of sexually-transmitted disease to Pharaoh that would have prevented any immoral act with Sarah.

What follows is one of the most humiliating episodes in Abraham's life. God is now using a pagan to chasten His own man. Think about that for a moment. Abraham is the one man God chose from all the men of the world to be the father of the nation of Israel. But because of Abraham's disobedience, he is now humiliated in front of a pagan ruler.

Twice Pharaoh asks, "Why?" Abraham had no answer. What could he say? He lied to save his own skin. He lied because he was afraid to trust God in a moment of crisis. He lied because he had decided that he couldn't wait for God to bail him out. He lied

because he thought it was the easy way out.

Abram lost his testimony in Egypt. He was literally kicked out of the world by the world. Lost people never forget a ruined testimony! They may never remember your good works, but they will never forget your failures.

In Egypt, Abram had no altar, he offered no sacrifices and he lifted no recorded prayers. He totally left God out of all that he was doing. When in the world, the child of God often lives like the world. Instead of bringing the light of the one true God into the darkness of Egypt, Abram only brought more darkness.

So off Abraham goes, back toward the Promised Land, back to where he used to be, back to the land he should never have left. His head is bowed, his shoulders slumped. Never has any man been so thoroughly humbled by the hand of God.

I wonder what Sarah said to Abram as they made the long trek across the Sinai Desert. I don't think he got any sympathy from her. One woman said she knew exactly what Sarah said to Abram. Nothing! Not a word during the long days of crossing the desert back to Canaan. She didn't need to say anything, and her silence spoke louder than words.

Everything Abraham gained in Egypt cost him later. Because of their great wealth, Abraham and Lot had to separate when they got back to Canaan. The wealth he gained caused Lot to desire the riches of Sodom. Among the servants was a young girl named Hagar who would be the source of much heartache and pain.

THERE ARE NO BENEFITS FROM DISOBEDIENCE!

I don't imagine that Abram often told the story of his days in Egypt. Most of us have a way of forgetting our painful failures and emphasizing our victories. But we always learn far more from defeat than we do from victory. I think that explains why this story is in the Bible. It teaches us important lessons about the spiritual life.

Living With Life's Choices

Genesis 13:1-18

Life is made up of choices. We make choices every day. Some choices have great consequences while others do not affect us greatly – sometimes the consequences of a decision are short – lived; Sometimes the consequences of our decisions last a lifetime or even into eternity.

In Genesis 12:10-20, Abraham made a couple of disastrous decisions. Abraham is seen leaving Canaan (The Promised Land) during a time of famine, to go to Egypt (a picture of the world). We are told that to get to Egypt from Canaan, Abraham had to go “down”, Genesis 12:10. Anytime a believer leaves the place where God has placed them, they are on a downward path. This is seen in the actions of Abraham while in Egypt.

-In order for Abraham to survive out of the will of God in Egypt, he told a lie about himself and he pleaded with Sarah to tell a lie about herself. He created the potential for others to fall into sin (Genesis 12:19-20). In mercy the Lord spared Abraham and Pharaoh himself has to send him packing. Considering the anger of Pharaoh because of Abraham's lies about Sarah, it was pure grace that Abraham was allowed to leave Egypt at all!
-But Abraham left Egypt a much richer man than he came. In spite of his sin, God had blessed him with great wealth in Egypt. And it is his great wealth that will now bring him great trouble.

Abraham has sinned badly, embarrassed himself and his wife, so what will he do now? Abraham is a wonderful example of what we should do when we get off course in fulfilling God's purpose for our lives. When we sin, Satan immediately rushes in to tell us we have messed up so badly God can't use us any more. However, God has always been and will always be the God of the second chance, the third chance, or however many chances it takes.

Abraham did what we should do when we rebel against the Lord. Abraham left Egypt and made his way back to Bethel, “The House of God,” and the “place of the altar” (13:3-4). When Abram was in Egypt, there were no altars, there was no praying, and there was no word from the Lord. Abram returned to the place where God had previously worked in his life. The Lord will always be found in the place where we left Him.

When Abraham returned to Canaan, he returned a chastened man. He returned a wiser man. He returned in repentance and faith. He returned with his wife, Sarah, undefiled. He returned a rich man.

-God didn't take Abram back with a sigh and reluctantly say, “Well, I guess I'll take him back.” A broken and contrite heart God would not despise. Jesus said, “He that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out.”

-Abram reestablished his devotion to the Lord. He built an altar and called on the name of the Lord. And God restored him with great riches. Abraham had become wealthy in "livestock, silver, and gold" (v.2) along with "flocks, herds, and tents" (v.5).

God is about to put Abraham to the test again. This time God will test Abram in the area of relationships. Three things I want you to see as Abram's faith is tested.

I. The Crisis which Demanded the Choice – Genesis 13:5-9

God had told Abram to leave Ur and to leave his family and his father's house and to go to a land that He would show him. But Abram's father, brother, and nephew, Lot, came with him. His brother, Haran, died on the way and his father, Terah, would later die. Abram took responsibility for his nephew, Lot. God had said to separate from all his family and as long as they were with him, not much good happened.

-Lot went with Abram and Sarah to Egypt. Now he comes back to Canaan and Lot is still with him. I think Abram knew Lot was a hindrance to him and he longed to be free from him. But how? We may be entangled in some relationship and seem powerless to break it off. Our only hope is to bear it quietly until God sets us free. God is about to prepare a way for Abram to be free of Lot.

There is contention and strife between the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abram. What caused the strife between the two? It's interesting that the contention in our text was directly related to wealth. Rather than Abram's and Lot's prosperity bringing them together, it divided them.

-By the way, this is the first time wealth or riches is mentioned in the Bible (Genesis 13:2), and it caused strife. There is no sin in being wealthy, if it is obtained honestly and one realizes that it came from God and that it all belongs to God. Poverty does cause problems, but wealth can be a bigger problem.

-Abram was rich in flocks, herds, crops, and tents, and so was Lot, probably with the assistance of Abram. Remember that the Pharaoh gave much cattle and servants to Abram for Sarah's sake. He most likely gave the same to Lot as well.

The herds of the two were so great that the land could not accommodate both. There was not grazing land or watering places for the two. What would happen?

Disputes, disagreements and conflicts do come among believers. If you want to know the true character of any person, just see how they respond in a time of conflict and disagreements.

Abraham's solution is the only one that will work under all circumstances. There are some things we should keep in mind;

1. When Christians disagree, the unbelieving world is always watching to see how they will handle it.

Note Genesis 13:7 :The Canaanites and Perizzites were in the land. Disunity destroys the testimony of Christians if it is not handled in a godly way. Psalm 133:1. Abram was jealous for the name of the Lord.

-If the Canaanites and the Perizzites saw Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen in conflict, both Abram and Lot would be in danger, for they would be easy prey and they were war-like neighbors. Notice v.8 "for we are brethren."

2. Deal with the problem quickly.

Proverbs 17:14 This means "nip it in the bud", or resolve it as soon as possible because a quarrel is like a crack in a dam – if left unattended, it will get worse.

3. Abram had all the rights, yet, he made the first move to bring peace.

Abram was the senior here. It was to Abram, not Lot, that God gave the promise. Abraham had raised Lot and cared for him since his father died. The wealth Lot had was because Abram helped him get it. But it was Abram who took the initiative in trying to solve the problem. Abram could have insisted on his rights, but always insisting on your rights does not solve problems – it only aggravates them. No wonder the strife ended quickly!

The character of Abram was magnanimous. Abram was a peace-maker; not a trouble maker. Abram did not delight in strife. He didn't have a fighting spirit. Some folks wear their feelings on their sleeves and you dare not violate any of their rights.

Abraham was concerned about family ties (v.8). Brethren are to love each other. They are not to be on the outs with each other.

II. The Criteria Which Determined the Choice – Genesis 13:9-13

One word describes Lot's choice: covetousness – an insatiable appetite for more. He was eager to do the best for himself, and

determined to make the fullest use of the opportunity. He would take advantage of old Abraham! Lot cared only about himself. He wanted all he could get and then some. His selfish greed for material gain was all that guided him.

-He never sought the counsel of God through prayer. Abram had gotten Lot out of Egypt, but he hadn't gotten Egypt out of Lot. When Abram gave Lot first choice in selecting the land, Lot didn't hesitate to immediately start choosing. He quickly grabbed the opportunity of first choice and chose what he thought was the best.

Lot should have said, "Abram, I owe you so much. You took me and cared for me after my father died. You gave me a good start in life; you taught me about Jehovah God; I'd never have all this wealth if it were not for you." But he made no speech.

We need to realize that although all Christians are washed in the blood of Jesus Christ and all Christians are going to heaven when they die, not all Christians are on the same spiritual plane. The Bible declares that there are carnal Christians – those who are saved but their "commitment level" to Jesus is very low and those who are spiritual Christians whose "commitment level" to Jesus is high.

You look at Lot in Genesis 13-19 and you might be tempted to think that he was never saved at all. He ACTED like a lost person; he THOUGHT like a lost person; he MADE DECISIONS as a lost person would. He was living on a "lower level". In fact, it is not until you get to the N.T. that we are told that he was a saved man (2 Peter 2:7-8 calls him "just" or "righteous" Lot). He was saved, but he didn't act like it. He didn't take his relationship with God seriously. The tragedy today is that so many are like Lot. They are saved, but they don't act like it and they don't take their commitment to Jesus seriously.

III. The Consequences Which Defined the Choices – Genesis 13:14-18

The phrase, "lifted up his eyes" is found twice in this context. But how great the contrast! Lot lifted up his eyes to spy out his own advantage. Abram lifted up his eyes, not to discern what would best make for his material interest, but to behold what God had prepared for him.

To the natural eye it looked like Abram got ripped off by giving Lot first choice, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Shortly after Lot had gone away, Abraham had another meeting with the Lord. Lot had lifted up his eyes and saw what the world had to offer. Now God invited Abraham to lift up his eyes and see what heaven had to offer. Lot chose a piece of land which he finally lost, but God gave Abram the whole land which still belongs to him and his descendants. Lot had said, "I will take." God said to Abraham, "I will give." What a contrast!

"Lift up your eyes and look" was followed by "Lift up your feet and walk." Claim your inheritance by faith! It is your faith in God that determines how much of His blessings you will enjoy.

Magnanimous Abraham Genesis 14:1-24

I have entitled the message "Magnanimous Abraham". There are actually two characteristics of Abraham that I want to call to your attention.

1. Abraham was magnanimous.

The word "magnanimous" comes from two words meaning "great spirit". It implies a courageous spirit, a generosity of mind, big – heartedness. Abraham was the original Brave Heart.

A magnanimous person is able to face trouble calmly, to set aside meanness and revenge, and make sacrifices for worthy ends. Magnanimous perfectly describes Abraham AFTER his experience in Egypt. Down in Egypt his lack of faith and trust in God had reduced him to small - heartedness, but back in Canaan, after repenting and trusting God, he exhibits great – heartedness. You can almost see God grow Abraham!

2. The second characteristic of Abraham I call your attention to is Integrity.

The word "Integrity" means to possess high moral standards and to adhere to those principles which causes them to seek the right way first. This is the behavior that God would have all His children exhibit all the time.

Let me remind you again that the book of Genesis is a book of firsts. In Genesis 14, we have recorded the first war that involved God's people, the first mention of a priest and king, the first time tithing is mentioned. Speaking of tithing, I heard about two men who were shipwrecked on an island. The minute they got to the island, one man began to scream, "We're going to die! We have no food or water! We're going to die!" The second man was propped up against a palm tree, acting so calmly it drove the first man crazy. He

said, "Don't you understand, we're going to die?" The second man said, "No, we're not. I make a hundred thousand dollars a week." The first man looked at him and said, "What difference does that make? We're on this island with no food and no water. We're going to die!" The second man said, "You just don't get it, do you? I make a hundred thousand dollars a week and I tithe! My Pastor will find me!"

Genesis 13 tells us that there was conflict between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. They are going to separate and Lot takes what he thinks is the best land.

-Abram was probably relieved when Lot took his herdsmen and flocks to the plain of the Jordan River, ending the feud between their herdsmen. Abram was not only the friend of God, but also a great friend to Lot. He unselfishly and generously let his nephew Lot take the land he wanted, and Abram took what was left, the barren areas of Canaan.

