

Essential Christianity

Volume 1: Genesis

Table of Contents:

Session 1: The Word of God

Session 2: Creation

Session 3: Innocence

Session 4: The Fall

Session 5: The Flood

Session 6: The Races of Mankind

Session 7: The Tower of Babel

Session 8: Abraham

Session 9: Jacob

Session 10: Joseph

The Word of God

Session 1

The Bible is a collection of books written by different men between the 15th century BC and the end of the first century AD. These books are also referred to as the “Holy Scriptures” or “the Oracles of God”. While there were several different human authors of the books of the Bible, these are not ordinary books. Each book was written under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

The Greek word *phero* translated in 2 Peter 1:21 as “moved by” is the same term used to describe something being carried along. As American theologian B.B. Warfield wrote:

The term here used is a very specific one. It is not to be confounded with guiding, or directing, or controlling, or even leading in the full sense of that word. It goes beyond all such terms, in assigning the effect produced specifically to the active agent. What is “borne” is taken up by the “bearer,” and conveyed by the “bearer’s” power, not its own, to the “bearer’s goal”, not its own. The men who spoke from God are here declared, therefore, to have been taken up by the Holy Spirit and brought by His power to the goal of His choosing. The things which they spoke under this operation of the Spirit were therefore His things, not theirs.

This is how the Bible speaks of the Holy Spirit moving the authors of Scripture to write its books. These two passages also make it clear that man did not think up what is in the Bible. God Himself revealed it to man.

Because of this divine inspiration the Bible is rightly called the word of God. As such it is inerrant and infallible in matters of faith, history and science. The Bible is God’s direct revelation to mankind and it is the only sure standard by which true religion and right moral conduct can be known. The Christian faith can be greatly enriched by Church tradition, historic confessions and the writings of past generations of saints, but all extra-Biblical writings and traditions must be weighed and tried by the

Bible itself. Jesus spoke of the authority and inerrancy of the Old Testament Scriptures. During His famous Sermon on the Mount, He said,

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:17-18)

Before that, He asserted the authority and sufficiency of Scripture as a rebuke to Satan, who was testing Him.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4)

He also said that even the things that seem unimportant in the Old Testament are of vital significance to Him. Therefore, we shouldn't look at the Old Testament (and, by extension, the entire Bible) as if it were manmade or irrelevant. Jesus clearly didn't think it was.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19-20)

Jesus also prophesied that the Holy Spirit would lead the early church into a fuller understanding of God, which we have in the books of the New Testament.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. (John 16:13)

Peter said that New Testament writings such as those of Paul were of equal, divine authority as the books of the Old Testament.

15...even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. (2 Peter 3:15-16)

Both the Old and New Testament writings were being twisted and misinterpreted by some people in Peter's day -- something that still happens

today -- and Peter used the Greek word for divine scriptures -- *graphe* -- to refer to both the Old Testament Scriptures and the writings (epistles) of Paul. At that point Paul's letters had not yet been compiled into the canon of the New Testament. But Peter didn't need to wait for a church council to tell him that Paul's letters were divinely authoritative.

A little bit of history is useful here. The books of the Bible were written across the course of many centuries, on three continents, in three languages, by 40 different men. Nonetheless, God teaches us that He Himself divinely authored the original writings of each book of the Bible. As such, the Scriptures have always had the power to change lives. The Word of God is not just letters on a page. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to change our hearts and continually sanctify us.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (James 1:18)

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

God's people have recognized the various books of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God as each book came into being and began to be read and circulated amongst God's people. In a few cases there were debates about whether or not certain books really were God's Word, but by and large the ancient Israelites and the early Christians knew for certain which books were divinely authored for reasons such as the following:

1. The texts contained specific messages from God to His people
2. They were authored by recognized prophets or apostles
3. They were consistent with what God's people had always believed about God and morality
4. What they taught made people holier and closer to God.
5. God's people worldwide recognized them as divinely authored.

As Jude wrote, God has completed his work of revelation. No new doctrines or morality can come into existence, and when we hear of sects proposing new ideas contrary to the teaching of Scripture, we must reject them.

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 3)

The Bible describes the creation of the world by God, the fall of man into sin through his own disobedience, and the redemption of mankind through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These three themes are the key to understanding the Bible and the Christian religion. Throughout the Scriptures God is presented as the sovereign creator and governor of the universe. He has the power to kill and to make alive, the power to raise up and to cast down at His own will. He alone can make unbreakable promises. Man, on the other hand, is wicked in his fallen condition. Man is full of lies and deceit. Because of this wickedness God gives to man a law to govern his conduct and to show him his evil nature. All of Biblical history is made up of sinful man's failure to follow God's law. However, God was not content to allow all of mankind to perish in their sins. Instead, he gave to sinful man a redeemer, His own son Jesus Christ. Jesus suffered in our place and was made the atonement for our sins. After his ascension into Heaven Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, under whose care we are able to lead Godly lives.

Questions:

-Who is the author of the Bible?

-What books are considered the "Word of God" or "Scriptures?"

-Can we disregard the Old Testament because of Jesus?

-What are some tests to determine if a book belongs in the Bible?

-Can we embrace new doctrines, new moral codes, or new books of Scripture? If so or if not, why?

-Did a church council make the books of the Bible authoritative? Or does God's Word have an authority that the Church recognizes and obeys?

-What is the central message of the Bible?

