

**SECRETS IN THE CREATION ACCOUNT FEW  
KNOW ABOUT AND THROUGH THE STUDY  
OF CHAPTERS 1-11**

**IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS**

By

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And the Bible study group.

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# **SECRETS IN THE CREATION ACCOUNT FEW KNOW ABOUT AND...**

## **CHAPTERS 1-11 STUDY**

### Introduction:

As I have studied the Bible over a period of some sixty years, it has become apparent to me that the real focus of both God and His Word, from beginning to end, is the spiritual life and faith of people. The Bible is really a spiritual book couched in the framework of human history. Unfortunately, so much time has been spent attempting to fit the text of the scripture into some theological, doctrinal, chronological, scientific, or philosophical scheme that the message the Lord wishes us to grasp is essentially lost. Yet, from Genesis through Revelation God's interest is in the spiritual life of mankind and in whom he places his faith. We will hopefully see that become apparent as we journey through these first chapters in Genesis.

The inspired writers of the Scripture have little or no interest in the items most get caught up in (and debate) because they are not important and their writing reveals this. Actually, much of the early chapters of Genesis are written in a way to clue the reader that there is something else going on beside and beyond the descriptions given in the text. This is deliberate in my opinion. Much like Jesus' parables, the text often becomes the vehicle carrying or containing the message that can only be seen by looking within the account. We will explore this and demonstrate to the best of our ability why this is so and find that indeed the message becomes a matter of the spiritual life, heart, mind and soul of a person, not of a message of the things people attempt to force the Bible to say.

The pre-Abrahamic chapters in the Book of Genesis are some of the most interesting and controversial chapters in all the Bible. We can see that the first eleven chapters are not just a narrative about the beginning of all things and that the God of Israel is the true creator, but that these first chapters are also a prologue to the birth of Abraham, the patriarch of all that follows. This is evidenced by the fact that we have eleven chapters of pre-Abrahamic narrative followed by thirty-nine chapters of the story of Abraham and his descendants. The entire remainder of the Old Testament for that matter. "From the time of Abraham onward, we have a congruent and historical picture of the foundation of the faith of Abraham's descendants, both of the Israelites and of the Ishmaelites. This work will deal with those chapters leading up to the time of Abraham, the patriarch of Israel."<sup>1</sup>

But the creation account in Genesis, as well as the ensuing ten chapters in the Book of Genesis have been the source of endless debate between those who take the Bible literally and the science community as well as debate among believers. The controversy on the age of the earth and the universe, the debates over the ages of the early patriarchs, where Cain got his wife, and endless arguments about the nature of God, the nature of man, the so called "fall of man" and its consequences, the flood and the animals included, and nearly every imaginable matter contained therein are included in the debates and addressed in this work. What I have to deal with is what I

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<sup>1</sup> This is attested to in passages such as: Matthew 1:1-17; 3:9; Luke 1:55; John 8:39; etc. and even God's statement in Exodus 3:6.

call “theological or doctrinal myopia.” This is when, due to “finger pointing” teaching, the scriptures are evaluated with the predisposition that everything therein must fit with what they have been told. Then, rather than actually questioning and studying the scriptures themselves they will not listen to anything that doesn’t back up their predetermined theories. Thus, the interpretation of the Bible is manipulated to support these ideas, not to determine the actual truth or intent of the text.

The reason for all this controversy is simply due to ignorance by some who set themselves up as “Bible experts.” However, the matters under constant debate and contention often have nothing to do with what the Bible is actually intending to teach. The real debate is between what these people believe from their own understanding versus scientific evidence. What these people don’t realize is that the manner in which the Hebrew authors wrote is totally different than how we, in the western world, convey or interpret received information. Thus, interpreting it in the way we have been taught, we miss most of everything God has for us to learn. This is one of the “secrets” we will discover.

Due to that, there is no real debate between science and what the Bible actually intends to teach any more than there is a debate between a chocolate cake recipe and brain surgery. We will examine and see why this is so when we delve deeper into the book. The Bible is not a science textbook any more than science teaches about spiritual matters. Forcing the Bible to be a scientific textbook is one of the problems. It has a far different and greater mission to accomplish.

From cover to cover, this inspired writing probes the depths of where our heart and faith are focused and presents the stark contrast between the spiritual and eternal realm and the fleshly temporary realm and to which we choose as most important and give our entire life to serve.

Let’s start from the beginning. Each of the Hebrew books of the Bible are titled using the first word in the first sentence of the book. So, Genesis is actually

“b’risheet” or - “in the beginning.”<sup>2</sup> The word “Genesis” is from the Greek<sup>3</sup>, not the Hebrew and does mean “beginnings.”

## **The First Secret**

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<sup>2</sup> Or “At the head”; “At the first, most important, chief, main thing.”

<sup>3</sup> From the Septuagint (LXX)

## THE ANCIENT EASTERN FORMS USED TO COMMUNICATE THOUGHT AS OPPOSED TO THE WESTERN METHODS

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ:

The Hebrew reads from right to left. Thus, transliterated: “B-rih-sheet b-rah El-oh-heem eht ha-shi-miam v-et hah-ah-erh-etz.”

The written script (and spoken language) of the near and far east is what we call a “concrete” system and is comprised of glyphs. Hebrew is one of those. A glyph is a symbol, pictograph or pictorial character. That is, each word and even many of the letters convey a picture. This is totally different from our method of communication. Therein lies a gigantic problem. In the western cultures, we use an abstract script and language comprised of letters. Simply put, we have to use many letters forming words to describe something. Whereas contained within the script and language of most eastern cultures the description is within the glyphs themselves.<sup>4</sup>

The Hebrew written script was developed from ancient times and is composed from a derivation of written scripts familiar to them from the time of Abraham’s journey from Babylon to Canaan, as well as from the influence of the Canaanite, Phoenician and later, Egyptian influences. Abraham, of course was not an Israelite, but a Chaldean. For him, Cuneiform was his native script.<sup>5</sup> In his residency in Canaan, the Phoenician and Canaanite script had developed from the ancient Greek script because, as it has been proven, ancient Greeks were among those who migrated the relatively short distance to what we call Palestine. The word “Palestine” or “Palestinian” comes from the ancient word “Philistine” who inhabited the territory still held by the Palestinians. It was the Philistines who were descendant of the ancient Greeks. All of these influences can be discovered in the ancient Hebrew script and shadows of it even in the modern Hebrew script. The major point in saying all this is that, once again, the Hebrew script was and is based in the typical far and near east glyphs and characters that create a “concrete” system of communication rather than our western and European “abstract” system.

So, in reading the English Bible in the western text, we miss the colorful and exciting pictures and meanings of the original language, and way too often misinterpret the message and intent God wants us to grasp. Thus, the debates and attacks occur over what is a really a misconception on the part of people who have not had the opportunity to learn about these things. This study is to help illustrate how the Bible can be more properly understood.

[It is recommended that the student refer to the appendix at this time to see the development of the Hebrew script.]

In the first verse of Genesis above, we can almost see “pictures” in the letters even though the modern script has been changed considerably from the ancient. And it is printed in calligraphy. Even

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<sup>4</sup> See the APPENDIX for more on the development of the Hebrew script.