We are going to deal with three areas of Abram's life in this passage that reveals that Abram is magnanimous as well as a man of integrity.

I. Abram's Integrity in Warfare –Genesis 14:1-16

In these verses four pagan kings of the East are in conflict with five pagan kings of the west. These were not kings of great nations, but they were kings of city-states.

-The five kings of the west had been paying tribute or taxes to the four kings for 12 years, and they said, "No more!" They would draw the four kings into their turf, into a valley where there were tar pits or slime pits or asphalt pits and defeat them once and for all (14:4,10). Instead, the four kings attacked them from behind and found themselves caught in their own trap, defeated on their own turf. When the four kings defeated the five kings of the plains, they went into the richest city, Sodom, took all their goods and their people. Lot and his family were among them.

-We might not have known about this battle at all if the victors had not taken all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, including their food supply and the people, including Lot and his family and departed. Abram, the man of faith, pursued the raiders to Damascus to rescue Lot, some 120 miles. To put it simply, Abram drove them completely out of the country. Abram divided the 318 servant – warriors and attacked the enemy at night. They were victorious and not only liberated Lot, but all the people and their possessions that had been taken by Chedor-la-omer and his allies.

Why did Abraham get involved? One could have thought, "Well, Lot is just getting what he deserved. In fact, this may have been God's way of dealing with Lot." Abraham would not have been honored in Sodom. His values would have been laughed at and scorned in Sodom. They didn't want anything to do with Abram UNTIL they got in trouble and needed his help. If Abram had done nothing, no one would have blamed him, but he chose to take action. So, why did Abram get involved?

Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Gal 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Rom 12:17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

Rom 12:18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Rom 12:20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Rom 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Abram freed Lot and his household and his goods. Lot was now aware of what Sodom was like. He had seen the sin, the wickedness, the influence it had on his family. This was an opportunity for him to repent, to change his ways, to come back to God! What did he do? He went right back to the cesspool of Sodom. Does that make sense to you? Yet, I see it all the time, and so do you.

II. Abram's Integrity in Worship – Genesis 14:18-20

Abram is about to meet two kings: The king of Salem and the king of Sodom. The king of Salem is Melchizedek. He is both king and priest. He is about to both refresh Abram and bless him.

Who is Melchizedek? His name means "King of Righteousness." Salem means "Peace." Many believe him to be the pre-incarnate Christ. He refreshes Abram with bread and wine, which speaks of redemption (Genesis 14:18). While his hands are full of gifts, his lips are full of blessings (Genesis 14:19-20). Abram validated his priesthood by giving him a tithe, for Melchizedek was standing in

the place of God.

Melchizedek also prepared Abram for a temptation he was about to face. Abraham was about to face the temptation of success. Would he receive credit for the victory, or would he refuse it and give both credit and glory to God?

III. Abram's Integrity in Wealth – Genesis 14:17, 21-24

The king of Sodom saw what the king of Salem had done and offered his own deal to Abram. It was a rude, crude, ungracious offer: “You take the goods; I'll take the people.” Abram was entitled to both: people and property. “To the victor goes the spoils.”

Why didn't Abraham keep the spoils of war?

1. Because they came from an evil source.
2. Because he wanted no alliance with Sodom.
3. Because he knew that God was enough.
4. Because he wanted Sodom to get no credit whatsoever.
5. Because he wanted God to get all the glory.

Abram refused anything and in the refusal, Abram was declaring his dependence upon God. Abram knew it was not his might, but God who gave the victory. He would lift the name of God on high.

So it is with us. Every victory comes from God. He is to be Praised!

Reaffirming the Promise Genesis 15:1-6

There is in the Bible what theologians call “The law of first mention.” That is, the first time a word or phrase is used in scripture, it is used in such a way as to fix its basic meaning throughout scripture. Of course, the Book of Genesis is a book of first, but Gen. 15 is an amazing chapter in that there are eight words or phrases that are found in this chapter for the first time.

1. “The word of the Lord came” Genesis 15:1 That phrase is used over 100 times in the O.T.
2. “Fear not” Genesis 15:1 This phrase is also used over 100 times in the O.T. and is used as well in the N.T.
3. “Reward” Genesis 15:1
4. “Shield” Genesis 15:1 Describes God's protection for His people.
5. “Heir” Genesis 15:3,4
6. “Believe” Genesis 15:6
7. “Counted” or “accounted” Genesis 15:6 God is an accountant. He puts things on record.
8. “Righteousness” Genesis 15:6

In Gen. 14, Abram met two kings: The King of Salem and the King of Sodom. Now in Gen. 15, he is about to meet another King – the Greatest King of all – God Almighty.

If you were to plot a graph of Abram's faith, his faith graph would be uneven. It soars when he hears God's Word and leaves Ur. It goes down when his father, brother, and nephew, Lot, go with him. It spikes higher when he travels to the land, builds an altar, and calls on the name of the Lord. But the curve dramatically dives when he takes his disastrous trip to Egypt. After Egypt, when he comes back to Canaan in repentance, it rises again. In Gen. 14, the faith curve again sweeps upward as the great hearted Abram rescues Lot and gives tithes to Melchizedek. Now, his great heart slows again as he experiences doubt and fear.

I don't know how long you have been saved, but if it has been very long, your faith graph looks something like Abram's because you have experienced both high times and low times in your faith. One commentator said that all believers experience “fainting fits” in their Christian experience, and this was Abram's time.

In this passage, Abram receives a word from the Lord concerning his FEAR, his FUTURE, and his FAITH. What he heard changed his life forever.

I.A Word About Abram's Fear – Genesis 15:1

Notice that the Word of the Lord came to Abram, but it came “in a vision”. How does the Word of the Lord come in a vision? It is either a word you hear or a vision you see. How can you “see” the Word of the Lord?

All of us, no doubt, have read something and not been moved by what we read when, suddenly, the truth leaps off the page and we

see it clearly for the first time. Or a message or truth comes from the pulpit and we are not stirred when suddenly and powerfully, we see the truth for the first time and we grasp the truth and – Eureka! - we get it. That's what being said here.

What exactly did God say to Abram? What did he see in the vision?

-Abram had experienced a great victory against four kings of the East, but now he is back home – alone with himself and his thoughts. Abram doesn't speak to the Lord, but the Lord can read the thoughts of his mind and heart and God reads his doubts, his fears, and his discouragement. In a vision or dream God begins to minister to his needs.

Abram becomes aware of God's presence with him. That is an awesome thing within itself – not that you see God or talk to Him as we talk to one another, but to sense and to be aware of God's presence with you.

God addresses his fears. Abram had won a great victory against four kings, and it was exciting, knowing that his God was fighting his battle for him, but now he was alone with his thoughts, Abram knows that Eastern kings don't take defeat lightly. What if they return with reinforcements and attack Abram's camp? What if Abram is killed? What would happen to God's covenant and promise?

God comes to Abram and says, "Fear not. You can trust Me." Abram was getting his eyes off the "Promisor" and on the promise. Like Peter when he walked on the water, he began to sink in fear because he took his eyes off the Lord.

Not only is Abram Aware of God's Presence, but he is Assured of His Promise.

"I am your shield"; Your protector and protection. "If the kings come against you, I will protect you. I will stand between you and whatever comes against you. I am your exceeding great reward" - your provider: your very personal, precious treasure.

II.A Word About Abram's Future – Genesis 15:2-5

It was not just the four kings Abram was concerned about, he was also concerned and burdened about the child that God promised him.

Only those who have gone through this experience can fully empathize with Abram and Sarah. There is no sadness like the sadness of wanting children of your own but not being able to have them. Even in this day of modern medicine and advanced technology, many couples wait for years and some couples wait forever.

"I go childless" other folks had children. Lot had children. Abram's servants were having children. The pagans living around him were having children. But God seemed to be inactive when it came to Abram and Sarah, and God had promised them a child.

Ten years has passed since God promised them a son. Abram doesn't see God doing what he thinks ought to be doing. He doesn't seem to be rewarding his faith.

Time is one of the great enemies of faith. If God promises and in five minutes we see God working; well and good. But what if a year passes or five years or ten years?

To wait on the Lord is a hard thing; but in this ten year period, God is behind the scenes working in Abram's life, even though Abram is 85 years old.

Abram is thinking, "The promise was hard to believe when I was 75; now I am 85. How much longer can we wait? We can't!"

Abram makes a troublesome suggestion. "Let Eliezer be the heir." There is no reason for us to think that Abram is sinning as he talks to God. He is not being disrespectful or rebellious. He is simply baffled by the way God is dealing with him. The Lord promises a son, but no son appears. Abram is wrestling with doubt.

-The Lord answered, "This one shall not be your heir." God does not even deem it worthy to mention the name of Eliezer. The thought of his being the line of promise is beyond disrespectful. God then spells it out as unmistakably as only God can; "A son coming from your own body will be your heir" (v.4).

God then takes Abram outside and pointed to the heavens saying, "Your descendants will be as the number of the stars – seen and unseen." God has already told him his descendants would be as the dust of the ground (Genesis 13:16); now He tells him that his descendants will not be just earthly descendants without number, but heavenly descendants shining eternally like the stars.

III.A Word About Abram's Faith – Genesis 15:6

- "He believed God." The Hebrew word for believed is "Amen" - Abram amen-ed God!
- The word "Amen" is a positive affirmation. The word does not mean, "May it be so;" it is more positive than that, it means "Let it be so" or "It is so!"

- Promises do us no good unless we believe them and act on them.
- Abram believed God. He believed God about his seed...THE SEED...and that the Savior/Messiah/Redeemer would come from his seed. How do I know that? John 8:56

His belief in God's promise was accounted to him for righteousness – he was saved!

We are not saved by making promises to God; we are saved by believing THE promise of God.

Billy Graham tells this illustration about what believing God means:

Suppose a man is in the courtroom and the judge knows that he's guilty. And so the judge asks him questions – This is the courtroom of heaven:

- “Have you loved God with all of your heart every day of your life?” And the man answers, “No, Sir, I haven't.”
- “Have you loved others as you're supposed to love them?” And he says, “No, Sir.”
- “Have you believed in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and your only way to God?” He says, “Oh, yes, Sir, I have.”
- And the Judge says, “All charges dismissed.” “All charges dismissed.”

And Billy Graham says, “Can you imagine the reporter who writes about this the next day in the newspaper?” The next day...and the headlines read something like this, “Judge dismisses all charges then takes criminal home with Him.” Isn't that what God does?

You see that word “account” - “It was accounted unto him for righteousness” is very special, because this is what happens when you put your trust in Christ: you say, “How can I be in heaven when I'm a sinner?” That's an important question. You can't go to heaven as a sinner, neither can I, but here's what happens: When Jesus Christ died on the cross, He paid for all of your sin and mine. When you believe in Him and trust Him for eternal life, He erases all of your sin out of His book, and He puts His righteousness in its place; He makes a transaction that is so incredible – He erases your sin, because you can't go to heaven with your sin and He takes all of the righteousness of Jesus Christ and He enters it in the books of heaven, so that when you look at those books, it says, “Lowell Johnson, absolutely declared righteous in Jesus Christ.” There is no sin in that book. Am I still a sinner? Yes. But Almighty God has forgiven all of my sin and in the place of my sin, He has entered His own righteousness and now I can go to heaven, not because I'm good or righteous, but because I'm going to heaven in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Nobody gets to heaven, but like that.

Christianity is not about doing good, but about receiving Him and His righteousness for me.

Have you believed God?

The Abrahamic Covenant

Genesis 15:7-21

Genesis 15 has rightly been called one of the most important chapters in all the bible. In it we discover the details of the Abrahamic covenant, which is the most important covenant in all the Bible. Hundred of years later the N.T. writers (especially Paul in Gal. 3 and Paul in Acts 3) will look back on this covenant as the foundation for the Christian gospel.

You will find that God made covenants with men and with nations.

1. The Noahic Covenant – Gen. 9:9-17

In this covenant God promised never to destroy the world again by water. The rainbow is the perpetual, symbolic reminder of this covenant promise.