Genesis 1: Creation

Session 2

In the Bible there are two main accounts of creation, Genesis 1 and John 1. Genesis is the first book of the Bible and it was written by Moses in the 15th century BC. The Gospel of John is one of the books of the New Testament and it was written by the apostle named John in the 1st century AD. Both accounts stress that God created everything in the world out of nothing by His own almighty will. God did not work on material that existed before He did, and God was not compelled to act by any outside force or necessity. Neither account mentions that God used intermediary means to create the world. Everything was created directly by His Word, and everything that God created was good. God did not create anything evil and there was no pain, death or sin in the world at the beginning.

The account of the creation given by Moses tells us the order in which God created the world and what the world was like at the beginning. God created the entire universe in six days.

On the first day God created light.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. (Genesis 1:1-5)

On the second day God created space and air.

6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. (Genesis 1:6-8)

On the third day God created the earth and plants.

9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. 11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth

grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 13 And the evening and the morning were the third day. (Genesis 1:9-13)

Here it is important to pause and note the fact that when God created living things, He created each one “after his kind.” Each plant and tree is to reproduce itself as God made it. Apple trees produce apple trees, walnut trees produce walnut trees, and so on. When God created them and “saw that it was good,” He had not created them with any mixed species, and Scripture clearly states that His intent was for them to reproduce after their own kind.

On the fourth day God created the sun, the moon and the stars.

14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. 19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. (Genesis 1:14-19)

On the fifth day God created sea creatures and birds.

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. (Genesis 1:20-23)

Here again we see that distinctions and separation between species was a part of God’s created order from the very beginning. On the third day He created plant and tree species to each reproduce “after his kind,” and now on the fifth day we see that God also made all marine animals and birds to reproduce “after their kind.”

On the sixth day God created land animals and man.

The sixth day was the apex of creation. It was the day in which God created not only everything that lives on land such as tigers, elephants, and bears, but He made the most complex and intelligent creatures in the universe: men and women.

24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. (Genesis 1:24-31)

Human beings are unique amongst God's creations because God created them in His own image. This means that men and women bear a resemblance to God in many ways. One of those ways is that from the very beginning God gives man authority to exercise dominion over God's creation. God has endowed man with divinely delegated authority to rule all of creation.

It is also significant that when God created man, He included both the male and female in that description. Both men and women are made in the image of God. However, from the beginning women came under the authority (also called headship) of men. We'll read more in Genesis 2.

Also, when God made man He said "Let Us make man in Our image." He said "Our image" rather than "My image" because God is a Trinity, one God in three persons. The three persons of the Trinity are the Father, the Son (or Word) and the Holy Spirit. References to the Trinity are found

throughout the Bible, but it was not until the era of the New Testament that the Trinity was more fully revealed to God's people.

In the first chapter of the Gospel of John, we have another account of the creation, one which reveals more clearly the activity of the second person of the Trinity, the Word of God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-3, 14)

Jesus Christ is the Word of God become flesh. The mysterious nature of the Trinity is revealed by these verses from John, where it is written that the Word was in the beginning before anything was created and that the Word was God. The Word was not a creature created by God, rather the Word is an essential part of the Triune God.

Therefore Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, has been present since before time began. He was instrumental not only in our redemption but in our creation as well.

On the sixth day God made all the creatures that live on the earth to reproduce "after his kind," and then created human beings with the same intent that they reproduce, and that their posterity take dominion over all of creation. As the Apostle Paul wrote in Acts 17:26, God assigned places and times in history for various ethnic groups to rule over their territories. God has prevented all ethnic groups, though, from having sole power over creation. He did that to make every nation and race realize their finite, mortal capabilities and search for the true, almighty God.

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us. (Acts 17:26)

Genesis 1 and John 1 both show us that a Triune God -- one God in three persons -- is the God who created everything. Genesis 1 teaches us that this God made every living species with a unique genetic identity and intended them to maintain their unique, divine design in perpetuity. The first chapter of the Bible also teaches us that the sexes are united but dis-

tinct, equally made in God's image, and unequal in their roles and authority. Finally, mankind has a divine mission: to take godly dominion.

Questions:

-Was God forced to create the world out of necessity?

-What did God say about the things he created? Did He think they were good or bad?

-Why is man special compared to other creatures?

-What were the first commandments that God gave to man?

-Is Jesus God or just a very powerful being created by God?

-Did Jesus only enter into history in the 1st century AD, or has He been present since the beginning?

-How did God design living creatures to reproduce?

-Is there more than one type of human? If so, do people need to reproduce “after their own kind?”

-Did God make men and women equal, unequal, or both?

Genesis 2: Innocence

Session 3

In the second chapter of Genesis we have a more detailed account of the life of man at the beginning of the world and of the creation of woman, who is meant to be man's helper.

15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Genesis 2:15-17)

Earlier we saw the first positive commandment given by God to man (i.e., be fruitful, take dominion). Here we see that God specifically created Adam to work in connection with the soil and God's great outdoors. No matter how technologically advanced our Western societies become, we should not forget that God designed man to be most happy and holy when connected to His good, green earth.

Also note that man, in a state of innocence and peace, worked. His primary vocation was not leisure, sleep, the pursuit of pleasure, or even corporate worship such as what we offer God when gathered as families and churches. Adam's primary occupation was work, and work was both a divine mission and a blessing to him.