<sup>5</sup> Cuneiform may have characteristics of far eastern influence, possibly Chinese. The Egyptian empire existed a thousand years before Abraham and the Greek culture began to have an impact about , or just before the time the Israelites left Egypt.

with that, each symbol still represents a picture. For example, the  $\beth$  “bet” in very ancient times, pictures a house or a building. It was understood and used later as conveying “within” or even “in.” The  $\aleph$  “resh” pictures the head or beginning of something. The  $\aleph$  “aleph” is derived from an original glyph of an ox head and portrays might or power. This is due to the use of an ox for the heaviest work of farming and pulling. The remainder of the word may suggest “everything.” So, today, though we translate this as, “In the beginning” we can see more from the ancient glyphs. We can now see that “a mighty power who at the beginning of all things built it all, built everything.” This mighty power is called “Elohim.” More on that title later.

Much of latter Hebrew has become a combination of symbols and glyphs that, taken by themselves, will not produce a coherent picture. But some of the ancient influences still remain as we will again see. Much of the near and perhaps even some of the far east has had an impact on the formation of our Biblical Hebrew. This concrete style of communication is evident even in China as most are aware. Chinese is a good way to illustrate what I am saying.

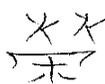
Chinese is a “concrete” system of writing and speaking. The Chinese below gives us a good idea of how pictures become characters and characters words. The characters are translated. They are the name of someone I once knew, and the pronunciation is noted across the middle of the display. His name, however, has a meaning. Can you interpret it?



WATER



MOUTH



FIRE

WOOD



LEUNG

KAI

WING



Pictograph



Character

MOUNTAIN

The family name, “Leung” means “water”. The name could mean “spits on fire to extinguish it”, or “Water cools a fire in the mouth.” Also, above we have an example of how a pictograph (mountain) became a character in Chinese.

Though the relationship to the Babylonian Cuneiform of Abraham’s culture is unknown, there seems to be a similarity.

So what? Is there a significance to this? In English, a Western form, we do not have a pictograph foundation. Rather, we use symbols to represent sounds, and these symbols are called an alphabet, after the first two letters of the Greek Alphabet; Alpha, Beta, etc. ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,). Our language is therefore called abstract, consisting in sounds, but not in pictures. To describe a picture, we use a series of sounds that carry meaning called sentences. We say, “Look at that high mountain covered in snow”.

After the sentence we can visualize the picture. In Egyptian, Chinese, Phoenician, etc., the picture is given immediately, and the “sentence” is understood thereafter. We can see this in the illustration above. This is called “concrete” language, that is, the characters give the picture itself, and are not one of several letters or words used to paint a description.

Hebrew is a concrete language. The original characters portrayed an image, not just a word. We translate the image into a word. But it doesn’t give us the total meaning. For example, the Hebrew word חָכְמָה (hoch-mah) is translated “wisdom”. What picture do you get from that word? Well, you have to contrive up something in your mind to represent wisdom to you, right? Like an old man with a long white beard, or a scholar studying at his desk, or the “Thinker”, an owl, or some Greek or Jewish sage or something like that. However, the Hebrew word conveys a picture. The original very ancient picture seems to portray one’s hand opening of a window of a wall or courtyard overlooking water – perhaps a river, lake or ocean. There may be the element of joy in this action depending on the interpretation of the glyphs. Yet later this morphed into a picture of “wisdom.”

But the idea or picture of “wisdom” became the picture of a craftsman taking a raw material, like clay, metal, wood, hide, wool or something of the like and subjecting it to a process that will turn it into a finely finished object fit for the table of the king or of God. So, smelting, purification, fire, carving, turning on a wheel, spinning, applying tools to form and design and remove unwanted stuff, the kiln or finishing process, polishing, and so forth, depending on what material is being used is the process or “wisdom” that brings about the beauty of the finished product. For example, we are told that “God is the potter, and we are the clay”. So, the word “wisdom” pictures something we would have never thought of on our own. And what we imagined when we thought about wisdom would be misunderstanding much of God’s message to us. Does that make sense? Oh, we would get an idea, but it would be our idea, not necessarily all that God is trying to tell us. In our language, we would use the word “experience” – but that is not as colorful or “picturesque” is it?

Let’s look at one example of how weak our abstract language is. Let’s say you received a box containing hundreds of unrecognizable parts and the instructions told you “some assembly required to build the Phlongel”. There are no pictures at all, and the first step said, “Now take the gosmelz and set it into port ‘b’ of the dlasertx”. Can you visualize this, or the finished product? Of course not. So, what do we do even when it is in clear English? We include diagrams and exploded views, photographs and schematics, labeling the proper picture with the word “gosmelz” accompanied by arrows indicating what it is and where it is to go. Concrete languages don’t have to do that. Our problem is that when we try to force them to do so if we can’t quite figure it out. Oh, as far as the box of parts is concerned, we, in like manner, could force a bunch of them together as we saw fit, but the result would be a far cry from what was intended by the creator. Get the idea?

Another example to help us understand all this is our use of American Sign Language for the deaf. Words describing a visual object can either be spelled out using the signing alphabet or simply presented with a motion. For example, for the word “SUN”, the index finger points to the sky and circles to indicate the shape of the sun. The hand is then turned towards the head and the fingers spread out to represent the sun shining down from the sky. But for the word “SON”, one might spell it out rather than use a sign for “boy” and another for “baby”. For “WORLD”, The “W” handshapes circle each other. For the word “WHIRLED” it would be spelled out. And, for “HEART”, the middle finger taps the chest over the area of the heart. Any combination of these is used to

communicate. Egyptian is like that in its writing. It is called Hieroglyphics, a Greek word meaning “sacred engravings” or “sacred glyphs.”<sup>6</sup>

Yes, something is lost in the translation, alright, both in the script and in the way it is used. The western influence around the world since the time of the Greeks and Romans has had a great impact on language and script. Most peoples today do not know the foundations of their language, and in China, school children are not being taught much anymore what the characters of their names mean. Unless it is a dead language like Egyptian, Amorite, Edomite, and so forth, modern scripts today have become more or less westernized and the original pictographs are seldom able to be seen, let alone understood.

Interestingly enough, we are beginning to return to a pictographic written language, and it is international. If you think about it, road signs are now in pictographs, “curve ahead”, “right lane ends” and hundreds more are largely now in pictographs to accommodate those who do not speak the native language. This is worldwide. “No smoking” is now the picture of a cigarette with a line through it as are hundreds of other signs. Rest rooms are indicated by pictures, the pedestrian crossing signs are hands or pictures of people walking with colored lighting and so on.

In our Bible, the language itself - that is the kinds of words used and how they are used and placed in the narrative - still gives us a pretty good idea of what kind of literature we are dealing with and how to approach it so we can get a decent interpretation. Then we can “see” the picture God wants us to “see” and apply the point and intent of His message to our lives. An example of seeing a truth in a verbal picture is the parable.

In all languages, the “words” are often the “vehicle” carrying the message and not the message itself. Rather than focus on the series of English words alone, we must try to ascertain if the words are a vehicle, or simple to be understood as is. The key to this is; what words are used, how they are ordered in the text and what they describe. Then we can go to work and enjoy the true point, picture, lesson or intent God has for us.