2. A Covenant of an Everlasting Priesthood with the Levites Numbers 25:10-13

God honored the tribe of Levi because the grandson of Aaron showed zeal for the holiness of God when he saw a Jewish man take a pagan harlot from Moab into his tent. Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron went into the man's tent with a javelin and pinned both of them to the earth with one shot.

3. A Covenant With the Nation of Israel – Ex. 19:5; 24:7-8; 34:10,27-28

God promised that Israel would be a “kingdom of priest”, a “special treasure”, and a “holy nation” if they would be an obedient and covenant keeping nation.

4. A Covenant with David – 2 Sam. 7:12-16; 23:5

God promised David that his kingdom would be an everlasting kingdom and from his line would come the Messiah.

5.The Abrahamic Covenant

This covenant was:

- (1)Announced in Gen. 12:1-4
- (2)Confirmed in Gen. 13:14-17; 15:1-7
- (3)Ratified in Gen. 15:8-18

The ancient practices of making covenants is foreign to our experience. Covenants were the most common means of making a legal agreement in the ancient world. Since written agreements were not common, most agreements were formalized through a ceremony know as “cutting the covenant.” After agreeing to the details, the two people involved would bring animals for sacrifice. After reading the agreement aloud, the animals were sacrificed and laid in two parallel rows. Then the two people would join hands and walk side – by- side between the rows of dead halves of the animals. If the vow of the terms were violated by either party, the violator would be put to death. That is, he was saying, “May I suffer the same fate as these animals if I break my part of the covenant.

The most important point in this passage is the fact that God (symbolized by the smoking oven and the flaming torch – 15:17) passes between the dead animals while Abraham sleeps. That fact is most significant because it means that God is taking upon Himself the full responsibility for keeping the covenant.

I. The Presentation of the Covenant – Genesis 15:7-8

God promised Abraham two things: An heir and a land.

1.An Heir

Gen. 15:1-6 reassures Abram that he will have an heir born of his own body. His descendants will be as the dust of the earth and as the stars of the sky.

2.A Land – Genesis 15:7-21

The land is an important part of the covenant, for it is in the land of Israel that the divine drama of salvation history was played out. -Salvation is of the Jews. Jesus, a Jew in the flesh, was sent down from heaven and the Son of God was made flesh and was born in Israel. He paid sin's redemptive price for sin on the cross in Israel. Jesus commissioned His Jewish followers to tell the good news of the saving gospel to the ends of the earth.

Notice 15:8 Abram asked God for a token of assurance. This is not a question of unbelief. It was simply Abram asking God to give him more information concerning the promise. He wanted his faith strengthened.

God doesn't mind us asking for more information about His promises as long as we do it with a believing heart.

II. The Preparation for the Covenant – Genesis 15:8-11

Abram was directed to use five distinctive animals, all of which would become standard sacrifices when the Mosaic covenant was instituted.

The animals were slain, then cut in halves, except for the birds because they were so small, and the two parts of each animal were laid in two rows opposite each other, several feet apart. There was no alter, no fire, no burning. Then the parties making the agreement would walk between the parts of the animals. The ceremony dramatized a self-imposed curse should either of the covenanting parties break the vow.

Four words describe this covenant: Personal – Literal – Unconditional – Eternal. This covenant is still in force today.

After Abram laid out the parts of the animals, three things occurred which made it difficult for Abram to fulfill his duties:

1.The Devourers Genesis 15:11

-Carcasses are an open invitation to many birds. The assault by these birds of prey and Abram driving them away foreshadowed the attacks that would come upon Abram's offspring from the nations.

The nations would try to devour Israel before God could fulfill His covenant with them. From Egypt trying to destroy Israel prior to the Exodus to the attempts of the Germans in W.W.II, to the Arab hostilities of today, the “birds” have tried to keep God from fulfilling His covenant with Israel. But God's protection would be with Israel.

2.The Delay

-God did not immediately come and walk between the pieces of the carcasses. Abram has done his assignment, but God tarries. Why? God wanted to test Abraham's faith and sincerity and strengthen his faith.

3.The Darkness Genesis 15:12

-God was saying to Abram that there would be dark times to endure, but remain true, the covenant would be fulfilled.

III. The Prophecies In The Covenant Genesis 15:13-14

God gave Abram seven prophecies concerning his life and the possession of the land.

1.Abraham's descendants would sojourn in a strange land – Genesis 15:13a; Ex.12:40

They would enter Egypt, the strange land, as honored guests because of Joseph, but the Jews would eventually become a threat to Egypt.

2.The Jews would become the slaves of Egypt and suffer great affliction – Genesis 15:13b; Ex. 1:11-12

3.They would be afflicted in Egypt for 400 years –Genesis 15:13c; Ex. 12:40

4.God would judge the people who oppressed them – Genesis 15:14a

5.When they left Egypt, the strange land, they would carry out great possessions with them – Genesis 15:14b; Ex. 12:31-36

6.Abraham would live to be an old man – Genesis 15:15; 25:7-8

7.The Jews would return to the land of Canaan when they left Egypt – Genesis 15:16

Why 400 years in Egypt? God is going use His people as a rod to punish the Amorites, who inhabited Canaan. When the cup of the Amorites' iniquity was full, God would unleash a flood of Israelites out of Egypt as an act of justice against the Amorites.

-This all-powerful, all-knowing, all-wise sovereign God would do two things at once – free His people from slavery and bring them back to their land as God's rod against the Amorites.

IV. The Provisions Of The Covenant Genesis 15:17-21 (Genesis 15:17-18)

God made a fiery appearance as a smoking firepot in the darkness. It was a theophany, a visual manifestation of God!

- Moses would view a similar phenomenon in the burning bush (Ex. 3:2).
- Israel would see it at Sinai when they “came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven” (Deut. 4:11).
- Israel saw it again in the pillar of cloud by day and a cloud of fire by night (Ex. 13:21). The fire symbolized

God's unapproachable holiness.

Notice: God walked through the pieces of the animals alone, confirming His covenant with Abram about the land. Abram never did walk between the animals. Why? Because this covenant was a unconditional covenant. God would give the land to Abram and his seed regardless.

There are two kinds of covenants: unconditional and conditional. An unconditional covenant means that the fulfilling of the covenant depends entirely upon God's Word. A conditional covenant means that the fulfilling of it is conditioned upon the behavior of man.

The boundaries of the land as well as the nations in the land are listed so Abram would know exactly what land God meant would be his inheritance.

• Israel never has possessed all of the land that God promised them. Under Solomon, Israel realized more of this covenant than Israel did at any other time. But the time is coming when Israel will realize in a complete way the fulfilling of this covenant. When God makes a covenant, God will fulfill it. The land is very important to Israel. That's why today there is such conflict over the land of Israel. Israel wants every inch of land that God promised them – and they shall have it! Keep your eyes on the Middle East. God has some unfinished business there!

Well, what does all of this have to do with us?

• God made another unconditional covenant – the covenant of salvation. Because it is an unconditional covenant, it is all of God. He would provide the sacrifice for our sins – His Son. He would determine the method of salvation – repentance and faith in His Son. His promise is eternal redemption and eternal life and an eternal home in heaven with Him! God has put Himself under a self-imposed curse if He breaks His pledge to those who trust Him.

Today some 4,000 years have passed since God made His covenant with Abraham and Abraham's seed. If you are saved, you are now part of Abram's offspring, his people and there is an ultimate land awaiting you.

Galatians 3:29 - "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Gal 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Gal 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

What a God and Savior we have! Abraham's God is our God also!

Abraham believed (amen) God! Do you?

The Mistake of Trying To Help God Out

Genesis 16: 1-16

Martin Luther, the Father of the Reformation, used to say, "The whole Christian life is a life of repentance." Repentance is not a concept we like to think about. It implies guilt, which we would rather not admit, and it speaks of changing our ways and reforming our habits.

-When Luther says that the whole Christian life is a life of repentance, he means that sin remains a problem in the Christian life. As long as we live in a fallen world, we will struggle with sin to one degree or another. But, it is not just the fallen world, it is our fallen nature that also remains with us.

God had just met with Abram in a powerful way and promised him that "a son coming from your own body will be your heir" (Gen. 15:4). God even added to the promise with a sign. Abram and Sarah believed it, but they didn't trust the promise enough to allow God to bring about its fulfillment in HIS time. Sarah thought, "Since God isn't doing anything about our lack of children, it looks as if we have to do something." They decided they had waited on the Lord long enough. If this child was going to be born, then God would need help from Sarai and Abram.

Sarai knew the infertility problem was hers; not Abram's. Ten years have passed since they left Ur and arrived in Canaan. That means there had been a decade of waiting for the promise to be realized and a decade for Sarai to feel guilty, frustrated and inadequate. She felt responsible for the non-arrival of the Promised Seed.

What do you do when God has promised something, but the fulfillment has not taken place? Some people might give up on God, but Abram was too strong a believer to simply walk away from the promise. Perhaps God intends for them to be creative. If so, Sarah is certainly up to the task. Sarai is going to suggest a HUMAN solution to a HEAVENLY problem. She will help God out.

Up to this point in our study of the life of Abraham, the emphasis has been upon Abram. Sarai has been in the background though she, too, is strong in faith. She is listed in the roll call of the faithful in Hebrews 11. Now she comes to the forefront.

Look at Abram's dear companion for a moment.

1.Sarai loved Abram. The writer of Proverbs says: "Whosoever finds a wife, finds a good thing." This was true of Sarai. First Peter says that wives should take Sarah as their example in loving their husbands. She was a wife of a quiet and meek spirit.

2.Sarai was loyal to Abram. So much so that her asset became her liability. She lied for Abram when they went down to Egypt. Now, she is willing to give Abram another woman to bear him the promised seed.

There is a saying in Christian circles today that is both true and false. Here is the saying: "If it's going to be, it's up to me." That's true if we're talking about doing our part in service for God. It is false if we try to do what only God can do. Like Sarai, we often try to make something happen by our own scheming. The lesson for us from Sarai is to live life without scheming.

Three things I want to share with you from this passage:

I. The Proposal – Genesis 16:1-4a

Here is Sarai's plan (her scheme): She suggested that Abram gain the Promised Seed through the sin of sexual immorality. In truth, Sarai was urging an immoral deed.

"Go in unto my handmaid, Hagar, and sleep with her." She didn't raise it as a question so they could talk it over and dismiss it. There was no praying; no discussion. Here was a woman taking the initiative and compromising another woman.

1. In the name of love, Sarah was willing to do violence to love. See if this makes sense: "Abram, I love you so much. I am not able to give you a child, so I'm willing to let you go into another woman so she can bare you a child." Sounds like a great sacrifice on her part, doesn't it? Her motive may have been good, but her method was sinful and wrong.

It was wrong against God. She would disobey God's law. The end doesn't justify the means. There is a right way and a wrong way of doing things.

It was wrong against Hagar. Abram and Sarai treated Hagar like an inanimate, unfeeling, soulless baby machine.

It was wrong against Abraham. Here is a wife giving her husband to another woman with her blessings. Not many husbands would refuse such an offer; and Abram didn't refuse.

It was wrong against Sarah, herself. She would rob herself of the high privilege of being his wife exclusively.

2. The strength of temptation is determined by the source of temptation. No one else could have approached Abram with such a proposition with the slightest hope of success. Abram had lived purely for 75 years in Ur and Haran, with all the immorality around them there. It is always harder to resist temptation when it is presented by someone we love.

3. The temptation was all wrapped up in the robes of pious language and self-denial. Sarai uses her barrenness from the Lord as an excuse and justification for evil and even says what she is asking is of the Lord (v.2).

4. Not only did Sarah approve of the suggestion, society did, too. What society of that time did condemn and despise was not having children. Everyone approved – but God. No one asked for God's approval.

Genesis 16 tells us that Abram immediately agreed with Sarai and when she brought Hagar to him, he slept with her. Why did Abram agree to her scheme?

- He wasn't getting any younger.
- God didn't seem to be moving very fast to fulfill His promise.
- This was a common practice in that day.
- It was Sarai's idea! I don't think Abram would have ever considered going to Hagar on his own. Sarai had to suggest it first or this story would never have happened.