Here we also see the first negative commandment given by God to man. The negative commandment is accompanied by a curse. Disobedience to God is always punished. The commandment given to Adam was a very light burden. He was given complete freedom to eat from any of the numerous trees in the garden except for one. In the original state of creation, there was no pain and no death, only blessed obedience to God's commandment and communion with our Maker.

18 And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh

instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:18-25)

For the first time we find God saying that something in His creation is not good. It was not good that man should be alone without a helper. Because only man was made in God's image, no other animal in creation was fit to be his helper. But take note that God did not simply form another man to be Adam's helpmate. Instead of forming another man from the earth, God formed woman from the body of the first man. This illustrates woman's similar nature to man and also her dependence on him. She is not a stranger to him, nor utterly beneath him, nor designed to rule him.

The woman's role is to help, support, and accompany her man in his God-given duty to be fruitful, multiply, and subdue the earth. No man can do this for another man. Neither can a group, or succession, of women. One woman with one man, for life, is God's design for marriage and the family. It is significant that in His teaching on the topic of marriage and divorce, Jesus quoted from this very passage of Genesis 2:

6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.
7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;
8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.
9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. 10
And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. 11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. 12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. (Mark 10:6-12)

Adam's claim in Genesis 2:23 that Eve was "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" is paralleled elsewhere in Scripture (Genesis 29:14, 2 Samuel 5:1, 2 Chronicles 11:1, et al.) by people referring to their ethnic kinsmen and distant relations. Since woman is designed for support, and since she was taken from man's side -- i.e., is biologically of the same genetic building blocks as him -- naturally men and women of the same ethnicity, culture, and religion are the only suitable mates for one another. A woman should look for a husband to lead her from men of her own people group and faith. A man should look for a wife to comfort and support him from women of his own ethnic group and faith. We'll see this lesson put into

practice repeatedly throughout the history of the Biblical heroes such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and later reiterated in the New Testament. As American theologian R. J. Rushdoony wrote in his *Institutes of Biblical Law*, and *The Doctrine of Marriage*:

Man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), and woman in the reflected image of God in man, and from man (I Corinthians 11:1-12; Genesis 2:18, 21-23). "Helpmeet" means a reflection or mirror, an image of man, indicating that a woman must have something religiously and culturally in common with her husband. The burden of the law is thus against inter-religious, inter-racial, and inter-cultural marriages, in that they normally go against the very community which marriage is designed to establish.

Moreover, if she is to be "a help as before him," a mirror, there must be a common cultural background. This militates against marriages across cultures and across races where there is no common culture or association possible. The new unit is a continuation of the old unit but an independent one; and there has to be a unity or else it is not a marriage. Thus, the attempt of many today to say there is nothing in the Bible against mixed marriages whether religiously or culturally is altogether unfounded. We do not have to go to the Mosaic law to demonstrate that, because here in the very beginning we are told that she must be a help meet "bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh" sharing his faith, sharing a common background, a common culture, a common desire to fulfill his calling under God. This, then, is the meaning of marriage in the Biblical sense.

In contrast to feminism and egalitarianism, the Bible teaches that God created the woman for the man, not the man for the woman (1 Corinthians 11:9). This is the underlying reason for the authority structure that existed throughout Western history known as patriarchy. The New Testament later comes back to the original order of creation, and the facts of the fall of man, to provide two reasons why men and not women should serve as leaders in the church.

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. (1 Timothy 2:11-14)

The ordained order of authority is demonstrated by the marriage relationship in which man is the head over woman, under Christ, who is under God the Father (1 Corinthians 11). This order of authority is the general structure in which mankind is to operate on earth.

Though the Bible indicates in Genesis 3 that the woman was deceived and that women are to be under the authority of their male heads of household, the Bible also teaches that woman was created before the fall and before sin and death entered the world. God created both male and female, and both male and female were innocent and good when they were created. The moral goodness of man and woman were demonstrated by the fact that they were naked and unashamed (Genesis 2:25). Shame only entered the world with sin and guilt.

Women are necessary and beneficial to men, not to mention essential to the continued, godly existence of any family or ethnic group. Christianity does not agree with pagan religions or modern philosophies in which the female nature is viewed as inherently evil.

Thus, the Biblical norm, or established pattern ordained by God is:

- 1) Marriage between one man and one woman,
- 2) of the same general ethnic stock, age range, culture, religion, etc.,
- 3) for life,
- 4) resulting in godly offspring,
- 5) exercising dominion in Christ's name, for the glory of God.

Questions:

-Is work a blessing or a curse? What kind of work did God command Adam to do in Eden?

-What was the punishment for disobeying God's first negative command?

-Why did God create woman?

-In what ways are man and woman different by God's design?

-What role does ethnicity play in forming a marriage and raising children?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

-What difference will this make in your life?

Genesis 3: The Fall

Session 4

The blessed state of Eden did not last for long. Satan, in the form of a serpent, tempted the woman into eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. (Genesis 3:1-7)

The very first sin of man, the root thereof, and the events surrounding, was based on pride. This is understandable in that all sin has pride at its root. In Genesis 3:5, the serpent tells Eve that by eating the forbidden fruit, “ye shall be as gods,” insinuating that she and Adam will have the ability to determine for themselves what is good and what is evil. The implication of the serpent is by disobeying God’s command, they would control their own lives. They could be their own gods. This is the opposite of Christ Jesus, who redeemed us. His life, death, and resurrection demonstrate humility, as when he said, “I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me,” (John 5:30) and prayed to God the Father shortly before His suffering, “not my will, but thine, be done.” (Luke 22:42).