This is why we are learning about the tremendous number of literary styles in the Bible. No other book ever written exhibits this amount of artistry and style. God is a God of pictures and stories so his people can have His Word live in them. He desires it to get into our bloodstream, and has devised ways to get it there, not just the words mind you, but the truth, reality and impact they are supposed to convey – so we will “know” and remember the truth of His lessons. “Know” is another of those words. Do you “know” what the word “know” is trying to convey in the Hebrew? Further, a grand selection of memory devices are used; pictures, acrostics, puzzles, riddles, fables, images, as well as God made the Hebrews build, dress, decorate, plant, celebrate the week, the month, the harvest, the year and, in fact, in everything they did, ate, saw, heard, and sensed in anyway, became a reminder of who God is and what their relationship with Him was to be. So, of course, even their writing did the same thing.

Further, they had and still have that sense of solidarity (oneness). That is, they are connected by blood to their ancestors as well as their descendants. This is another commonality in the near and

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<sup>6</sup> For an extensive Hebrew example of a “pictorial word” please see the appendix – A PICTURE OF FAITH.

Far East. Jews today still use the words, “When ‘we’ were in Egypt”, in the Passover celebration. Note Hebrews 7:9-10 as an example,

“And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.”

Levi wasn't born for around a half a century after Abraham died. Tithes weren't collected by the “Levites” for centuries, and, thus the word “Levi” itself has many deliberate nuances and pictures attached to it, as does the word “Israel”. As you know, Hebrew names have meanings attached to and often describing the person or persons so named. Anyway, the above verse has caused interpreters to come up with all kinds of mystical ideas about what it is saying and miss the “Hebrew” point of solidarity of the family of Israel, past, present and future. If I were a Jew, could I also say that I paid tithes to Melchizedek? Further, could I say that the sin of my ancestors is my sin as well? No wonder we are so confused by the Bible. Its original beauty has been forced into the mold of western form, thought, idea and interpretation.

Our goal is to get a taste of the real thing, as best we can. We want to begin to “think Hebrew.” Returning to our first verse, what does it really intent to convey?<sup>7</sup>

## **CHAPTER ONE**

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<sup>7</sup> In the appendix is a worksheet from The Bethel Series entitled “Divine Intentions” that gives more insight to the understanding of literary styles.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ:

## GENESIS 1:1

The focus of this seven-day creation narrative is on God - The Almighty, and that He the highest God is supreme, the creator of all the universe and all that is within it. This is the God the Jews worship. No other god is to be considered. This is the God who simply speaks the creation into existence. This voice of command is mentioned over a dozen times in the first chapter plus the statement “God made” (or “created”) seven more times. Let’s look at the Hebrew text and learn about it.

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ:

← Read

Hebrew is read from right to left. In this modern calligraphic script, one can almost see “pictures” in each letter. There are still shadows of the ancient Hebrew glyphs in these letters as we will see. This phrase is normally translated, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Transliterating the Hebrew text above it would read (though left to right here, the verse actually reads right to left) “B-rah-sheet b-rah El-oh-heem aht ha-shi-miam v-et ha-aertz.”

The prophet Jeremiah proclaimed, “Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You.” (32:17)

This style of the Hebrew word בראשית - “beginning” is intending to convey that the most important thing to consider is that it was “Elohim” (the third underlined word from the right) who created the universe. The “heavens” is everything we see above and surrounding us and “the earth” is the land we stand on. The word here for God, “Elohim,” transmits its own message.

First, “Elohim” is used about 2,500 times in the Hebrew scriptures, and even is used of the gods of other nations.<sup>8</sup> This is not the personal, relational, covenant name of God<sup>9</sup> but rather his description as the “Mighty One.”

Second, this designation is used in place of His “name” to avoid using His sacred “Name” in a

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, I Kings 11:4-5 and 33.

<sup>9</sup> יהוה or Yahweh (or Yahveh) in the most common translations. This word is used over 7,000 times in the O. T.

context where it is not directly necessary. This is to avoid any chance of violating the third commandment.

Third, this designation will be recognizable to all who may read the account who are not Israelites. The specific “God” becomes apparent in chapter two verse four where it is consistently used in the second creation account focusing in on God’s relationship with man (Adam.)

Fourth, the designation “Elohim” is plural. It is the plural of “Eloah” which is derived from “El” meaning “mighty one.” “El” portrays a charging bull or Ox in the ancient pictograph. This is interesting as one “god” of the Egyptians was the bull (or Ox), and the bull was also worshipped by the Sumerians and some Greek cultures. In the introduction, I noted that the Hebrew glyphs were derived from other cultures, among them Egypt, Mesopotamia and Phoenicia. In the Hebrew, “El” is לֵאל and the ancient picture of א (aleph) is the Ox. However, the Hebrews moved away from using this term for the Ox or Bull and used the word “par” for the bull and “shor” for the Ox. The root of “par” word means to break up, stomp, divide (perhaps referring to the hoof), shatter, etc. and “shor” seems to indicate something like a “wall.”

The plurality used here of God will be applied to the creation of man as we will see soon.

## **The Second Secret**

The seven-day creation account. Seeing the introduction of the creation account in verse 1 telling us who created the heavens and the earth, we now move to the narrative that tells us how He did it and why. We will also see a predominant theme as we journey most never see.<sup>10</sup>

## DAY ONE.

Genesis 1:2-2:3,

2: “The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.”

2: “The earth” means the “landmass” of the planet. “Formless” is a “wasteland,” “chaotic” or “futile” - not having “purpose” in its present state. “Void” means there was nothing but “emptiness.” Later, in verses 9-10, it appears that the land was entirely covered with the massive waters of the vast oceans. This image becomes significant when we conclude the Noah adventure.

There was no light but only “darkness.” This darkness cannot be seen through. We could not see anything if we tried except an empty darkness. Like in a deep cavern when they turn off the lights. Total blackness. But God saw. The “deep” over which “darkness” existed is the massive seas and oceans.

“Spirit of God” is the “breath” of God. We see this translation many places.<sup>11</sup> Jesus pictured it in the same manner in John 3:6-8 as He spoke to Nicodemus.

6: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7: 'Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8: 'The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"

In Acts 2:1-4, we read,

1: “And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2: And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3: And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4: And

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<sup>10</sup> It would be thought provoking to listen to Rabbi Manis Friedman’s video entitled, “Before The Book of Genesis: The Real Story of Creation” found online. In the appendix, his thought and my comments are reflected in an article of the same name.

<sup>11</sup> A few examples: Genesis 2:7; 7:15; Job 4:9; Psalm 33:6; Isaiah 40:7 etc. “Wind” is also a translation, Genesis 8:1.

they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”

The Greek word for “Spirit” chosen by the writers of the New Testament is “πνεῦμα” (pneuma) and also means “breath.” We get our words “pneumatic” and “pneumonia” from this Greek word.

So, the “breath” of God was “moving,” or the picture is more of a gentle hovering over the water.

3: “Then God said, ‘Let there be light;’ and there was light.”

“Light” is a “bright illumination.” The Hebrew word אור (“or”) is used over a hundred times in the Old Testament and often refers to the glorious “light” the Lord produces. In His gospel, John uses the “speaking” of God to teach that it was the preincarnate Christ that was the Word of God and the personification of light.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2: He was in the beginning with God. 3: All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4: In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5: The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” John 1:1-5

John also uses the term “light” as a metaphor for “truth” as do many Biblical writers. “Darkness” often is used of evil and lies.