II. The Problems – Genesis 16:4-6

The Chinese alphabet has a symbol for trouble. It is a picture of two women under the same roof. This whole situation begins to turn ugly. Let me list some problems:

1. Pregnancy Genesis 16:4

Pregnancy was what Abram and Sarai wanted at the first, but not long after it occurred, it was no longer desired, especially by Sarai. Her scheming began to backfire.

2. Pride Genesis 16:4

Because Sarai couldn't conceive over the years, when Hagar conceived, it caused Hagar to become proud. She had achieved something Sarai had not, and it went to her head.

3. Disrespect – Genesis 16:4

"Her mistress was despised in her eyes." Though Sarah was over Hagar in authority, Hagar showed Sarai no respect.

4. Marital Decay – Genesis 16:5-6

Immorality cooled the love between Abram and Sarai and heated up contention. Sarai is upset with Abram and Abram is upset with Sarai.

5. Hypocrisy – Genesis 16:5

Sarah blames Abram for doing what she asked him to do. Sarai blames Abram for the problems while ignoring her own responsibility in the whole matter!

6. Betrayal – Genesis 16:6

Sarah and Abram encouraged Hagar to go to bed with Abram, but when troubles came, Sarai mistreats Hagar and Abram went along with the mistreatment. A boy persuades a girl to act immorally with him, but when she does, the boy often drops her. If she becomes pregnant, not only does the boy often fail to stand with her, he often forsakes her.

7. Injustice – Genesis 16:6

“Do to her as it pleaseth thee.” There is no justice in this remark. Hagar is the only one considered guilty by this remark. Sarai takes no blame though she had encouraged the sin. Abram assumed no responsibility, though he had gotten Hagar pregnant.

8. Cruelty – Genesis 16:6

Immorality doesn't make people happy. Sarai is upset. Hagar is upset. Abram is upset. There is no happiness there and it all started with immorality. Hagar ends up in the desert, all alone.

III. The Policing Genesis 16:7-16

Hagar flees to Sur, on the border of Egypt and there God, in a great display of grace, steps in, provides for Hagar, gives her comfort and tells her to return to Sarai and to submit to her.

This “Angel of the Lord” is none other than a pre-incarnate state of Christ. Here for the first time God ministers to an unwed mother to be. God tells her that she is going to have a son, his descendants will be many, he will be a wild donkey of a man by nature. That is, he'll be aggressive and independent in nature and every man's hand will be against him. His descendants would be Arabic, and Ishmael would be the Father of the Arabic people.

Hagar names the place, “You are the God who sees.” “God is the one who lives and He sees me”.

What a mess life had become, all because they made the mistake of trying to help God out. The two women never did get along and there was nothing Abram could do. The conflict only escalated with the birth of Isaac. Sarah will have Hagar and Ishmael cast out again when Isaac is just a child.

The God of the Everlasting Covenant Genesis 17:1-27

God first made His covenant promise to Abram when he was 75 years old. God promised him that from his seed would come the Messiah and that he would be the father of many descendants. That's an incredible promise to a man who is 75 years old and has no children. You can hardly blame a man if he had trouble believing it. So God repeated the promise many times across the years. Each time he added a bit more detail.

- First, the promise was general - “I will make a great nation from your descendants.”
- Second, the promise became more specific - “You will have a son.”
- Then, God added promises concerning the land or the nation itself - “To your descendants will I give the land from the River of Egypt to the River Euphrates.”
- Finally, God “cut a covenant” with Abram in which He made an unconditional promise to fulfill everything He had promised.

In Genesis 17, some 24 years have passed and Abram is 99 years old. He has no child except the son born through Hagar, his wife's maidservant. Now God comes again to Abram with even more details.

I. God's Revelation Genesis 17:1

It has been 24 years since God gave Abram the promise of a son. He is now 99 years old and in Genesis 17:21, God tells Abram that within 12 months, a child will be born to them. The child will be a son and his name is to be Isaac.

-In Genesis 17:5, God changes Abram's name to Abraham, “father of many nations.” In Genesis 17:6, God tells him many nations and kings will come from him. In 17:7, God tells him that He will make an everlasting covenant with his descendants. In Genesis 17:8, God said He would give the whole land of Canaan to Abram's descendants.

How could Abraham believe such an amazing statement? The answer is the name by which God introduces Himself: “I am the Lord Almighty” - “El Shaddai.” El Shaddai describes the God who makes things happen by means of His majestic power and might. He is both strong enough to do what He declares He will do and, yet, sensitive enough to care about those with whom He works. In declaring Himself as El Shaddai, He is declaring to be both strength and tenderness.

El Shaddai means something like He is the God who moves mountains. He can make a mountain and he can move a mountain if He

wants to. Abraham, what are you worried about? Giving you a son when you are 100 years old is no problem for Me! You think it's hard to have a baby when you are 100 and your wife is 90? It's no problem at all!

II. God's Reassurance

God repeats the promise of the covenant again – Genesis 17:2-9

God then changes Sarai's name to Sarah, Princess and Mother of Nations – Genesis 17:15-22.

Even in his lack of understanding about how God was going to pull off the birth of a son at their age, Abraham's laugh was a mixture of wonder as to how it was going to happen and joy that it would happen.

III. God's Requirement – Genesis 17:9-14

Once God repeated the covenant, he told Abraham and the other men to be circumcised. God calls circumcision “the sign of the covenant.” God goes on to specify conditions regarding circumcision

- All male descendants were to be circumcised.
- Circumcision should take place on the eighth day after birth.
- Both natural – born descendants and foreign slaves were to be circumcised.
- Anyone who refuses to be circumcised must be cut off from the people of God.

Two questions deserve special attention:

1. Why did God ask for this particular sign?

He could have asked for any sign He wanted. Why pick something like circumcision?

a. Circumcision by its nature touches the very core of what it means to be a man. In his most intimate and personal moments, each Jewish male would forever be reminded that he was a holy son of the covenant and that he belonged to God. No one else might know he was circumcised, but once he was circumcised, he could never forget it.

b. Circumcision speaks of separation from the flesh. The flesh was cut away. Ephesians 4:22-32

There are some things that ought to be “cut – away” from the believer; never to be attached again.

2. Why did God choose a sign that applied only to men?

I think the answer is that God was reminding Abraham that he was the head of his own household, and as such, he had to answer to God for what happened in his own family. Circumcision means accepting your place as God's appointed spiritual leader in your own family.

IV. Abraham's Response Genesis 17:23-27

Our story contains one final detail. After God finished speaking and left him, Abraham was circumcised. Verse 23 specifies that it happened “on that very day.” This is instant obedience.

He then had Ishmael and all the other men in his household circumcised. This is complete obedience.

What does all of this mean for us today? What's the application?

You and I are not required to be circumcised today in order to be followers of the Lord. The N.T. speaks – not of physical circumcision, but “circumcision of the heart” that must be performed before a person can enter into a personal relationship with Almighty God.

Rom. 2:28-29 “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”

Gal. 5:6 “For in Christ neither circumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.”

Col. 2:11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ.”

Spiritually, we all need to be circumcised today. But note this carefully: circumcision was never meant to be an end in itself. The physical mark was meant to be accompanied by a deep spiritual commitment to God. Where commitment was absent, circumcision soon degenerated into ritualism. That's what had happened over the centuries. By the first century many rabbis spoke of

circumcision as if it were an automatic ticket to heaven. Circumcision had become the supreme symbol of Jewish superiority! A man need only to be circumcised to insure his place in heaven.

Is there a modern-day application? Many regard baptism in much the same way the Jews regarded circumcision. Some churches even teach that baptism saves from sin and guarantees entrance into heaven.

This is one place where the practice of infant baptism may be rightly criticized. Multiplied millions of people today are putting their hope in heaven in the fact that a priest sprinkled some water on their forehead when they were a few days old. This tends to become a religious ritual that leads many people away from saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Let me be clear on this point. All religious ritual is worthless unless something has already happened in the heart.

- Baptism cannot save you or help save you!
- The Lord's Supper cannot save you or help save you!
- Church membership cannot save you or help save you!
- Tithing cannot save you or help save you!
- Praying twice a day cannot save you or help save you!
- Lighting candles cannot save you or help save you!
- The sacraments cannot save you or help save you!
- Religious ritual cannot save you or help save you!

These things are not altogether bad, but to whatever extent you base your hope of eternal life upon any of these things, you are making the same mistake the Jews made 2,000 years ago.

Circumcision was suppose to mean, "I am dedicated to God." Where a person was truly dedicated to God, it had legitimate meaning. Where they weren't it became a ritual without reality. In the same way, baptism is supposed to mean, "I have given my heart to Jesus Christ and He is my Savior." When that is true, baptism is a wonderful appropriate step of faith. When that is not true, baptism has become meaningless – and even dangerous, because it may lead you to think you are a Christian when you really aren't.

Unfortunately, millions of people have a religion based on superstition. They put their trust in some outward factor as their hope for heaven. Such people will someday be sadly disappointed. Others trust in inherited religion: "Daddy was a deacon. Momma was a Sunday School teacher." They act as if salvation is inherited like you inherit the color of your eyes. It doesn't work that way when it comes to salvation. No one else can believe for you. You have to believe for yourself if you want to go to heaven.

When God Came to Dinner

Genesis 18:1-15

The appearances of Jehovah to His people during the O.T. are called "theophanies". God draws very close and speaks to men, as though Himself a man. They at first believe they are meeting another human being, a great warrior perhaps, or a traveler. Sometimes they think this is an angel, and, yet, it is actually the living God who is visiting man. Then, as the conversation develops, there is often a dawning realization that this impressive Person speaking to them is none other than the Lord Himself.

The writer of Hebrews commemorates Abraham's hospitality with this famous advice: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Genesis 13:2). Such was Abraham's experience. It was only at the conclusion of his hospitality that he came to understand what had transpired.

One of the things that made Abraham the great man of God that he was, was his servant spirit. As wealthy as he was and as much influence as he had, he had a great servant heart and spirit. Jesus told His disciples AND US, if you want to be great in the Kingdom of God, have a servant spirit (Mark 10:44-45).

In this passage, you cannot help but see Abraham's hospitality as he is going to act as a servant to three heavenly guests – two were angels; the other was the Lord Jesus Christ – we know that from Genesis 18:1, 13, 14 where the word "LORD" is in all caps, referring to Jehovah.

Two things I draw your attention to from this passage:

I. The Ministering of Abraham – Genesis 18:1-8

The sun was high over Abraham's camp; likely just after noon, for the Bible says that it was in the heat of the day. Temperatures can reach well over 100 degrees in the summer there. Abraham is trying to keep cool.

The morning chores were complete and the workers had returned to their tents for their customary siesta. The sheep, donkeys, and camels were gathered under the shade trees. Abraham was sitting in the shaded entrance of his tent, resting. Perhaps he had nodded off because as he looked up, he saw three men standing nearby.

We know that Abraham's guest were the LORD (Jehovah) and two angels. But Abraham had no idea of this – at first. In retrospect, there were indications.

- The initial hint may be that he did not see them approach him. In O.T. times, supernatural visitors often appeared from nowhere and then disappeared (Judges 6:11-12).
- Next, Abraham's bowing low was an unwittingly proper honoring of deity, because the word for "bowed" is also translated "worship" when God is the object.
- Also, Abraham's singular address "O LORD" (LORD = sovereign) was unknowingly appropriate in respect to God.
- Finally, as Abraham watched his guest, he no doubt witnessed there otherworldly character and saw that one of them commanded a reverence far above the others.

Abraham had neither seen nor heard their approach. They were simply there, looking at him. The phrase "stood by him" means the three men were standing at an appropriate distance as strangers who wanted to visit, but who needed an invitation to come further. Standing nearby was the equivalent of our knocking, waited to be invited in.

Abraham was 99 years old, but his response was spontaneous and from the heart. He ran toward the men, despite being 99, bowed to the ground before them in warm respect, sensing from their appearance that these visitors were to be honored.

- Notice his servant spirit of submission: (1)He bowed himself to the ground before him (v.2); (2)He addressed the leader as "my lord," granting him respect that is due those of a higher rank (v.3); (3)He called himself "thy servant" (v.3) and "your servant" (v.5).
- Few people traveled in the heat of the day because of the heat, so Abraham wanted to make them comfortable. First, he got them some water and washed their feet; then he invited them for a meal – and they accepted. Abraham didn't know it at the time, but God had come to dinner!