In his pride Adam sought to pass blame for his sin to his wife and to God rather than taking responsibility as the head of his family (Genesis 3:12). In contrast, Christ took full responsibility for the sins of His people on the cross and suffered the wrath of God even when He did not have to. As the example of perfect humility, Christ is the opposite of fallen man, who by nature is the child of wrath (Ephesians 2:3) and is the living proof of pride.

When Christ redeems a man and makes him a child of God, man is commanded to be “clothed with humility” (1 Peter 5:5). “God resists the proud

but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6) A redeemed man puts on “the new man” created in the image of Christ, and will display a Christlike, humble character to the world around him (Colossians 3:10).

With this very first sin we see a prototype of all human rebellion against God. When we rebel against God we set ourselves up in God’s place, thinking that we have the power to determine good and evil for ourselves. As the omniscient creator of the world, it is God’s right alone to determine what is good and what is evil. We are creatures who are dependent on God for our existence and for our knowledge, and only through irrational pride can we presume to know better than God. All anti-Christian ideologies both ancient and modern stem from this same fundamental sin of putting man’s fallible judgment in the place of God’s.

In a state of innocence man was unashamed of his nakedness because he had no sins to hide. Everything about him was pure and he could show his entire self to God and his fellow creatures without embarrassment. The innocence Adam and Even had enjoyed was destroyed by sin, and the punishment for sin was immediate, in that they lost communion with God.

After committing their sin, Adam and Eve attempted to hide from God, and when confronted by Him they attempted to shift the blame for their transgression. Rather than simply admitting “I am a sinner, I am responsible, God have mercy upon me,” they tried to make excuses. In truth, they had no excuse. They knew what God had commanded them to do. They decided to listen to Satan rather than to their Creator. The wicked nature of fallen man was already obvious. Fallen man still behaves the same way today. People rarely admit their personal failures and constantly make excuses for their misbehavior.

8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. (Genesis 3:8-13)

God then pronounced His curses upon the serpent, the woman and the man. God's law had been openly and deliberately violated. God had clearly communicated that death would be the consequence for violating this law. There would have been no injustice on God's part if he had instantly struck Adam and Eve dead and started over again with a new creation. However, being a God of mercy and love, in addition to pronouncing His curses He also made the first promise for future redemption (Genesis 3:15). The curses include pain for the woman in childbirth and hard labor for the man in producing fruit from the earth. This gives us a clearer picture of the life that God originally intended for mankind: painless, sinless dominion and reproduction.

14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (Genesis 3:14-24)

At this early stage of Biblical history the promise of redemption is still obscure. Throughout the Bible narrative the promises of redemption are expanded and embellished, until the full revelation of that redemption is given in the New Testament. This early promise, that the seed of the wom-

an will bruise the head of the serpent, is fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus was born of woman and through his death and resurrection he crushed the head (the power) of Satan. Satan's victory was temporary, Jesus' victory is permanent.

Mankind began to divide into two groups based on their faith, or rebellion, towards God. In the first group were men like Adam and Eve's second son Abel, who gave God their best and lived in obedience to Him. In the second group were men like Abel's older brother Cain, who did not give God the highest place in their lives, but pursued their own lusts. From the beginning, those who rebel against God have violently persecuted those who obey Him, as Cain did when he conspired against and murdered his brother Abel.

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. 6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. 8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? 10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. 11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; 12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. (Genesis 4:1-12)

After Abel's death and Cain's expulsion from his native society, the Bible describes the genealogy of Cain's offspring (Genesis 4:16-24). Notice that many of them were innovators and good at their trades. This is due to God's gift of common grace to all regardless of their willingness to obey Him. We see this at work in our day when brilliant people like Stephen Hawking hate the God who gave them their intellect, and when physically endowed athletes, actors, and models live godless, wicked lives.

In Genesis 4:25-5:32 we see the link from Adam and Eve to Noah.

Questions:

-What was the first sin?

-What did our first parents hope to achieve by disobeying God?

-What was the woman's curse?

-What was the man's curse?

-What is the promise given by God?

-Why did Cain murder Abel?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

-What difference will this make in your life?

Genesis 6-9: The Flood

Session 5

After the expulsion from Eden, Adam and Eve began to have children. Although in a fallen state, mankind still attempted to exercise a type of dominion over the earth. Men founded cities and invented various arts. But by the time of Noah, mankind had become so evil that God sent a great flood as a punishment. All mankind was wiped out except for Noah and his family. Being God's vicegerent over creation, it was Noah's duty to save not only a remnant of mankind in his ark, but a remnant of all animal species as well.

5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. (Genesis 6:5-8)

In His self-revelation to mankind, God does not present Himself as cold, immovable or impersonal. He is a living, personal God whose heart can be grieved. We experience grief as creatures with limited knowledge and power. By analogy we can have some idea of the grief experienced by an all-powerful and all-knowing God, but it is beyond our comprehension to know exactly how God's grief is related to His foreknowledge.

13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. 18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. 20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. (Genesis 6:13-14, 17-20)

The nature of the Covenant that God promises to Noah is explained after the flood.