4-5: 4: “God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5: God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”

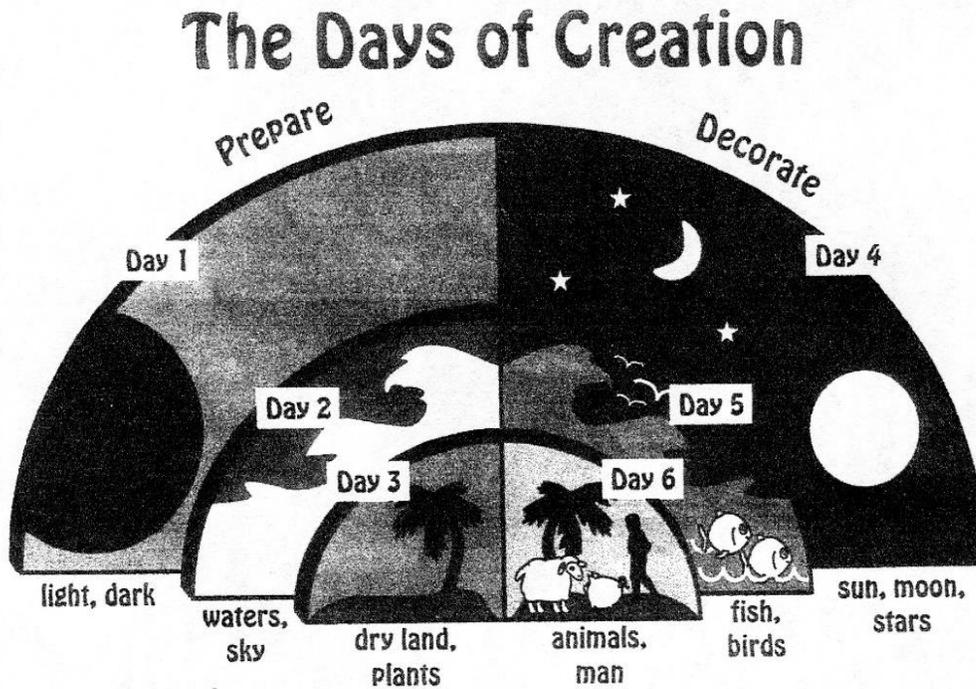
The Hebrew word “tov” is translated “good” and is found over 400 times in the Old Testament. It can also mean “pleasant,” “beautiful,” “fine,” “delightful” and so on.

The “light” God called “day” (“yohm”) and the “darkness” “night” (“lay-lah”).

Evening is “ereb” and morning is “boh-kehr.” For the Jews, morning or dawn begins the next day. In the narrative, each day concludes, “...and there was evening and there was morning” ...and then denotes a “day.” Yet, no Sun or Moon was in existence as yet. This is an important feature to illustrate that this is an especially designed depiction, not a scientific one.

Now we must pause and look at this more carefully. We see in these three verses a canvas, if you will, or a background of light and darkness upon which is nothing as yet. I like to call it a “preparation” for what is yet to be fulfilled on the canvas. You will note that in verses 14-19 something of great interest that concludes day four.

Next is a diagram that shows something most do not ever see or come to understand it's significance.



STRUCTURE OF PARALLELS IN ELEMENTS  
OF THE SIX DAY CREATION ACCOUNT  
THEME: PREPARATION AND FULFILLMENT  
COMMANDS

PREPARATION	< — — — >	FULFILLMENT
DAY 1. COMMAND 1 LIGHT	< — — — >	DAY 4. COMMAND 5 LIGHTS
DAY 2. COMMAND 2 SPACE WATER	< — — — >	DAY 5. COMMAND 6 BIRDS FISH
DAY 3. COMMAND 3 LAND VEGETATION	< — — — >	DAY 6. COMMAND 7 ANIMALS MAN
	DAY 7 CONCLUSION	

As you can see, the correspondence of what was created, and on which day, shows a theme that has been known for centuries but seldom if never taught in churches. It is a major theme throughout the Bible from Genesis through Revelation. This is the theme that God prepares beforehand all that is needed for our well-being, both temporally and eternally, before we even arrive on scene.<sup>12</sup>

For example, note Psalm 74:16-17 that reflects this exact theme from the creation account,

16: “Yours is the day, Yours also is the night; You have prepared the light and the sun.” 17: “You have established all the boundaries of the earth; You have made summer and winter.”

The word “prepared” is the Hebrew “kun” and can be translated “make ready,” “make provision,” and the like. The question is begged, “prepared for what or whom?” The answer is obvious as we examine the rest of the creation account. Psalm 65:8-13 points to this as well:

8: “They who dwell in the ends *of the earth* stand in awe of Your signs; You make the dawn and the sunset shout for joy. 9: You visit the earth and cause it to overflow; You greatly enrich it; The stream of God is full of water; You prepare their grain, for thus You prepare the earth. 10: You water its furrows abundantly, You settle its ridges, You soften it with showers, You bless its growth. 11: You have crowned the year with Your bounty, And Your paths drip *with* fatness. 12: The pastures of the wilderness drip, And the hills gird themselves with rejoicing. 13: The meadows are clothed with flocks And, the valleys are covered with grain; They shout for joy, yes, they sing.”

Psalm 104 extolls God’s provisions for man and the creatures of the earth. In verses 14 and 15 for example, we read,

14: “He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, And vegetation for the labor of man, So that he may bring forth food from the earth, 15: And wine which makes man's heart glad, So that he may make *his* face glisten with oil, And food which sustains man's heart.”

In the New Testament we see evidence of this as well. Please note Luke 2:22- 32 where we read that when Joseph and Mary brought the infant Jesus to present Him to the Lord with the required sacrifice,

25: “... there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26: And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not

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<sup>12</sup> This theme can be called either: “Prepare and Decorate” as the diagram notes, or “General and Specific,” “Preparation and Purpose,” “Preparation and Fulfillment” “Background Canvas and Detail,” or so on.

see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27: And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, 28: then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29: 'Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; 30: For my eyes have seen Your salvation, 31: Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32: A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES,<sup>13</sup> And the glory of Your people Israel.'"

And Mark 1:1-3,

1: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2: As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY';<sup>14</sup> 3: THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'<sup>15</sup> 4: "John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."<sup>16</sup>

In Matthew 20:23 Jesus says to James and John whose mother asks Him to seat her sons on His right and left in the coming kingdom, "... to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father."

Also, quite poignant is Matthew 25:32-34 where Jesus gives an illustration of the final judgment.

32: "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; 33: and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. 34: "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"

When one considers that this preparation was finalized before the creation of the world, it is not difficult to believe that everything was even as we see in verse 41, "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

Paul has no problem with this either. In I Corinthians 2:6-9 he writes,

6: "Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; 7: but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our

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<sup>13</sup> Isaiah 9:2; 42:6-7; 49:6, 60:1-3, 60:19;

<sup>14</sup> Malachi 3:1

<sup>15</sup> Isaiah 40:3

<sup>16</sup> See also: Luke 1:67-80; 7:26-28.

glory; 8: *the wisdom* which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; 9: but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND *which* HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."<sup>17</sup>

Again, “predestined before the ages...”

He also writes in Ephesians 2:10, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

Paul opens his epistle to Titus with,

1: “Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2: in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, 3: but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior...”