When the three accepted the invitation for lunch, things began to speed up: (1)V.2 says Abraham "ran" to meet his guests...(2)(v.6)Abraham "hurried" into the tent to tell Sarah...(3)(v.6)"Quickly make some bread...(4)(v.7)Abraham "ran" to the herd and - watch this – Abraham himself picked out a "tender and good" calf – nothing less than the best! He would kill the fatted calf for the Lord! No leftovers; no scraps, only the best!

There were only three guest, but look what Abraham sat before them: six gallons of fine flour were used to bake bread (v.6), plus a whole calf, and the meal was served along with butter and curds (yogurt) and milk. That's a royal feast!

Then v. 8 says Abraham "stood by them under the tree." His standing by the heavenly guests under the tree is the posture of a faithful servant who is ever ready to do the bidding of his master. Abraham remained at his post of service, ready to do any further service needed by his heavenly guests. He would continue there until his service was no longer needed.

This test reveals six marks of biblical hospitality:

1. Initiative – He saw them and invited them to stay (3)
2. Honor – He bowed low before them (2)
3. Desire - "Let me get you something to eat" (5)
4. Sacrifice – He chose a choice, tender calf (7)
5. Speed – He hurried to serve them (6-7)
6. Attentiveness – He stood while they ate (8)

The N.T. has a lot to say about showing hospitality. Rom. 12:13; I Peter 4:9; Heb. 13:2

II. The Message For Sarah – Genesis 18:9-15

Actually, the message is for both Abraham and Sarah, but the real emphasis is on Sarah's doubt. While Abraham and the Lord are having a conversation, she is listening at the entrance of the tent. When she hears the promise that Abraham will have a son "about this time next year", that thought is too much for her. After all, Abraham was way too old and she was far past childbearing years. They had already waited 24 years since God's original promise, so why should next year be any different?

Once upon a time She had believed the Lord only to have her faith dashed on the jagged rocks of reality, not once, but time and time again. No, she wasn't falling for that old line again.

God made the announcement that the Promised Son would be a product of Abraham and Sarah, not Abraham and someone else. God wanted Sarah to know that she was to be a mother.

18:12 – Sarah laughed within herself; and God knew it (Genesis 18:13). Why did Sarah laugh and then deny it? The Bible says she was afraid. Of what?

1. Of her doubt being exposed publicly
2. Of what else God might know about her
3. Of what Abraham might think or say to her.

Probably many of us would have done what Sarah did. Better to try to cover your tracks (or so we think). But, now, behold God's tough love toward Sarah:

1. God reads her mind and heart (12)
2. God confronts her (13)
3. God reminds her of His power (14)
4. God reaffirms His promise (14)
5. God exposes her unbelief (15)

Why do this and why do it publicly? Because as the mother of the nation, she would have enormous influence in the history of Israel. Before God can send Isaac, He must bring her to the end of herself so that her confidence would be in God alone. I'm sure Sarah didn't particularly appreciate this rebuke from the Almighty, but it was absolutely necessary in order that God's plan could go forward. In a sense, God could not bless her until He had rebuked her.

Sarah's laugh insulted God by limiting His capability; which brings us to the question, "IS anything too hard for God?" "IS anything too difficult, too wonderful, too incredible, too surpassing for God?"

Watch God's grace step in! After mocking and doubting God's power, God told Sarah she would have a son (Genesis 18:14). That's grace! God smiled on Sarah. In fact, God had the last laugh. Sarah laughed within herself; God said, "The boy child you laughed about will be called "laughter"...Isaac!

Aren't you glad God's grace prevails, even when we doubt God; even when we disappoint God; even when we desert God at times.

What amazing Grace! Even if we are not faithful, He remains faithful still.

Abraham: The Intercessor

Genesis 18:16-33

Genesis 18 contains two messages: A message about a child (Genesis 18:1-15) and a message about a city (Genesis 18:16-33). The Lord asked three questions in the first message and one question in the second.

- In Genesis 18:1-15 the Lord asked: "Where is Sarah?" (As if He didn't know (v.9), "Why did Sarah laugh?" (v.13), and, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (v.14). Now, in Genesis 18:17, the Lord asked, "Shall I hide anything from Abraham?"

Jehovah, with two angels, has delivered the message to Abraham and Sarah, that she will have a son within the year. The Lord even told the couple that they were to name their son Isaac.

-The two angels, who are in appearance as men, stand up to leave Abraham, for there is more for them to do. The meeting with Abraham and Sarah is over. The men turn from Abraham, who is among the grove of trees at Mamre, and turn towards the town of Sodom. Mamre is 3,000 feet above sea level in the Judean mountains south of Jerusalem, while Sodom was on the plain of the Dead Sea, 700 feet below sea level, the lowest place on earth, and so the two men looked down on the city literally and morally.

The Lord lingered while the angels went on toward Sodom. Notice Genesis 18:16, 22. Notice also the deliberation of the Lord as He says, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing?" These are not the words that the Lord THOUGHT, but the Lord spoke them in Abraham's hearing. The two angels that were with the Lord probably knew the Lord's thoughts, but they were silent.

What on earth is the Lord going to do? What are the plans that He could have kept secret, but now says that He will not hide from Abraham?

There are, of course, counsels that God hides from men. What will happen to our country in the century to come? God has not told us. What will happen to us in old age? It is a secret matter. God has not revealed it.

God has immediate plans for the total destruction of Sodom, but any hint of this has been hidden from Abraham.

Think of the great position Abraham had in the heart of God. God is about to take Abraham into His confidence and reveal something to him that He would reveal to no other in that day. Abraham was the friend of God! Wouldn't it be wonderful to be close enough to the Lord to learn His "secrets" and know how to pray about those things.

-Notice Genesis 18:19 "For I know him (Abraham)". "I have chosen him and he has wholly committed himself to me. I can trust him, for he has complete trust in me! He is my intimate friend." This is an expression of divine confidence and a tribute to Abraham's faithfulness, obedience, and consistency.

God desires that all who belong to Him would be close enough to Him so that He might reveal His plans to them.

- Psalm 25:14 "The secret (counsel) of the LORD is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant."
- Amos 3:7 "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secrets to His servants the prophets."
- John 15:15 "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing: but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known to you."
- James 4:8 "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

God is about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah as judgment against their great sin, but before the Lord proceeds in the judgment, God takes Abraham into His confidence and reveals their judgment and the reason for His judgment.

I. The Information – Genesis 18:20-21

God had just revealed to Sarah that He is The All-Knowing God, for He heard Sarah laugh "within herself" the laugh of doubt and He confronted her about it. Now God tells Abraham that He knows about the great sin of Sodom. God was not ignorant of what was going on there.

Someone has well said that God oversees everything and overlooks nothing. "The cry" of that place and their grave, "grievous sin" was the reason for the coming judgment.

Man's view of Sodom and God's view of Sodom were very different. In Gen. 13:10 when Lot looked at the plain of Jordan (which was Sodom), he said it was well watered everywhere. That is, it had lovely meadows on either side of the river and was highlighted by its lush and fertile land. He even said that it would remind one of the Garden of Eden. To many, Sodom was viewed as a showplace and a success story. They probably bragged about it being "the city that never sleeps." There was something for everyone there. Every pleasure known to man was there! AND - "What happened in Sodom, stayed in Sodom!"

But God had a different view of Sodom. The "cry" expresses the cruelty of sin upon others. The effects of sin are hurt and destruction on others. Just like the cry of Able's blood cried out against Cain, the cry of Sodom came up to the Lord. There was homosexuality and immorality, but there was also social violence. There were no human rights. The poor and needy and defenseless were especially brutalized. A man commits sin and thinks that sin is over, but the guilt lingers and so do the effects of our sin for years to come.

II. The Investigation – Genesis 18:20-21

God had no need to go down to Sodom to investigate. God is omniscient. There is nothing He does not know, but God is giving Abraham and all of us an eye-opening scenario saying, my judgment is fair and straight. My judgment is based on knowledge. The widespread reputation of Sodom's wickedness has reached heaven itself. Sodom is an intolerable cesspool on the landscape of creation, but before removing it God wants Abraham and all of us to know that He has seen that the sins of the people of Sodom have been filled to the brim, because not until then will God's judgment fall. This is what Abraham hears on that walk he took with the Lord and His two angels.

The central lesson of our passage deals with the character of God.

- It teaches us about God's perfect knowledge. God sees and knows about the godly things that are done, but He also sees and knows about every sin and every injustice in this evil world.
- It also teaches us about God's justice. He will not wink at sin or say, "Boys will be boys"; or "Live and let live". He will always do what is right and fair. Abraham's whole prayer is based on the question in verse 25, "Will not the judge of all the earth do right?"
- It also teaches us about God's mercy. When He heard the outcry of Sodom's sin, He personally came down to investigate the case. Not only that, but He allowed Abraham to intercede for them.

III. The Intercession – Genesis 18:22-23

Here is another “first” in Genesis. When Abraham prays for Sodom, it is the first intercessory prayer in all of the Bible. To “intercede” is to plead the case of another person. When a friend speaks up on behalf of a student about to be punished, that friend is interceding. Likewise, when Abraham asked God to spare Sodom, he was interceding in the highest court of the universe.

But that raises an interesting question. Why did God allow Abraham to intercede for Sodom? After all, God already knew the facts and He already knew what He was going to do. Doesn't that render Abraham's request useless? If God already knows what He's going to do, why pray?

God was waiting for Abraham's response to the fact of the coming judgment. By the way, God is waiting to see how we will respond, knowing the condition of our own nation.

God allowed Abraham to intercede in order to reveal His mercy. He wants Abraham to know that he takes no pleasure in destroying the wicked. It also teaches us the value God puts on intercession. After all, Christ lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25) and the Spirit intercession for us (Rom. 8:26).

Why did Abraham intercede?

1. Lot, who was both Abraham's nephew and half-brother, was in Sodom, with his family.
2. There was the danger of total destruction upon the city and the people. Archaeologists tell us that Sodom may have been a city of a quarter of a million people in Abraham's day. That means that 250,000 people could have been spared if there had been only ten righteous people there.
3. God had put compassion for the lost in the heart of Abraham. We are never more like Jesus than when we intercede for others (Heb. 7:25). Jesus prayed and wept over Jerusalem just before He went to the cross.
- God put the dilemma of the divine wrath firmly before Abraham, as He puts it before us.

This whole section is about prayer. There is so much right about Abraham's prayer.

1. He prayed Intelligently. His prayer was guided by divine revelation. He knew Sodom was headed for judgment – AND SOON!
2. He prayed Compassionately. He was honestly concerned about both the lost and the saved of Sodom.
3. He prayed Humbly – 18:27
4. He prayed Respectfully – 18:25
5. He prayed Persistently. He came back to the Lord again and again – six times in all. Don't miss God's patience, kindness, and grace as Abraham comes back to the Lord again and again. God wants us to intercede for sinners under imminent judgment. Abraham became an advocate for any righteous who might be living in Sodom.
6. He prayed Persuasively. He based everything he said on God's character.

With all that said, Abraham's prayer wasn't answered. Sodom was destroyed, but Abraham sure learned something about God and something about himself in that prayer experience. That's why God put this experience of Abraham in His Book! Sometimes our prayers won't be answered “yes” either. But it wasn't Abraham's fault. Nor is it always our fault. And with that truth in mind, we return to the most fundamental truth about prayer, which is that we must always say, “Thy will be done.”

Lot: The Shameful Christian **Genesis 19:1-38**

Genesis 19 tells one of the most dramatic stories in all the Bible. Even people who never go to church know that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone (burning sulfur). They have heard about Lot's encounter with the angelic visitors, the desperate last-second escape, and the strange, sad tale of Lot's wife turning into a pillar of salt. As if that were not enough, the chapter ends with a sordid story of sexual perversion.