20 And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. 22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. 4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. 5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. 6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. 7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, 9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 10 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. 11 And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. 12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. 17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth. (Genesis 8:20-9:17)

In this Covenant with Noah and his sons God reiterates the creation mandate of multiplying and exercising dominion over the earth and its creatures. God promises that He will never again destroy mankind with a flood, even if mankind acts wickedly. He forbids man to eat the blood of

living creatures. He commands man not to commit murder and He establishes the death penalty as the just recompense for this crime. Finally God designates the rainbow as the symbol of the Covenant. We shall see a succession of Covenants as we progress through Bible history until we reach the New Covenant established by the blood of Christ. These Covenants all recall the original state of man prior to the Fall and are meant to re-establish the communion with God that our first parents enjoyed. The Covenants are founded on God's mercy, not on man's goodness.

After the Flood had ended and Noah's family had once again tilled the soil and grown crops from it, Noah became drunk, took off his clothes inside his tent, and was spied upon by his son Ham.

20 And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: 21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. (Genesis 9:20-22)

When Shem and Japheth heard about it, they dealt with their father with reverence for him.

23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. (Genesis 9:23)

The following day, when Noah was once again sober, he pronounced blessings and curses on his sons. He was acting in the role of a prophet, and we will see later in the Bible (and in later secular history) how his words were prophecies about the races of man.

24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. 25 And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. 26 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. 27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. (Genesis 9:24-27)

Shem, the ancestor of God's prophets Abraham, David, and Our Lord Jesus Christ, is noted as the one who is in a special relationship with God. His older brother Japheth, whom we will soon see was the predecessor of our European peoples, would inherit God's blessings when he would "dwell in the tents of Shem." In other words, his people would have an equal claim to fellowship with God as Shem when Japheth's children adopted the faith God would reveal to the world through Shem. This is an ancient prophecy of the conversion of our white, Gentile forefathers to Christianity.

Questions:

-Why did God destroy most of mankind with a flood?

-What did God do for Noah and his sons after the flood?

-What was the sign of the Covenant with Noah?

-What penalty did God impose for killing a human being?

-To which of Noah's sons did God promise blessings, and why?

-Why was God going to bless Japheth, and how?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

-What difference will this make in your life?

Genesis 10: The Races of Man

Session 6

We have seen that from the beginning of history separate bloodlines could more or less follow, or rebel against, God. After his expulsion from Eden, Cain went on to have posterity that did mighty works but rebelled against their Creator (Genesis 4:16-24). Through Seth, Adam and Eve became the ancestors of a separate bloodline of those who called on God (Genesis 4:25-5:32).

Now in the tenth chapter of Genesis, God goes to lengths to indicate that all of mankind developed into separate, distinct racial and ethnic groups.

We can see that the history of humanity is marked by separation, segregation and difference. The Bible describes the God-ordained division of humanity into various races and tribes. These races are marked by differences in appearance, historical significance and achievement. When it comes to the physical sciences, God has left it to the human intellect to learn gradually about the intricacies of the world we live in. Because race and identity are given such a prominent place in the Bible, we should not be surprised to find that these differences also have a biological component. There is nothing in the Scriptures that even remotely suggests that all of the races of mankind are endowed with the same genetic gifts.

The simple fact that chapters and chapters of the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, consist of genealogies (sort of like a family tree) proves that God takes our biological relationships seriously. For example, without Christ's genealogies in Matthew 1 and Luke 3, which show that He had the biological pedigree that fulfilled prophecies about what bloodline the Messiah needed to have, there is no way that He could have been Messiah.

The Biblical account of the Flood presumes that all of mankind had been destroyed except for those who survived it by abiding in Noah's ark. Eight souls walked out of that ark and onto dry ground to repopulate the planet: Noah, his wife, their three sons, and their three daughters-in-law.

Noah's three sons are the patriarchs of the three overarching ethnic divisions in the world. Genesis 10:1-5 explains the origins of Japheth's blood-

line: the white race. Genesis 10:6-20 explains Ham's bloodline: the black and Asian races. Genesis 10:21-31 explains Shem's bloodline: the Semitic races. Shem will be the focus of the Biblical narrative going forward, since God particularly taught His Word to Shem's descendants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We'll get to that in Genesis 12. But let's take a moment to look at what God's Word says about each, and how that corresponds to our world today.

Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood. 2 The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. 3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. 4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. 5 By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations. (Genesis 10:1-5)

For centuries, Biblical commentators both Christian and Jewish have ascribed the European nations to Japheth. Since tracing the descent of ancient patriarchs through to the 21st century involves quite a bit of historical research, because ethnic groups migrate and change names over time, and because fallible human historians can err, you may find differing accounts of which sons and grandsons of Japheth match up to which historical and modern European nations.

For example, when the Old Testament prophet Jonah tried to run as far away from his God-given mission to Nineveh (in modern-day Iraq), he got on a ship bound for Tarshish, which some say is another word for Spain, the farthest westward extent of the ancient world.

As another example, one grandson of Japheth has a name that might be familiar to your ears: Ashkenaz. Jews who trace their descent through Western Europe, especially Germany, call themselves Ashkenazi Jews because in Jewish history Ashkenaz is presumed to be the ancestor of the German people.

But for simplicity's sake, let's look at what British theologian Matthew Henry had to say about the sons of Japheth:

The posterity of Japheth were allotted to the isles of the Gentiles (Gen. 10:5), which were solemnly, by lot, after a survey, divided among them, and probably this island of ours among the rest; all places beyond the sea from Judea are called

isles (Jer. 25:22), and this directs us to understand that promise (Isa. 42:4), the isles shall wait for his law, of the conversion of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ.