Hebrews 11:3 says, “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.” The Greek word for “prepared” is “kah-tar-tid-zoh” and means to “prepare” or “complete.” For whom or what? In 11:16 we read of those faithful listed, “But as it is, they desire a better *country*, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.” That is in advance of their arrival.

Jesus told His disciples in John 14:1-3,

1: "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2: In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for go to prepare a place for you. 3: If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.”

All the way to the last Book in the Bible we read statements such as, “Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” (12:6) and “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.” (21:2) The Greek here for “made ready” is “heh-toi-mahd-zoh” – to “prepare” or “make ready.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Isaiah 64:4

<sup>18</sup> Other verses relating to this theme are: Psalms 8:1-9; 19:1-6; 23:5; 33:6-9; 78, (especially verses 19-20); 104; 136; Nehemiah 9:6; Isaiah 25:6-8; Zephaniah 1:7-8;

The theme that can be easily seen in the creation account by the way it is structured is, in the opinion of many: “Prepare and Decorate” as the diagram notes, or “General and Specific,” “Preparation and Purpose,” “Preparation and Fulfillment” “Background Canvas and Detail,” and so on.

Isaiah 45:18 states this clearly, “For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it *and* did not create it a waste place, *but* formed it to be inhabited), ‘I am the LORD, and there is none else.’”

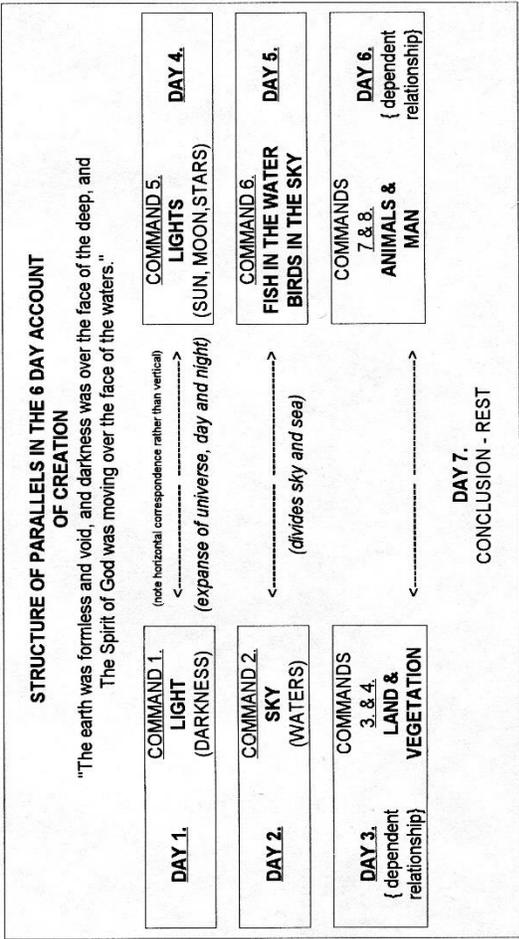
A structural diagram and outline of the first eleven books of the Bible.

I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	
CREATION 1:1	EDEN AND THE FALL 2:3-2:4	THE ROLL OF ADAM'S DESCENDANTS BEFORE THE FLOOD 5:1-5:32	WICKEDNESS ON THE EARTH ON NOAH INTRODUCED 6:1-6:9	THE FLOOD AND ITS AFTERMATH 9:29-10:1	DESCENDANTS OF NOAH AND SUBSEQUENT EVENTS 11:1-9	THE TOWER OF BABEL 11:10-26	GENEALOGY OF THE PATRIARCHS AFTER THE FLOOD 11:27-32	ABRAHAM 12:1
		*	*	*	*	*	*	

\* MAIN THEMATIC SECTIONS (ANCIENT "CHAPTERS") DESIGNATED BY THE WORDS: "THIS IS THE ACCOUNT OF...", OR, "AND THESE ARE THE GENERATIONS OF...", OR SIMILAR STATEMENT.

<-SERIES OF->  
COMMANDS

- A. ANNOUNCEMENT ("then God said")
- B. WORD OF COMMAND ("let there be..")
- C. SUMMARY WORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT ("and there was" or "and it was so")
- D. DESCRIPTIVE WORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT ("and God saw that it was good")
- E. NAMING AND/OR BLESSING ("and God called it")
- F. TEMPORAL FRAMEWORK ("and there was morning, the #day")



## DAY TWO

1:6-8

6: “Then God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.’ 7: God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. 8: God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.”

6-7: The word “Expanse” is use eighteen times in the Old Testament, all in just four books; Genesis, Psalms, Ezekiel and Daniel. It is the Hebrew word “rahqia” from “rahqua” used to describe the hammering out or flattening of a sheet of metal to spread it or stretch it. Here, it describes a vast vault of space or sky becoming a spatial division between the “waters” mentioned in verse two.<sup>19</sup> The upper waters are undefined, but apparently are designed to ultimately become rain.

8: The expanse God called “heaven.” No, not where He dwells. The word “heaven, in both testaments refers to one of three things depending on the context. Here it is the sky, as is noted in verse 20, that the birds fly in the “expanse of heaven.” Next it can describe where the stars, Sun and Moon exist. This will be seen in verses 14 and 17. Finally, it describes the place where God and all His angels reside.

In is important to note that in the phrase, “And there was evening and there was morning, a second day” we are still in the environment of verse 5 where only light is called “day” and only darkness is called “night.” Critics often point out that a “day” must have the Sun rising in order to establish a “day.” And the sun doesn’t appear until the fourth day. Exactly! This underscores the point of this study. But remember, the Bible is neither a science textbook, nor an astronomy dissertation. Other Bible “literalists” have a hard time with this also because the earth sprouts vegetation on day three without the benefit of the Sun. So, they make up some non-Biblical weird theological idea to explain this. In addition, determined to force the creation of the universe into six literal days, they must deny that the Hebrew word “yom” could define more than twenty-four hours. “Yom” to them must be twenty-four hours, no more, no less. Generally, that is the case.

But then one has to delete numerous passages where the word “yom” is used to define other periods of time in the over two-thousand times it is used in the Old Testament. For example,

In Genesis 4:3 we read, “So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground.” “time is the Hebrew word “yom.” Then, “Isaac

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<sup>19</sup> Psalm 19:1, 150:1; Ezekiel 1:22 and Daniel 12:3 give more pictures of how the word translated “expanse” is used.

breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, an old man of ripe age; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.” “Age” is “yom” (Genesis 35:29)

Or, “*There were* six steps to the throne and a round top to the throne at its rear, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms.” The word “each” is “yom.” (I Kings 10:19)

Then,

“And David spoke the words of this song to the LORD in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.” (II Samuel 22:1) The “day” there defines a period of time, much as we use the phrase, “In my day.”

The phrase “to this day” occurs eighty times in the Old Testament.” And though the word “day” (yom) is used, the intent is “to this time” or “era.” For example, in Genesis, 47:26 we read, “Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt *valid* to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh's.”

So, as the critics and “literalists” debate these things, neither side knows that the Bible is not addressing or teaching anything they think it is.

So, once again, the mention of, “And there was evening and there was morning, a second day” demonstrates a special depiction of creation that shows preparation and purpose.