Jesus used the days of Lot to show what the time would be like just before He comes again in judgment upon this earth. What were those days like? Luke 17:26-30

1. Materialism: It seems like we must have things – and not just things, but better things than our neighbors and friends. We don't just want to keep up with the Jones'; we want to surpass them.
2. Pleasure – seeking: We never seem to learn to say “no” to our passions. We want the good things and the good times. If it feels good, do it!
3. Entertainment: We become what we focus on in the same way we are what we eat. There's nothing wrong with entertainment as long as it leaves us better; not worse.
4. Immodesty: Modesty is essential in every Christian's life; not because we're good, but because we know we're weak.
5. Sexual perversion: Homosexuality and sexual abuse is everywhere. The result is broken families, divorce, blended families and homes.
6. Tolerance and compromise: Political correctness is killing us. The world says that Christians are too narrow minded; yet, some would have us to be so open minded that our brains fall out!

Look at this tragic chapter with me.

I. The Development of Lot

Lot had so many spiritual advantages:

1. He accompanied his Uncle Abraham from Ur to Canaan. He saw firsthand how a man of faith lived, what his character was, what make up Christian values and standards.
2. He worked beside Abraham, who was God's personal friend.
3. He helped Abraham build his altars and participated in worship with him.
4. He even saw the mistakes Abraham made and how God dealt with him because of those mistakes and how Abraham responded in repentance.
5. He became a follower of God because of Abraham.

But he had one major character flaw – materialism! He chose the plains of Sodom because he saw dollar signs. He couldn't see or didn't care about the immorality of Sodom because of those dollar signs. Having spiritual advantages without taking advantage of those advantages are not an advantage at all.

II. The Delegation From Heaven – Genesis 19:1-3

The two angelic messengers from God have taken the form of young men, walking down the hill to the town of Sodom. God had promised to spare Sodom if ten righteous people were found there. What would they find there?

Notice that the two angels walk up to the city by themselves. The Lord was not with them. That they walked without the Lord is an ominous sign. This is a God forsaken place.

When they arrived in Sodom, they discovered Lot sitting at the gateway of the city. Genesis records the progression of Lot's assimilation into Sodom. Initially he had “looked toward Sodom (13:10); then “moved his tent as far as Sodom” (Genesis 13:12); next he is “dwelling in Sodom” (Genesis 14:12); here he is “sitting in the gate of Sodom” (Genesis 19:1). Lot had become a prominent man in Sodom. He was well-known in the gates. It was the elders of the city who sat in the gate. It was there that disputes were brought so that the town leaders might hear and pass judgment. Lot administered justice concerning city quarrels and officially welcomed visitors into the city. He was a sort of “mayor” of Sodom.

Lot had really done well. He had moved up the social scale. He was making a good living. When he was with Abraham he was living in tents, traveling from one pasture and one water hole to another. We are told in Genesis 19:2 that Lot lived in a house. This is the first time the word “house” is used in scripture.

When Lot saw the two men (angels), he echoes what Abraham did in Genesis 18. In a spirit of humble hospitality, he rose to meet the men; then bowed with his face toward the ground; he invites them to his house and offers to wash their feet. He makes them a feast.

At first they refuse Lot's offer, but when Lot insists, the two men go with him.

III. The Debauchery of Sodom – Genesis 19:4-11

As word spread throughout Sodom that two men had come to visit Lot, the true character of the city became clear. As the meal drew

to a close, there was a growing disturbance outside the house. A noisy crowd was gathering and it grew larger and louder as the minutes went by. Soon it was evident why the mob had gathered outside Lot's house.

Notice 19:4 "(All) the men from every part of Sodom (to the last man), surrounded the house – both young and old – and they called to Lot, "Bring out the men! Bring out the men! Let us have our way with them!" The men of Sodom were homosexuals who wanted to have sex with the two strangers.

When God created human beings, He created them purposefully to come in two varieties – male and female. That wasn't an accident or an experiment. Men and women were created to be similar to one another and yet different in very important ways. From the beginning, God designed human beings to be sexual beings that could experience and express their sexuality as males or females. He designed sexual intercourse to be the means of procreation as well as an incredibly satisfying experience of intimacy.

God's vision from the very beginning of creation was the vision of oneness – that we would be one with Him and one with each other. This oneness is not the kind that's achieved by bringing together two of the same thing; it's the oneness that's attained by bringing together two different things to form one new thing. Oneness in marriage is the union of man and woman into one flesh. The genius of marriage is that $1 + 1 = 1$. It's lousy math, but great theology. One man, plus one woman, equals one flesh, perfectly suited for one another.

It doesn't work that way in same – sex relationships. One man plus one man equals two men. There is no complementary nature, so there is no oneness.

When God created the woman, He did it by taking something out of the man. In marriage, God brings a man and woman back together to reclaim the fullness of the divine image – masculinity and femininity. No such union takes place when members of the same sex come together. There can be intimacy, companionship, and even love between members of the same sex, but there can't be oneness. And oneness is what marriage is about.

Notice Genesis 18:20-21. It only took one night in Sodom to see that the evil report that had reached Heaven was as evil as the report they had received.

Notice Genesis 19:6-7 Imagine a believer calling the scum of Sodom, "My brethren!" That's how far the unholy morality of Sodom had warped Lot's sense of values.

In response to the lewd cries of the homosexuals, Lot offers to give the mad mob his two virgin daughters to do with as they will. But the men of Sodom didn't want Lot's girls, they wanted his guests. These men, because they were angels, were different from any man they had ever seen. They had a glow about them. They were strong and well-built. They were fresh flesh! They wanted these men! They would not be denied! Their desire was a communal rape of the visiting men.

Here was a believer in Jehovah God trying to live happily in a carnal place and trying to be friends with carnal folks. You would think from the O.T. account that Lot was not saved. It's not until we get to the N.T. that the Lord tells us Lot was a righteous man. But we are also told about how he felt about himself.

-2 Peter 2:6-9 gives us insight into Lot's heart. Three times the passage speaks of Lot as being "righteous" (Righteous Lot...that righteous man... his righteous soul). But Peter also says that Lot was "vexed" or "distressed" or "worn down" by the filthy lives of the Sodomites, and his soul was "vexed" or continually tortured. Inwardly, he was distressed by the sexual conduct of the wicked and was tormented in his righteous soul over their lawless deeds, but outwardly he said little or nothing. He didn't approve of what was going on in Sodom, but he didn't speak out against them. He just tolerated it with no courage to speak out against their sin. Lot was a conflicted soul, at the same time both offended and allured by Sodom. He liked the prosperity, the comforts, the culture and the prestige, but he was worn down by the filthy lives of the lawless men and perpetually tortured in his righteous soul by the deeds he saw and heard.

IV. The Declaration About Sodom – Genesis 19:12-14

The wickedness of Sodom was crying out for punishment. Lot set out to warn his sons-in-laws...actually it was his prospective sons-in-laws because neither of his daughters had slept with a man.

-How did these two men respond? They laughed and mocked at Lot. "Come on old man! We've lived like this in Sodom a long time and there's never been a judgment. No one has believed in judgment since the time of Noah. If God told you there's going to be a judgment, He's bluffing! We can do whatever we want to. God's not going to do anything about it."

V. The Deliverance of Lot – Genesis 19:15-22

"Get up! Hurry! It's the last hour!" "But he lingered!" "How can we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

-You would think when Lot saw the power of the angels smiting the Sodomites with blindness, that would get Lot in gear! "Flee for your lives and don't look back!" Finally the angels took their hands and lead them to safety.

The angels tell Lot to go to the mountains (where Abraham dwelt), but Lot said, "No, let me just go to Zoar," which means "small." It was a mini-Sodom itself. He must have a little Sodom again in his life.

VI. The Destruction of Sodom – Genesis 19:23 -25, 27-29

God rains fire and brimstone on Sodom and everything is destroyed.

Abraham gets up early the next morning and goes to the place where he interceded to see what God would do. He sees the smoke and knows ten righteous could not be found in Sodom.

VII. The Death of Lot's Wife – Genesis 19:26

Turning to look back may seem like a small sin to deserve such a great punishment, but it spoke volumes. Looking back tells you what really mattered to her. It spoke of proud unbelief. She was taken from Sodom, but Sodom was still in her heart.

What an end! On the verge of having mercy to be condemned by divine justice! She is on the brink of salvation, fleeing to safety, and she stops and turns back. How many folks have come to the brink of saying yes to Jesus, and then they stop and turn away from Him. So close, but it is not to be!

The worst thing of all is that she died in the very act of her sin and she had no time for repentance. What a dreadful thing to die in the very act of sin.

VIII. The Daughters of Lot – Genesis 19:30-38

Lot and his two virgin daughters leave Zoar and go and live in a mountain cave.

Noah got in trouble with the use of alcohol after the judgment of the flood and it resulted in his nakedness and the curse of his son.

Now alcohol and drunkenness is going to get Lot and his two daughters in trouble after the judgment of Sodom. This is not the story of an abusive father. He would not knowingly lay a finger on his girls. The abusers here were Lot's daughters, two mature women, but notice that they did what they did, not for sexual gratification, but, facing extinction, the end of their father's line. Both girls would get their father drunk, one on one night; the other on the next night, Lot knowing nothing and remembering nothing about it, but both daughters were with child by their father.

Lot would learn what happened, for it was just the three of them in the cave in the mountain. No other man was there. He had to be the father of his girl's babies.

The girls show no shame in what they had done. The oldest named her son Moab, which means "from the father". The youngest named her son Ben-Ammi, which means "son of my kinsman" or "son of my close male relative". They were bragging about their shameful sin and flaunting their sin before their father.

The Moabites and the Ammonites are sometimes referred to as the sons of Lot and they often fought against Israel. When Israel left Egypt and asked Moab permission to pass through their land on their way to the promised land, they were refused. Then the Ammonites hired Balaam to curse Israel at the time of the exodus.

-The sad thing is, it didn't have to be. God showed them mercy in bringing them out of Sodom. He offered them spiritual deliverance. They refused.

Revisiting Old Sins Genesis 20:1-18

One of the great proofs that the Bible is THE inspired, infallible Word of God is that it tells the truth about God's people – including the dark side. It is never pleasant to see failure in the life of one of God's children, but I'm thankful that God didn't sweep Abraham's sin under the rug. I'm grateful because, like Abraham, I struggle with sin. Sometimes I struggle with the same sins over and over, as I sure you do, too. In the midst of our struggle we need encouragement and the blessed assurance that we have hope in the midst of our failures.

When we last saw Abraham, he was standing near the top of a mountain, overlooking Sodom and Gomorrah, watching the smoke from God's judgment rise from those twin cities. He turns from the two cities and goes south. He wants to get away from that place.

Abraham himself is about to make a huge mistake. In fact, this is the third major failure of Abraham after he came into the land of Canaan.

- The first of his failures was the lie he told in Egypt, saying that Sarah was his sister.
- The second failure, and the worse of the three, was having a baby with Hagar.
- His third major failure, found here in Gen. 20, was a repeat of the first failure – he lied about Sarah being his sister – Again!

Do you have some sin, or maybe sins, that you find yourself repeating over and over? You confess the sin, ask forgiveness for the sin, and promise God and yourself that you will not commit that sin again and, then, you find yourself repeating the sin over again.

-The writer of Hebrews (Genesis 12:1) calls these “besitting sins” - “sins which cling so closely to us.” sins that may not appeal to others remain a deadly lure for us. Deceit was Abraham's besetting sin. It was hard for him, as it is for all of us, to lay aside our besetting sin.

A sin once committed is not difficult to repeat. Even great saints can fail again in the same area they failed in years ago. No matter how long you've been in the faith or how many battles you've won, you can still fail again in the same sin in which you failed years before if you are not continually cautious about that sin in your Christian walk.

We all have character weaknesses. We do not all have the same weaknesses, but whatever our weaknesses may be, we had better be especially watchful in that particular area.

Example: Diabetics must watch their diets much more closely than non-diabetics. If we recognize that truth in physical areas, how much more do we need to recognize that truth in the area of character.

Abraham was not made of angel's dust. He was a man just like us; with weaknesses just like us. The arm of flesh will fail and disappoint you. In our flesh dwells no good thing!

Abraham repeats the same sin that he committed thirty years before. At 60, Sarah was beautiful, but now she is 90. There's usually a big difference between a 60 year old woman and a 90 year old woman. Sarah is now 90 and she must have been beautiful still, because the King wanted her for his own.