The “isles” referred to in Genesis 10:5 refers to Europe. Note that the Bible says those isles were divided according to language, family line, and nationality. This presumes a diversity amongst the larger Japhethic people group, which is what we see not only in modern-day Europe, but everywhere in the world. Larger racial groups contain sub-groupings divided along language, particular family line, and nationality. When we get to the history of Israel, we’ll see people with one language and one nationality but increasingly-smaller levels of government according to tribe, clan, and family.

In Genesis 10:6-20, we see the sons of Ham, the father of the African and Asian peoples.

6 And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.

There are several important names in this passage that play into the rest of the Old Testament story of God’s people contending for their religious and racial existence against pagan, foreign peoples. One of them is Nimrod, who founded Babel -- which we will see in the next chapter. Later, probably after the events of Genesis 11, he then went to Asshur and laid the groundwork for the Assyrian empire based in Nineveh.

8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, 12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.

The Assyrian Empire and Babylonian Empire each conquered and exiled the Israelites. The fact that they are listed here in a book written centuries prior to their conquest of Israel shows the hand of God at work in the writing of the Scriptures.

Most importantly, Ham’s genealogy introduces us to Canaan and Canaan’s posterity.

15 And Canaan begat Sidon his first born, and Heth, 16 And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, 17 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, 18 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and after-

ward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. 19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.

These are the characters who will constantly be on the stage of the Old Testament accounts of Israel's struggle between faithfulness and unfaithfulness. It is through the Canaanites that God disciplined and rewarded His people. It is the Canaanites that Noah prophesied would be the servants of both Shem and Japheth's posterity. (Genesis 9:25-27)

The scope of the Genesis narrative is narrowing to fix our eyes on what He will do with a particular man -- Abraham -- two chapters from now. But in this chapter we're having the broader context of the story of God's redemptive work laid out before our eyes.

Note that again, God says that a major racial group was not only divided from the others by way of bloodline, but that within itself there are distinctions and dividing lines (Genesis 10:20).

Finally, we come to Shem the father of the Hebrews, Arabs, and other Middle Eastern peoples. Like his elder brother Japheth and his brother Ham, Shem's descendants spread out over the planet after the flood, and divided into linguistic, national, familial subgroups associated with geographic territories (Genesis 10:31). That is, language and nation, blood and soil, have gone together since the beginning of human history.

We'll read much more about one particular branch of Shem's family tree beginning with Genesis 12. But now the scene has been set for an important event in Biblical, and secular, history: the Tower of Babel.

Questions:

-Who were Noah's three sons, and which racial groups come from them?

-Did people originally want to live all together or did they tend to separate on their own initiative?

-Which people groups were the Israelites going to contend with throughout their history?

-From which son of Noah were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob descended?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

Genesis 11: The Tower of Babel

Session 7

Millennia ago, Solomon wrote, “There is no new thing under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9) Here in Genesis 11, we see that the globalist, multiracial, secular scheme of the 21st century is indeed nothing new. We also see that long ago, God specifically punished a similar type of behavior severely, with permanent consequences.

1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. (Genesis 11:1)

This should strike modern readers as odd. Here the Bible tells us that the entire human race spoke one, single language. We don't do that today. In fact, in all of recorded history since Genesis 11 not even one portion of the world has spoken a single language in a single dialect. Why? The chapter goes on to tell us the reason.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. (Genesis 11:2-4)

The descendants of Noah spread out over the planet, which had been emptied of human beings during the Flood. They ended up in Shinar, which is another name for Mesopotamia, which is our modern-day Iraq. These people built a city -- Babel, the precursor of later Babylon -- with a tower that they intended to “reach unto heaven.”

Why would they do a thing like that? These are the people who could directly trace their ancestry to Noah. These people knew about the Flood the same way we know about the world wars. For four generations their ancestors had passed down the stories of what life was like when God wiped out all of mankind (except eight people). These people knew that God was real. They knew that God could devastate them. And they also knew that God had told their ancestor Noah and his sons to “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” (Genesis 9:1) God had told Noah's ancestor Adam the same thing, adding the charge to subdue the planet and take charge over every living thing. (Genesis 1:28)

In other words, God wanted them to spread out, have babies, and create a civilized world full of people who loved and feared Him. But they didn't want to.

So, like today, people rebelled against what God had commanded them. It is noteworthy that instead of spreading out, they huddled together in one place. We can also look at the fact that they built a centralized metropolis and draw comparisons to what is happening today with centralization in government, in urbanization, and in interracial mixing. Clearly and most importantly, instead of worshipping their Creator, they said "let us make a name" -- the name of a substitute, manmade god -- in an attempt to replace and overthrow Him.

In this attempt to build a centralized, humanistic, anti-God, monolithic society, those from Japheth, Shem, and Ham's bloodlines took part.

5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. (Genesis 11:5-6)

The Biblical text again refers to the whole of mankind as being involved in this attempted *coup d'etat* when God issues His verdict of their schemes.

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8 So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth. (Genesis 11:7-9)

God confused the language of all the earth, not a portion of it, according to the text. And that is exactly what we see throughout all of history until today. The Bible also indicates that the people who had gathered in Babel scattered all over the world -- and that it was God who was doing the scattering. Lastly, we see that they never finished building their tower or their city. That doesn't mean that others wouldn't attempt to do the same thing later on, but it does mean that God did not (and never has) let anyone take over the whole world in opposition to Him, His Law, and His created order. We can take comfort in that.