## DAY THREE

1:9-13,

9: “Then God said, ‘Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear’; and it was so. 10: God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. 11: ‘Then God said, ‘Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, *and* fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them’; and it was so. 12: The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. 13: There was evening and there was morning, a third day.”

9-10: The “lower waters” or waters beneath the sky become the seas. They are gathered into “one place.” What does that mean? Then we have, “...and let the dry land appear.”

We can envision many things as have scholars and students over the centuries. But we are still dealing with a blank canvas background displayed for a purpose or fulfillment to be revealed. The simple Hebrew is that the waters were placed in such a way that the land was able to appear. So far, there is no life in the creation, but all the preparation for it is ready now.<sup>20</sup>

Hopefully, we are seeing something of an “artistic” or even “romantic” presentation of the creation that extolls the love and power of our God. Day three will demonstrate this also as will the remainder of the creation account.

11-13: Now that there is land, God commands produce, both vegetable plants and fruit trees to bring forth seed “after their kind” so that other plants might be planted and multiply. The note “after their kind” is rather interesting as to attempt to genetically blend one kind (or specie) of a natural product with a totally different kind (or specie) has never been possible by the most determined scientists.<sup>21</sup>

And though the earth is now sprouting vegetation and fruit, there is still no Sun or Moon. This becomes so obvious that this is not intended to be a scientific document that it is a wonder that most miss this. The intention of this narrative is for another reason. The care that God took to prepare for our arrival is a reflection of His nature as well as His purpose in creating the universe and the environment in which He places mankind. This purpose and

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<sup>20</sup> All sorts of theories to try and explain this scientifically have been offered. None are satisfactory as this account is not interested, nor designed to comply with the scientific minds and discoveries that developed thousands of years later. However, one theory, not a proven fact, does stand out as interesting. That would be the Pangea theory. However, even this theory is not the point of the Genesis narrative nor does the narrative intend to promote it.

<sup>21</sup> I address the theory of “evolution” in verses 24 and 25 and make this note here because of the creation of vegetation and fruit. Fruit and much of the vegetation on the planet is only suitable for human beings. If both vegetation, fruit and humans “evolved” which came first, and why? If man came first, he could not have survived. If the vegetation and fruit came first, why? It is only needed by mankind and there were none if vegetation and fruit came first.

God's nature is expressed by the Psalmist in Psalm 136:1-9,

- 1: "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting."
- 2: "Give thanks to the God of gods, For His lovingkindness is everlasting."
- 3: "Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His lovingkindness is everlasting."
- 4: "To Him who alone does great wonders, For His lovingkindness is everlasting;"
- 5: "To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His lovingkindness is everlasting;"
- 6: "To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, For His lovingkindness is everlasting;"
- 7: "To Him who made *the* great lights, For His lovingkindness is everlasting:"
- 8: "The sun to rule by day, For His lovingkindness is everlasting,"
- 9: "The moon and stars to rule by night, For His lovingkindness is everlasting."

The psalmist attributes the creation to the "lovingkindness" of God. The word for this is "che-sed" and it is used in the Old Testament 176 times and exclusively used as an attribute of God. The word also carries with it, "favor," "mercy," "goodness," "devotion," and "unchanging love."

Psalm 33:5-8 agrees,

- 5: "He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD. 6: By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host. 7: He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses. 8: Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him."

In Psalm 107, the author extolls God for His "lovingkindness" in His provision for His people. In Psalm 23:6, we read, "Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." So, we can conclude with confidence that the creation account is a narrative of the lovingkindness of God toward mankind whom He will place on the earth.

The word "rule" used of the sun and Moon in verses 8 and 9 is "memshalah" and means to govern or have authority or power over something. This is a different word from the word for "rule" or "dominion" God later gives to man as we shall discover. We see that Psalm 136 also relates directly to day four.

And now, we have the completion of the third day.

## DAY FOUR

Now, if we place the fourth day horizontally across from the first day, we will see correspondence, design, and it is a preparation for a purpose (or fulfilment).

1:14-19,

14: “Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate 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 expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth’;  
and it was so. 16: God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day,  
and the lesser light to govern the night; *He made* the stars also. 17: God placed them  
in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18: and to govern the day and  
the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was  
good. 19: There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.”

14-15: God explains the purpose of specific items of “light” He is going to place in the expanse of heaven. The word “lights” here is “Ma-or.” “Light” is “or” as we saw in verse three. “Ma-or” is a specific luminary and the term “menorah” is from this root.

The first reason for the placing of these specific lights is so that the day will be separated from the night. Second, that a measurement of time can be established, namely seasons, days and years. Third, so that there will be constant light upon the earth.

16-19: Now the specific identification of the luminaries is given. From the text we see clearly that these are the Sun, the Moon plus the stars and that we now have the stellar universe to give light to the earth even in the midst of darkness and each element with its own purpose, the Sun to “govern” the day, and the Moon to “govern” the night. The word “govern” is “memshalah.” This word is used of the kings of Israel and Judah and means to have “rule,” “dominion” and “authority.” (See note about Psalm 136 in “DAY THREE above)

And now, we finally have the Sun and the Moon, and once again “there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.”

## DAY FIVE

1:20-23,

20: “Then God said, ‘Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.’ 21: God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. 22: God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’ 23: There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.”

20-21: The word of God now creates all the creatures that inhabit the oceans and all the birds that fly in the “heaven” of the sky. “Birds” is actually “creatures with wings that fly” and includes insects, bats, etc.<sup>22</sup> This corresponds or shows the purpose of fulfillment of day two in verses six and seven.

The “great sea monsters” is the English equivalent of the Hebrew word “tan” or “tannin.” This word is only used 18 times and one cannot have confidence in the English translation in any verse where the word is used. The reason is that the definition cannot be pinned down. An approximation of the word would be a creature that strikes fear in a person. Usually, a vicious or large creature that poses or might pose a threat in one’s thinking. Here, in this verse, one could assume that the author may well be thinking of a whale. This would be a mysterious beast for the peoples of that time.

But this word can also refer to the crocodile as the word “sea” in verse 20 could also refer to a river. It is used that way in Ezekiel 29:1-4 and the Hebrew word “tannin” is used there as in Genesis 1:20. The crocodile is clearly envisioned here, and it is one of the Nile’s creatures in the realm of their god “Nun.”

1: “In the tenth year, in the tenth *month*, on the twelfth of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying, 2: ‘Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt and prophesy against him and against all Egypt. 3: ‘Speak and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, The great monster that lies in the midst of his rivers, That has said, ‘My Nile is mine, and I myself have made *it.*’ 4: ‘I will put hooks in your jaws And make the fish of your rivers cling to your scales. And I will bring you up out of the midst of your rivers, And all the fish of your rivers will cling to your scales.’”

One can easily envision the ancients regarding the crocodile as a “dragon” or a “monster.” Of

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<sup>22</sup> Leviticus 11:13-21, Deuteronomy 14:18-19.

course, one has to assume that the ancient Hebrews had seen a Chinese dragon. If not, then the English translation is really skewed.

The same could be said of the word “leviathan” used 6 times in the Old Testament. This word may be attributed to the crocodile as well. In Isaiah 27:1 it is used twice to describe a “serpent” of some kind and is also coupled with “tannin” as creatures that are thought of as dangerous. But this verse is also a metaphor for the powers of Assyria, Babylon and Egypt. In Egypt and Assyria, leviathan was

“In that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill the dragon who *lives* in the sea.”