I.A Review of an Old Story –Genesis 20:1-2

Temptation will come no matter where we are, but when we are in the wrong place, temptation has more power to overcome us than when we are in the right place. Abraham goes south, toward the place of Egypt, the place where he failed before, and there is not the slightest hint that God ordered him to move in that direction.

Watch verse 2: When they got to Gerar, “Abraham said of Sarah, “She is my sister.” “And Abimelech, King of Gerar, sent and took Sarah.” This lie is going to put Sarah and the promise of the covenant in great peril.

Why did Abraham lie again?

1.He feared for his life –Genesis 20:11

Abraham ASSUMED that no one in Gerar feared God, but in this story Abimelech clearly respected the Lord. He also ascribed evil motives to Abimelech for no good reason. It's true that they MIGHT have killed him because of his wife, but the men of Gerar had given no evidence of that fact, and even so, that still would not have justified his sin.

2.He rationalized his lie – Genesis 20:12

Sarah was his half-sister, so what he said was partly true, but in this case, a half-truth was really a whole lie since Abraham's intention was to cover the truth, not reveal it.

3.He talked Sarah into joining him in the lie – Genesis 20:13

Abraham used a line on Sarah that men have been using on women since time immemorial: “If you love me, you will...” While Sarah may be faulted for going along with the lie, clearly the responsibility rests squarely on Abraham's shoulders.

The root cause of Abraham's sin was his lack of faith in God. He doubted God would or could take care of him and Sarah, so he decided to help God out, though God didn't need that kind of help. Abraham's sin was cowardly, deliberate, dishonest, and dishonoring to God. It jeopardized Sarah's purity, misled an innocent man, and destroyed Abraham's testimony. God could have used Abraham as a witness in Gerar if he had told the truth, but because he lied, he not only lost his testimony, but he lost any opportunity to witness for the Lord.

Consider the following statement: "When good men do wrong, they do worse harm than when bad men do wrong." That's because we expect bad men to act bad, so when they do wrong, we are never surprised. IN fact, we're surprised when the ungodly do good. But the world expects Christians to have higher moral standards. They expect us to live differently than they do. When we don't we hurt the cause of Christ and drive men and women away from the Kingdom of God. How much better it would have been if Abraham had told the truth, trusted God, and accepted the consequences.

II. The Return to an Old Sin – Genesis 20:3-8

Ever wonder where the phrase, "You are a dead man" came from? It came from the Bible. God, in His grace, saved Abraham from Himself. What damage could have been done if the sin had run its natural course?

How many times has God saved us from ourselves? We made some dumb decision or did some dumb thing and, by all rights, we should have suffered greatly for it, but God spared us.

It may seem strange to speak of God "protecting" Abraham, but that's exactly what this passage teaches. Even though Abraham is clearly in the wrong, and even though no overt evil may be ascribed to Abimelech, God's protection of Abraham is seen in at least four ways:

A. The Dream – Genesis 20:3

Clearly, Abimelech had no idea who Sarah really was and he had no conception of Abraham's importance in the plan of God. Here God not only warns Abimelech, He also shows him the way of escape. He must return Sarah to Abraham and then ask the prophet to pray for him. If he does not, then he and all his household will die. "Sarah's married! Touch her and you're a dead man!"

B. The Defense – Genesis 20:4-5

Abimelech says that he had no reason not to believe Abraham and Sarah when both told him they were brother and sister. They had no children. How could he have guessed that what Abraham said was untrue?

According to Genesis 20:17, God evidently struck Abimelech with a disease (perhaps a sexually – transmitted disease) that prevented him from physically consummating a relationship with Sarah. As painful as it may have been, this was God's grace shown to a pagan because it kept the king from committing the sin of adultery, for which he would have died at the hand of God.

-It is also clear that God closed the wombs of all the females in Abimelech's household until he returned Sarah to Abraham.

C. The Direction –Genesis 20:6-7

God is fair. God affirms Abimelech's defense. Abimelech learned that it was God that had been there keeping him from sinning. But, he must return Sarah to Abraham.

D. The Decision – Genesis 20:8

Abimelech exposes Abraham's sin publicly. This public exposure served several purposes. First, it forced Abraham to deal with the reality of his own sinful behavior. Second, it exposed a continuing weakness in his own life. Third, it prevented him from continuing on in sin and possibly making even greater mistakes. Fourth, it served as a warning that God hates adultery. Fifth, it shows that God will not sit idly by while His children live in sin. Sixth, it protected the promised seed from corruption at the hands of pagans.

III. The Rebuke of an Old Saint – Genesis 20:9-16

This pagan king gave Abraham a piece of his mind. This is the second time Abraham is rebuked and chewed out by a pagan.

Abimelech interrogates Abraham with three questions.

1. "What have you done to us?" What have you, a righteous God-fearing man, done to us – we who have never had the revelation of God that you have had?
2. "How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me?"
3. "What were your reasons for doing this?" This was the most humbling question of all. Abraham had to answer, "My fear of men and I didn't trust the Lord to keep me."

IV. The Restoration Between Sovereigns – Genesis 20:14-18

All is not lost because of Abraham's lapse into a besetting sin. The reminder of the account drips with grace. There is a triple restitution.

-Think of it. Abraham evaded responsibility for a sin he DID commit, but Abimelech took responsibility for a sin he DID NOT commit.

He didn't just return Sarah.

1. Abimelech gave Abraham sheep, cattle, and slaves as restitution for taking Sarah (v.14).
2. Abimelech gave Abraham permission to travel all over the land (v.15).
3. Abimelech gave Abraham a thousand shekels of silver and told Sarah that he was giving it to her "brother" to cover the offense against her before everyone. She was completely vindicated. He pays twenty times the fine bestowed on a man for lying with a virgin and he hasn't touched her and he doesn't keep her. It is Abimelech who is the Christlike figure in this story. The Lord is good to Abraham even when he deserves God's rod.

Note Genesis 21:1-2.

Gen 21:1 And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

A Time To Weep and A Time To Laugh

Genesis 21:1-21

The Christian life is a land of hills and valleys. Solomon expressed the same thought when he said, "There is a time to weep and a time to laugh (Ecc. 3:4). Every hill also has a valley beside it.

This is particularly true of family life because the people closest to us can also bring us both joy and sorrow. Our homes can be happy one day and very sad the next. Things change quickly.

In our study of the life of Abraham, we come to an event that should have brought only joy to Abraham and Sarah, but while the birth of Isaac brought joy, it also brought its share of pain and sorrow.

Our text contains two parts: the birth of Isaac (Genesis 21:1-7) and the expulsion of Ishmael (Genesis 21:8-21). Each has valuable lessons for all of us to consider.

I. What Abraham Learned From The Birth of Isaac – Genesis 21:1-7

A. He Learned That God Keeps His Word – Genesis 21:1-2

Did you notice where God is in these first two verses? He's at the beginning and He's at the end. God is why Sarah got pregnant and why Abraham is now changing diapers at age 100.

God always keeps His word. The first two verses emphasize three times that God is faithful to keep His word - "as He had said...as He had spoken...which God had spoken."

-God is a God of His word. Character is greatly honored when it can be said of someone, "He is a man of his word." That's God!

- Joshua 21:45 "not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass."
- Joshua 23:14 "And you know...that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed."
- Matt. 5:18

B. He Learned that God's Timing is Always Perfect – Genesis 21:2

Approximately 25 years have passed since God first spoke to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees. During that time Abraham had many adventures and many spiritual ups and downs. Sometimes, he fervently believed God, but often he doubted. Time and again God appeared to him to remind him of His promise.

Notice the phrase in Genesis 21:2 "at the set time" Nine months before, God had told Abraham and Sarah they would have a Son "at the set time"; Nine months later the child was born.

It was a red-letter day in the life of Abraham and Sarah when that little baby boy was born. I can almost see Abraham pacing back and forth in front of the tent flaps – praying, wringing his hands, saying, "Oh, come on Sarah. Hurry up, Sarah! I can't wait much longer." All of a sudden Sarah, lets go with one last scream and the baby cries and Sarah says, "Get in here, Abraham!" Abraham takes one look at the baby and says, "It's a boy! It's a boy! It's a boy! Thank you, Lord! Thank you, Lord! I thought this day would never come!" Abraham is smiling from ear to ear, skipping and hopping around the tent like a kid with a new toy!

Two miracles have taken place. A baby boy is born to a ninety year old woman, and both are fine. Then, the baby was born right

when God told them it would be.

Abraham hold that tiny boy in his arms and says, "His name is Isaac! Laughter!" Then Baby Isaac cooed and laughed out loud. And so did Abraham and Sarah! And Heaven smiled!

Isaac was the first male reported to have been circumcised at birth.

Gen. 21:6-7 are considered to be Sarah's song. Really, these words are a carol, which means a song of joy, rapture, or gladness.

Then Isaac is weaned (v.8) and Abraham made a great feast to celebrate! A child was usually weaned at age three, so Isaac was a toddler.

II. What Abraham Learned From the Dismissal of Ishmael – Genesis 21:8-21

Abraham and Sarah laughed and rejoiced when Isaac was weaned at age three, but there was another laughing, and Sarah saw it! The son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking Isaac, and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son!"

The last word in verse 9 is actually "Isaac", "laughing, mocking, scoffing." It is an intensive form of Isaac's name which means that Ishmael's laugh was a mocking laughter.

Abraham may have been the father of the faithful but his family life was a shambles! Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael, and now, Isaac together. This arrangement did nothing but cause trouble for Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar. Sarah was jealous of Hagar and her baby; Hagar was jealous of Sarah and her relationship with Abraham, and poor Abraham is caught in the middle, trying to please two women.

Sarah's words are harsh and bitter and reflect the lingering resentment she felt toward Hagar every since Ishmael was born.

By now Ishmael is about 16 years old. Think about it: For 13 or 14 years, Ishmael had gotten all the love and attention from Abraham. Now, he was left out and Isaac was getting all the attention and love.

When Ishmael mocked Isaac, this was the straw that broke the camel's back. Sarah has had enough. She wanted both of them out of her tent.

Notice the Remorse of Abraham – Genesis 21:11

Think of the pain that ripped through Abraham's heart as he had to say to his own flesh and blood, "Be gone! And never come back." But that's what Sarah was asking him to do and God agreed. God told him to do what Sarah asked him to do. Then, God promised to take care of Hagar and her son.

A. Abraham Learned That Choices Have Consequences

It may have seemed like a good idea to sleep with Hagar 18 years earlier to help God out, but Sarah was wrong to suggest the idea and Abraham was doubly wrong to act on it.

B. Abraham Learned that the Good Must Go In Order that the Best May Come.

Some feel that it was not fair to send Hagar and Ishmael away. No doubt it was painful to Abraham.

God knew something Abraham didn't know. God knew that He (God) was going to take special care of Ishmael out in the desert. God never intended to see Hagar and Ishmael die in the hot sun. Also, God wanted to protect the promised seed of Abraham. As long as Ishmael remained in the house, he would be a threat to God's plan(v.12).

Notice Genesis 21:15-21

The water ran out as the sun beat down on the woman and her son. Hagar was broken-hearted, thinking that Ishmael was going to die. She didn't want to witness the death of her son so she leaves him under a bush and goes off to weep about a "bowshot" away (about 1,000 feet).

Ishmael prays and God shows Hagar the provisions He has for them. Genesis 21:17-21.

When we come to the N.T., Paul gives us the spiritual meaning of this passage in Gen. 21 and tells us it is filled with symbolic truth. Paul give us four spiritual truths as they relate to Gen. 21.

A. Ishmael is a picture of the Flesh. Galatians 4:22-24

Gal 4:22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

The word "flesh" does not mean the flesh that hangs to your bones and makes up your body. The word "flesh" means anything you are without God. Sarah offered Hagar to Abraham and they produced Ishmael. Ishmael represents the flesh. Ishmael was the best they could do without God.

What does the flesh (the old life without God) look like?

Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

B. Isaac is a Picture of the Spiritual

Gal 4:22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

Isaac was a miracle child; a supernaturally born son. He was a son of faith. You can't explain the birth of Isaac apart from God.