The second part of the chapter is a genealogy which bridges the centuries between Shem and the Flood, passes through the Tower of Babel, and spans to the Biblical patriarch Abraham (Genesis 11:10-32). In this genealogy we see that four generations after Shem, 101 years after the Flood, one of Abraham's ancestors named Peleg was born. Peleg means "divided." It was in his generation that God stopped the globalist cabal in Babel and divided the earth among the races of man, as indicated in the genealogy in Genesis 10. Again, take heart: God worked in history to make distinctions among mankind and gave them separate lands.

25 And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. (Genesis 10:25)

This story shows how all of human history is in God's hands. God has given man a contingent liberty but at any time God can easily frustrate our designs. Even the punishments that God brings on us ultimately serve His ends and bring about the fulfillment of His decrees.

Questions:

*-What did the builders of the Tower of Babel attempt to do?
Why?*

-Who took part in this scheme?

-What did God think of this city and its tower?

-What could the people at Babel have done if they succeeded?

-What things did the people at Babel do to unify mankind?

-How many generations and years went by between the Flood and the Tower of Babel? How do we know that?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

Genesis 12-24: Abraham

Session 8

With the story of Abraham we see a new stage in redemptive history. God calls Abraham and establishes a special Covenant with him and with his children. The commandments and promises made to Adam and to Noah applied to all of humanity, since all subsequent humans descended from them. The promises made to Abraham only apply to his descendants. This is the beginning of God's plan to establish a special Covenant people from which blessings for the entire human race will come forth.

Abraham's original name was Abram and his wife's original name was Sarai. They are referred to by these names until Genesis 17, when God gives them the new names of Abraham and Sarah. God first appears to Abraham in Genesis 12 where He calls Abraham to leave his father's house and promises him the land of Canaan (Palestine) as an inheritance.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. 6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. 7 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. (Genesis 12:5-7)

The promise to Abraham that in him all the families of the earth shall be blessed has been seriously abused by Zionists who aim to establish a slavish fidelity to the apostate, Christ-hating Jews of today. The text in Genesis 12 was explained by the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3. In this New Testament scripture we are informed that the promise of the blessing to be given to all mankind was Christ himself, not the carnally minded Jews who rejected Him. Just as Christ was present in the creation, He is present in all of the promises and Covenants. The book of Revelation declares that Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. It was through the Word of God that everything was made, and the course of history leads up to Christ, the incarnate Word, saving his people and reigning over all creation in eternity. The Jewish interpretation of the Old Testament makes the promises of God petty and self-serving. Only through the revelation of Jesus in the New Testament do we have the key to understanding the fullness of the Old Testament and the riches of the ancient promises.

Despite the special revelation given to Abraham, his sinful nature frequently asserted itself. Abraham was full of doubt concerning God's promises. As Abraham became older and remained childless it seemed to him increasingly unlikely that God's promise of a magnificent progeny would come to pass. When God announced to Abraham that Sarah would bear him a child at age ninety, Abraham laughed.

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. 17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. (Genesis 17:1-17,19)

The circumstances surrounding Abraham and his lack of offspring illustrates that God frequently chooses the weak and lowly things of this world as his instruments. Abraham and Sarah were not naturally fruitful. Abraham was one-hundred and Sarah was ninety years old, and they had no children. When the birth of the promised heir finally came, it was a miraculous event. Like the Covenant with Noah, the Covenant with Abraham contains moral precepts (to walk before God and be blameless), an external sign (circumcision), and a promise (the land of Canaan, a fruitful progeny). The commandment to walk before God echoes the close communion that man had in his original state before the fall.

After many years of waiting Sarah finally bore Abraham a son named Isaac. However, the long wait before receiving this son was not the final test for Abraham. God demanded that Abraham offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Although God ended up stopping Abraham before he actually sacrificed his son, it was still necessary for Abraham to have complete obedience to God even when he could not understand the reason for it.

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. 2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. 3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. 9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. (Genesis 22:1-13)

This story teaches us that everything we have is a gift from God. All of our possessions belong to God, and it is His right to demand their return. God has total sovereignty over His creation, and the creature has no right to question or criticize the creator. This story also points towards the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross. God spared Abraham's son, but God did not spare His own son. The Lord provided a ram so that Isaac did not have to die, and in the person of Jesus He provided a victim who stood in our place.

Questions:

-What were the promises made by God to Abraham?

-What was the sign of God's Covenant with Abraham?

-Through which son would the Covenant nation arise?

-What did God ask Abraham to do with his son?

-Are there promises that God has made to me that I don't take seriously?

-What does God ask us to sacrifice for Him?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

Genesis 25-36: Jacob

Session 9

The promise of the Covenant passed from Abraham to his son Isaac, and from Isaac to his son Jacob. Jacob later received the name Israel, and the twelve tribes of Israel were descended from his sons. In the life of Jacob we again see the inability of fallen man to live honestly and trust that God will fulfill his promises in time. Isaac's wife Rebekah gave birth to twin boys. The elder was Esau and the younger was Jacob. Because Esau was the firstborn of the twins the inheritance of his father was naturally his. However, Esau foolishly sells his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew and some bread. Later on Jacob receives the blessing from his dying father intended for Esau by impersonating his brother. Enraged by the deception of Jacob, Esau vows to kill him and Jacob flees. After leaving his parents, Jacob receives his famous vision of the ladder ascending to heaven.