But Ezekiel 29:1 is more descriptive.<sup>23</sup> In any case, the thought in verse 20 is that of a terrifying creature of the seas or rivers. God saw it all as good, however and each produced offspring after its own kind.

22-23: We have a new comment here. “ God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’”

This is the first time we have a “blessing” by God. He only applies this to living creatures and mankind. The word “blessing” here is “barak” and is used over 300 times in the Old Testament. It means “to give a good thing” to someone. So a blessing from God to reproduce ones own kind is (or was) intended to be a very good thing indeed.

23: “There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.”

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<sup>23</sup> See the appendix for pictures of the Egyptian god “Sobek.”

## DAY SIX

1:24-25,

24: “Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind’; and it was so. 25: God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

24-25: Here, the correspondence or purpose and fulfillment of verses nine through thirteen (day three) takes place. The land, fruit and vegetation of day three now find purpose in the creation of animals and mankind who will now be able to eat and survive. Each are to procreate after “their kind.” God saw that it was “good.”

Now evolutionists “poo-poo” a creation and this account because it isn’t “scientific.” Well, I “poo-pop” the evolutionists because; 1. They are responding to what the majority of churches teach about this account, and of course it isn’t scientific. Then, if evolution was even remotely possible, here is a major problem. Most all living creatures on the planet are either herbivores or carnivores. There are a limited number of omnivores, such as bears, racoons, foxes, pigs, some primates, some birds and humans of course. None of the creatures outside of humans have any need for any sustenance except grassy vegetation, tree leaves or meat. In their natural environment, there isn’t a specie on the planet that requires citrus, fruit, root vegetables, or any of the tens of thousands of vegetables and fruits that exist on the earth. So, if there was no need for these plants for the animals, why did they “evolve?” Only mankind needs them. But, set a lemon (or one of the thousands of items only people need to eat to live) before an evolutionist and ask, “Why did this ‘evolve?’” “Did it evolve before or after man evolved?” Their answer will be, “Duh I dunno.” No matter what they try to say, their answer is impossible. Think about this. I am sure I could make a long argument about this nonsense, but the point of creation should be clear now, God created the universe and all the earth’s produce out of His loving kindness in preparation for our impending arrival. But.....

On the other hand, I know that people who are believers in the creation have been brainwashed and dry cleaned with ironhanded stuff about the creation account. But if you listen to them, nothing they say makes sense, nor is it included or intended in the Biblical narrative, especially when they proclaim that the Earth and even the universe is just a few thousand years old. So, when they attempt to force the Bible to agree with them, they fall into the abyss of foolishness in the eyes of both people of science and Biblical scholars. I have no use for either of these groups but I choose not to rant on.

1:26,

26: “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and

let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle<sup>24</sup> and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

26: This is the most interesting passage of all in the creation account. There is so much here that most miss. Let’s examine it a bit at a time.

I. This verse is actually another “plan, preparation, and intent” statement within the existing “fulfillment” one.

A. In verse 26, God notes His intention to create people.

B. The next verse (27) is the actual creation of people fulfilling God’s intent seen in verse 26.

C. Then in verse 28 we have the “blessing.”

A clever technique.

II. God’s title – here, as in the entirety of chapter one through chapter two, verse three<sup>25</sup> the word for “God” is Elohim. This word is God’s title and means “the divine almighty,” It is also plural. Thus, we see the translation “Let us make man in our image.” The plural reflects the plural of Elohim. Most Hebrew words ending in “m” are plural.

III. This is the only subject in creation God makes “in His own image.”

IV. Also, the word “man” here is “Adam” (אָדָם) translated “man.” This word is also plural. “Adam” is both male and female as we see in 5:2 that says, “He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man (Adam) in the day when they were created.” The translation of “adam” to Adam does not occur until chapter 2, verse 20. But it is “adam” consistently from 1:26 onward with an exception we will note later. Though many translations change from “man” to “Adam” in chapter 2, the Jerusalem Bible uses the term “man” throughout.

V. “Our likeness” indicates the plurality of God, that is noted as male and female, repeated in verse 27. Then, in addition to this we have,

VI. “Let them rule”... that is “Adam.” The word “rule” is, as we noted different that the word used for the Sun and Moon that “govern” over the light and darkness as we saw in 1:16. The word in verse 26 is “rah-dah” and is a more powerful word. It means to “have dominion and authority over.” More on this in verse 28 where repeated is God’s word to them, ““Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

VII. God gives man (mankind) total dominion over the entire planet. It is His gift of

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<sup>24</sup> “Cattle” are all the grazing animals.

<sup>25</sup> The chapter division between one and two is misplaced. The account begun in 1:1 is completed in 2:3. 2:4 begins a new narrative.

lovingkindness to mankind as we saw in Psalm 136. We also see this repeated in Psalm 8, where the psalmist, declaring the awesomeness of God in His creation (reflecting this very chapter) says,

3: “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; 4: What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? 5: Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! 6: You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 7: All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8: The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. 9: O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!”

### **BRIEF EXCURSUS ON THIS DELEGATED AUTHORITY GIVEN TO MAN BY GOD**

Failure to grasp the critical and repeated fact that God gave rule and dominion to man - stated many times in scripture - has led people to come to some very confusing and incorrect conclusions. We often hear believers say, in response to some tragedy, disappointment, disaster, or evil act, “Well, God is in control!” I know what they are trying to say, but others go further and in compliant with statements like, “Why did God allow this? Or “Why didn’t God prevent or stop this?”<sup>26</sup> the insipid and stupid answer is, “God allowed this heinous evil for some higher purpose.”

The answer to this quandary is found in Genesis 1:26; 1:28; and Psalm 8 where it is clearly stated that God gave mankind “rule,” authority, control and responsibility over the entire creation including themselves. Though God has ultimate authority and is sovereign, indeed the “Almighty” who has all power and rule, He relinquished “control” and “dominion” over the creation and gave it to man – to us.

Sovereignty is what most people are referring to when they say, “God is in control.” But when they ask, “Why did God allow (or not prevent) something,” they are now laying the responsibility at the feet of God and simply accusing Him of being evil. After all, if one has the power to prevent an evil act or save someone from evil and does not do so, is he not as guilty as the perpetrator? So, thinking this way, people blame God.<sup>27</sup>

But! These are the wrong questions. The real question is, “Why do we allow or not allow God to work in our lives so that we would not commit the evil in the first place? The Scripture says over and over again that the source of evil is not God, and not even Satan, but us, humanity. The wickedness, evil and sinfulness of mankind is declared thousands of times

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<sup>26</sup> For a full study of the problem of evil and where God is in all of “this,” please see the article on The Problem of Evil on my website: [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org) under controversial topics.

<sup>27</sup> There is no reference in scripture stating the “God is in control” of all people blame Him for, nor is there a statement of Him “allowing” the horrors people blame Him for.

in the Bible. Though Ecclesiastes 7:29 say, "Behold, I have found only this, that God made men upright, but they have sought out many devices." ("Devises" can be translated "schemes") Genesis 6:5 says, "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." And Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it? Psalm, 53:2-3, 2: "God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there is anyone who understands, who seeks after God. 3: Every one of them has turned aside; together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one."<sup>28</sup> The statements go on.<sup>29</sup> Take away all people from the planet and there would be no evil at all.