Rom 4:17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Rom 4:18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

Rom 4:19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

Rom 4:20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

Rom 4:21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Rom 4:22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

What does spiritual, supernatural living look like?

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

C. Ishmael is going to Persecute Isaac

Gal 4:28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. 29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

When we are saved the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, but the old nature is there, too. If you are saved, you have both Isaac and Ishmael living inside of you and Ishmael is going to persecute you. If we don't learn as Christians that we have two natures living within us, we will be victimized by the old nature. If we yield to the fleshly nature within us, it will control us. If we yield to the spiritual nature within us, it will control us.

D. Abraham put Ishmael out and we must put the works of the flesh out of our lives.

Gal 4:30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Rom 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Rom 6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are live from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Abraham put Ishmael out because God told him to. How did he put him out?

1.It was Personal

Abraham, himself, had to deal with Ishmael, even though he didn't want to. He had to make a decision to obey God and put him out, even though he didn't want to. Let me tell you something about our flesh: ONLY we can deal with the old nature in our life. No one else can.

2.It was Painful

It wasn't easy to get rid of Ishmael. He had been attached to him for 14 years. He was hard to let go of. And so is our flesh. We have had our old fleshly natures for a long time. As painful as it may be, we will not have spiritual victory in our lives if we don't put our flesh away.

3.It was Permanent

Abraham did not allow Ishmael to return. There was no invitation for him to return. We must put away the works of the flesh once and for all in our lives.

4.It was Prompt- Genesis 21:14

If God leads you to deal with something in your life, do it, and don't delay. The longer you hold on to the things He wants you to deal with, the harder it will be to deal with.

How do you deal with the Ishmaels in your life? Here is the key. By taking one day and one step at a time. When you get up each morning, realize that within you is two natures. Don't feed the old sinful nature – starve it. Commit to the spiritual nature.

Abraham's Defining Moment Genesis 22:1-14

What was the defining moment in your life? Don't tell me it was your birth, we all understand that. Of all the moments of your life, what one moment has changed your course of being? When you look back, there was one moment; one decision, that changed your course of living. What was that one moment in your life? Was it your conversion? Your marriage? A decision that you made?

As the Bible points out the lives of its characters, it does not fail to point out their defining moments.

- Moses experienced his defining moment as he stood before the burning bush.
- David experienced his defining moment when he went out against Goliath, with nothing but five smooth stones, a sling, and the power of God in his life.
- Daniel experienced his defining moment when he refused to eat the king's meat and drink the king's wine, so that he might obey his God.

As we look at Genesis 22, we will see Abraham's defining moment and come to Abraham's ultimate test of faith. In the "School of Faith" we must have occasional test, or we will never know where we are spiritually. Abraham has his share of test right from the beginning.

- 1.First was the "Family Test", when he had to leave his loved ones and step out by faith to go to a new land (Genesis 11:27-12:5).
- 2.Then followed the "Famine Test", which he failed because he doubted God and went down to Egypt for help (Genesis 12:10-13:4).
- 3.Once back in the land, Abraham passed the "Fellowship Test" when he gave Lot first choice in using the pastureland (Genesis 13:5-18).
- 4.He also passed the "Fight Test" when he defeated the Kings (Genesis 14:1-16).
- 5.He also passed the "Fortune Test" when he said no to Sodom's wealth. (Genesis 14:17-24)
- 6.But he failed the "Fatherhood Test" when Sarah got impatient with God and suggested that Abraham have a child by Hagar (Genesis 16).
- 7.Abraham passed the "Farewell Test" when it was time to send Ishmael away, even though it broke his heart (Genesis 21:14-21).

Not every difficult experience in life is necessarily a personal test from God. Sometimes our own disobedience causes the pain or disappointment as when Abraham went to Egypt.

Learn to distinguish between Trials and Temptations.

- Temptation is meant to pollute and weaken us; Testing is meant to purify and strengthen us.
- Temptation offers immediate pleasure and gain; Testing offers immediate pain and loss.
- Temptations come from our inward desires (James 1:12-16); Trials come from the Lord who has a special purpose to fulfill.
- Temptations are used by the devil to bring out the worst in us; Trials are used by the Holy Spirit to bring out the best in us.
- Temptations seem logical; Trials often seem very unreasonable. Why would God give Abraham a son and then ask him to kill him?

All believers face similar temptations to sin, but not all believers experience the same trials of faith.

God's testings are tailor-made for each child of God, and each experience is unique.

When God severely tested Abraham, He was actually paying Abraham a compliment, for God does not test one so severely unless that person has grown strong in the faith. The toughest test are for the strongest saints. God never tested Lot in this way, because He knew Lot was not mature enough for strong testing.

Our faith is not really tested until God asks us to bear what seems unbearable, do what seems unreasonable, and expect what seems impossible.

Consider how unreasonable God's request seemed. Isaac was Abraham's only son, and the future of the covenant rested on him. Isaac was a miracle child, the gift of God to Abraham and Sarah in response to their faith. Abraham and Sarah loved Isaac very much and had built their whole future around him. When God asked Abraham to offer his son, He was testing Abraham's faith, hope and love; and it looked like God was wiping out everything Abraham and Sarah had lived for.

When God sends a trial to us, our first response is usually, "Why, Lord?" and then, "Why me?" Right away we want God to give us explanations. But faith does not demand explanations; faith rests on promises.

God is very specific in what He asked Abraham to do:

A. God told Abraham Whom to sacrifice.

In a very plain, clear, repetitive way God told Abraham that he was to sacrifice Isaac. It was "thy son", "thine only son", "Isaac", "whom thou lovest", and "him" (Genesis 22:2).

Isaac was:

1. The Lone Son – God was asking Abraham to put his all on the alter. When Isaac is sacrificed, there will be no son left. This verse tells us how God counts. God said to take your "only son". Ishmael didn't count in God's eyes. Isaac was the only heir to the covenant.

2. The Loved Son – Genesis 22:2

Abraham had previously demonstrated that his love for God was greater than his love for Ishmael. Though he loved Ishmael, he obeyed God's orders to send him away. Abraham was asked to do more than just send Isaac away; He was asking him to give up Isaac; to slay him.

3. The Law-abiding Son - Isaac submitted completely to his father's will in the whole ordeal. Isaac went with Abraham (v.3), he carried the wood for Abraham (v.6) and there was not a word of complaint or protest when bound and laid on the alter (v.9).

B. God told Abraham When to sacrifice – Genesis 22:2 (now)

C. God told Abraham Where to sacrifice – Genesis 22:2

Moriah was some 42 miles away. It would take three days to get there. At that point Abraham only has two options. Either obey or disobey. If he had stopped to argue, that in itself is a form of disobedience.

If he had tried to talk God out of it, that too is disobedience.

Abraham's obedience is immediate, unquestioning, and filled with faith. Nowhere had God promised to spare his son; yet, somehow Abraham understood enough of God's character that he was willing to do what God required in faith and somehow believed that God would work out the details and spare his son.

1. Notice the Promptness of Abraham to obey (Genesis 22:3). God had spoken to Abraham in the night and Abraham got up early in the morning to obey God.

2. Notice the Place of Sacrifice – Genesis 22:9. God made it very clear where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac, and the place was more important than Abraham could ever have realized at the time God gave the instructions. It was at “Moriah” where he would find the ram to offer in the place of Isaac.

3. Notice the Preparations for the Sacrifice – Genesis 22:3,6,9. Have you wondered what was going on in the mind and heart of the 120 year old Abraham as they made that 42 mile trip to Moriah? I wonder how many times tears filled Abraham's eyes as he looked over at Isaac. I think he said repeatedly, “Son, I can't tell you how much I love you” and I think Isaac smiled and said, “Dad, I love you, too.” They get to Moriah and Abraham tells his servants to stay there and he and Isaac would go worship and then THEY would return.

It is interesting that the wood is mentioned five times in the narrative and that Isaac did not start carrying the wood until he arrived at Mount Moriah. The wood is not a picture of the cross, for Jesus did not carry His cross all the way to Calvary. The wood seems to picture the burden of sin that Jesus bore for us (1 Peter 2:24). Abraham took the wood and “laid it upon Isaac, his son (Genesis 22:6), and “the Lord hath laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:6).

Abraham carried a knife and a torch, both of them instruments of death. The knife would end Isaac's physical life, and the fire would burn the wood on the alter where his body lay. In Isaac's case, a substitute died for him; but nobody could take the place of Jesus on the cross. He was the only sacrifice that could finally and completely take away the sins of the world.

In the Bible, fire often symbolizes the holiness of God (Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Heb. 12:29). The fire consumed the wood as a picture of the judgment of God against sin. The cross was the physical instrument of death; but at Calvary, Jesus experienced much more than death. He experienced the judgment of God for the sins of the world. Isaac felt neither the knife nor the fire but Jesus felt both.

5. Notice the Perplexity about the Sacrifice – Genesis 22:7-8

Isaac knew what was essential for a sacrifice: Fire is important. Wood is important. A knife was important. But without the animal there could be no sacrifice.

Isaac asked about a lamb, but God provided a ram. The answer to the question, “Where is the Lamb?” was given by John the Baptist: “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:28).

6. Notice the Provisional of the Sacrifice – Genesis 22:9-14.

As Abraham began to build the alter and when he took the wood off of Isaac, I think at that point Isaac realized that He would be the sacrifice. As Abraham bound Isaac and placed him on the alter, I think the tears were flowing, even though Abraham knew it was God's will for him to do what he was about to do. Being in the will of God and doing the will of God is not always easy. In fact, sometimes it is painful.

As Abraham raised the knife to offer His Son to the Lord, Abraham heard the Lord say the most precious words, “Abraham, do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” Why the test? God wanted to know who Abraham loved more: Him or Isaac.

God the Father would walk with His Son up Calvary 2,000 years later, and the Father would sacrifice His Son. This time there would be no reprieve; No substitute! The Father would sacrifice His Son.

The thicket in which the ram was caught pictures the crown of thorns and the crown of thorns represents sin being placed on the head of the Lord Jesus. Remember that there were no thorns on earth until man sinned. Thorns appeared because of sin. It was not coincidence that they placed the crown of thorns on the head of the Lord Jesus, for our sins were laid upon Him.

Somehow Abraham understood something of the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. When he said, “God Himself will provide the lamb,” he was pointing not simply toward the alter on Mount Moriah, but to a greater sacrifice to be offered at the very same location almost 2,000 years later when God provided the Ultimate Lamb – Jesus Christ – for the sin of the world.

What an impression this event must have had on Isaac as well. He now knew that his dad loved God more than anyone or anything.

Genesis 22 was a dress rehearsal for Calvary. Isaac did not actually die, but “in figurative sense” (Heb. 11:19) he died and was raised from the dead. Jesus, however, really died, was buried, and was triumphantly resurrected. It is interesting that Abraham returned to the two servants (Genesis 22:19), but nothing is said about Isaac. In fact, Isaac is not mentioned again until he is seen

meeting his bride (Genesis 24:62). While it is obvious that Isaac did return home with his father, the Bible type reminds us that the next event on God's calendar is the return of Jesus Christ to claim His bride, the church.

There is always an "afterward" to the tests of life, because God never wastes suffering. "But He knoweth the way that I take; When He hath tested me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). Abraham received several blessings from God because of his obedient faith.

1.He received a new Approval from God (Genesis 22:12)

Abraham had described this whole difficult experience as "worship" (v.5) because, to him, that is what it was. He obeyed God's will and sought to please God's heart, and God commended him. It is worth it to go through trials if, at the end, the Father can say to us, "Well done!"

2.He received back a New Son

Isaac and Abraham had been to the alter together, and Isaac was now a "living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1-2). God gave Isaac to Abraham, and Abraham gave Isaac back to God. We must be careful that God's gifts do not take the place of the Giver.

3.God gave Abraham New Assurances (Genesis 22:16-18).

Abraham had heard these promises before, but now they took on a fresh new meaning.

4.Abraham also learned a New Name for God (Genesis 22:14).

Jehovah-jireh means "the Lord will Provide." God provided the true Lamb of God to die for the sins of the world. God provided His Son to die for you and me personally and He must be received personally. Have you personally received Him?