10 And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. 16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. 18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. 20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee. (Genesis 28:10-22)

In this passage God confirms that the Covenant blessings of Abraham have been transferred to Jacob. The ladder symbolizes a divine link between God and His creation. The ladder is a means of communication

between heaven and earth. The angels of the Lord ascend and descend on the ladder. They are the messengers of God and they bring blessing and punishment upon men.

After gaining his wife Rachel from his uncle Laban, Jacob finally returns to his home. Early in the morning on the day on which he was to reunite with his brother Esau, Jacob wrestled with an angel of the Lord and prevailed.

24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. (Genesis 32:24-30)

More light is shed on this mysterious incident by the prophet Hosea, who wrote "in his strength he struggled with God. Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; He wept, and sought favor from Him" (Hosea 12:3-4). In the Old Testament passages where God is said to appear to man, there is often ambiguity as to whether God Himself or one of His angels is present. The passage in Hosea says that Jacob struggled with God and that he struggled with the angel. This suggests that the angel represented God's glory and strength, but that God in His very essence did not struggle directly with Jacob. Because Hosea says that Jacob "wept" and "sought favor" from the angel, some have interpreted this passage to mean that Jacob's "wrestling" refers to fervent prayer. Many of the saints throughout history have described prayer as a kind of wrestling with God. In prayer we come face to face with God and with our own weakness and sinfulness. After eating the forbidden fruit Adam and Eve were ashamed to stand before God. In prayer we must overcome this shame. The Bible also teaches us that God sends trials to those whom he loves as a means of refining us. Israel, the name that Jacob earns after wrestling the angel, comes to signify all of Jacob's descendants as well as the members of the New Testament Church who are the spiritual Israel. This striving with God must be at the center of who we are as Christians.

Questions:

-Who ascended and descended on the ladder in Jacob's dream?

-How does "Jacob's ladder" represent God's relationship with his creation?

-Did Jacob act dishonestly in supplanting his brother Esau?

-How did Jacob gain the name Israel?

-What role does prayer play in our lives?

-Why does God want us to pray?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

-What difference will this make in your life?

Genesis 37-50: Joseph

Session 10

Joseph was the eleventh of Jacob's twelve sons and his father's favorite. Joseph was gifted with great virtue and the miraculous power of prophetic dreams. His father's favoritism enraged his brothers who plotted against him.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. (Genesis 37:3-4)

Early on in the story of Joseph, he relates certain of his dreams to his family. His family members are offended by the dreams which seem to suggest that Joseph will one day rule over his brothers.

5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. 8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. 9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. 10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying. (Genesis 37:5-11)

Joseph's brothers find these dreams to be so offensive that they sell him into slavery and tell Jacob that his son had been killed by a wild beast. When Joseph was a slave in Egypt his skill in interpreting dreams became known to Pharaoh, who was troubled by his cryptic dreams. By God's grace Joseph correctly interpreted Pharaoh's dreams to mean that after seven years of plenty Egypt would be struck by seven years of famine. Pharaoh is so impressed by Joseph's ability that he establishes Joseph as governor of Egypt and entrusts him with gathering food for the impending famine. The same famine affects Canaan, and Jacob sends his sons to Egypt to purchase food. Joseph recognizes his brothers, although his brothers, thinking that Joseph is dead, do not recognize him. When Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers he does not take revenge or even express any anger.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. 4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. 5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. 6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. 9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: 10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: 11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty. 12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. 13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither. 14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. 15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him. (Genesis 45:3-15)

God's ways are not understood by men. What seems like a great misfortune can become a great blessing. When Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery they were attempting to prevent the realization of his prophetic dream, but in reality sending Joseph to Egypt as a slave is what allowed the dream to come true. Joseph understood this and did not blame his brothers for their actions. Through all of his trials as a slave and a prisoner in Egypt he maintained his faith in the power and wisdom of God. He honestly interpreted Pharaoh's dream, knowing full well that honestly answering the questions of a tyrant can be dangerous. He showed mercy to the men who had betrayed him, and he used his position of power to ensure the survival of his people.

Before Jacob fell asleep in the Lord he made his son Joseph promise that Egypt would not be his final resting place:

29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: 30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. (Genesis 47:29-30)

The love of a particular place, just like the love of a particular people, is not sinful. These two loves are often intertwined as in the case of Jacob. He longed to be buried in the land of his fathers, not in the land of strangers. Although we are always to look to God and the world to come, this does not mean that particular earthly places and people cannot be loved above others. Even Jesus is said to have loved one of his apostles above the others.

After bringing his family to Egypt at Joseph's request, Jacob soon passed away. On his deathbed he prophesied about his sons and their descendants. Of chief importance is the prophecy about his son Judah. Jesus was a descendant of Judah, and Jacob's prophecy about Judah points towards Christ.

8 Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? 10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. 11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: 12 His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk. (Genesis 49:8-12)

Jesus is the lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5), our garments are washed in his blood and in the Lord's Supper we partake of his blood by drinking the blood of the grape. He is of the royal tribe of Israel, and all other faithful Israelites bow down before Him.

Questions:

-What was Joseph's miraculous gift?

-What was God's purpose in sending Joseph to Egypt?

-Why did Jacob not want to be buried in Egypt?

-Why was Joseph not angry at his brothers?

-From which of Jacob's sons is Christ descended?

-What questions did this study bring up that you'd like to investigate further?

-What difference will this make in your life?