The reason why we do not allow God to control our lives is because we do not want to. The reason we don't want to is because God gave us the power of choice, the choice to do as we desired. And we consistently desire that which God has said will cause us grief. Why? Mostly to alienate God from our lives to do what we please so our "flesh" will be satisfied. But satisfaction of the flesh is not lasting, so we grasp for more and more worldly and fleshly things that bring only a brief pleasure or sense of satisfaction. The temporal things of this world will never bring fulfillment because only the spiritual things of God can accomplish that. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world." I John 2:16

Now, the concept of "free will" is a fact clashes with the Calvinistic doctrines of "predestination" a great many denominations hold to. Bottom line, Calvinistic predestination disallows free will and puts all matters of existence and human choice in the predetermined and unalterable plan of God.

They point to the "sovereignty" of God for this conclusion. "Sovereignty" does include the idea of there is no higher, other God than the One presented in the Bible. The "sovereignty" of God does include total power, rule and dominion over all. But what these folks fail to note, as repeated numerous times in the Scripture, is that God delegated the dominion and rule over the creation to man, but holds full control over the consequences of the choices mankind makes in exercising his dominion. "Predestination" for the Jews in the time of Christ and the apostles was simply, "god has predestined that those that believe and trust in Him will be saved and enjoy eternal life in His kingdom." Few ever think or research what Paul and the Jews of his time meant by "predestination." They simply interpret his writings by Calvin, never by the actual intent of the ancients.

But if God did not give free will and dominion of the creation over to man but predetermines every choice man makes including evil then this would place God as the source of evil. I call this idea one of the "doctrines of demons". If the poor sheep of God's pasture come to a

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<sup>28</sup> In Romans, chapters 1-3 Paul makes this case clearly and this verse is quoted therein.

<sup>29</sup> The theme of the sinfulness of man is stated over 500 times in the Bible. Romans 3:23 says it succinctly, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

place where they believe God is evil because He could have prevented their own or another's personal tragedy then as Paul notes in I Timothy 4:1, "... the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons..."

This may be why so many are leaving the church. The church is teaching lies about these things and others, and people are believing the lie and thus rejecting God. The quantity of those falling away is staggering it seems the Bible is declaring. Why? Because of the choice to believe a lie rather than the truth. People, as has been proven, are easily led away from truth so as to believe lies. Why? The reason for this will be found in chapter three.

Meanwhile, Paul puts the choices of man this way in Romans 1:21-25,

21: "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22: Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23: and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. 24: Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

25: For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."

If we have no power of choice, then why did Joshua ask of Israel,

"If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15.

Then in Joshua 24:22 he says,

"'You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves the LORD, to serve Him.' And they said, 'We are witnesses.'"

In I Samuel 8:18, the Lord through the prophet Samuel says to the people,

"Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

The apostle Paul writes in his letter to the church at Philippi in 1:21-25,

21: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22: But if *I am* to live *on* in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23: But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better; 24: yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. 25: Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for

your progress and joy in the faith...”

So, I conclude that we have a free choice based on our desires. The Calvinist will reply, ‘The choices we make are predetermined by God.’ And that brings us back to the obvious conclusion that God has to be the source of all evil. People make evil choices and horrifying evil is the result. This is not of God.

Because, the Bible says,

“This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.” I John 1:5

“Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.” James 1:13

“For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You.” Psalm 5:4

“Are You not from everlasting, O LORD, my God, my Holy One? We will not die. You, O LORD, have appointed them to judge; And You, O Rock, have established them to correct. *Your* eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness *with favor*. Why do You look with favor On those who deal treacherously? Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up Those more righteous than they?” Habakkuk 1:12-13

So, many still understand that the one who has the role of dominion and authority over something or someone is held responsible for what transpires under their rule. When things go wrong, we look to the head honcho, right? This understanding, of course, is being replaced by people who not only fail to accept responsibility for their conduct and what they choose to do, but instead find someone else to blame for it. Our society is now supporting this idea to a great extent, even to the extent that those who carry out evil are simply victims. God does not accept this view as is made clear later by upcoming passages.

In chapter three of Genesis we have the man and woman blaming another for their own choices and the consequences thereof. Man blames God. Not much has changed. That is why the account is not just a story from long ago, but our story from long ago. God held the man and woman accountable for their choices. Thus, if man is not responsible for his decisions, then why would God hold him accountable?

**END OF EXCURSUS**

1:27,

27: “God created man in His own image,  
in the image of God He created him;  
male and female He created them.”

27: This verse could be in Hebrew poetic form. The Jerusalem Bible prints it this way. There is meter in the Hebrew text, though other translations print it as narrative. There is a great deal of Hebrew poetry in the Bible, and the entire book of Psalms is an example. This style of typeset is the indicator that the text is in poetic form.

We once again have a repetition of the point that “man” is both male and female, made in God’s image as male and female and that the term “Adam” is plural. We may confidently conclude that within the nature of God, there is both male and female in equal strength, unity and harmony to the degree that the declaration in Deuteronomy 6:4, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one” is indeed true, though there is a plurality.

This corresponds to the declaration in Genesis 2:24, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” This verse is repeated several times in the New Testament defining marriage between a man and a woman. Jesus, in answering the Pharisees who said,

”Moses permitted *a man* TO WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND *her* AWAY.’ But Jesus said to them, ‘Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, *God* MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. ‘FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH’; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. ‘What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.’”  
(Mark 10:4-9)

The theological concept proffered by the Catholic church stating that God is a “trinity” is inadequate. The term is not found in the Bible. As we see all through the Bible and in the ensuing narrative, there is more of a “family” theme rather than a theological or philosophical concept. We see family concepts all through the Scripture as God relates to His people. He is Father, a husband to His bride. He has a Son, and we are God’s children through faith in His Son. We are members of God’s house household, brothers and sisters in Christ who is our brother. Being in God’s image we are instructed to “be fruitful and multiply.” And, so on, as we see in verse 28.

1:28,

28: “God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

28: I suggest, as an opinion, that the “be fruitful and multiply” command could be a

reflection of the very nature of God Himself who is doing that very thing in creating mankind in His own image.

Continuing, once again there is a repetition regarding the “rule” of man over the earth. Repetitions are given by Biblical writers for emphasis. We have the command for “man” to “subdue” the earth and “rule” over it. “Subdue” is to bring it into forced bondage, under your full control, subjugate and even “trample under foot.” “Rule” is again “rah-dah” defined in verse 26 item IV above.

1:29-30,

29: “Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; 30: and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, *I have given* every green plant for food.’ And, it was so.”

29-30: “Behold” is “hinneh” in the Hebrew and it is God saying, “Look and see.” This verse affirms the recognition of God preparing all the vegetation for them prior to their arrival as well as the “green plants” for the animal life.

1:31,

31: “God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.”

We have come to the conclusion of the sixth “day” of creation. The creation and all its provision for man’s well-being, as well as all the creatures on the earth is done and “behold,” everything is “very (or exceedingly) good.” It is the reader that is to “look and see” how “very good” everything God had made was.

As noted in footnote 22, the chapter division here is misplaced. This narrative actually continues into chapter 2:3 where it concludes. So, we will include it here. Here is a note on the chapter and verse inclusions:

“The chapter divisions commonly used today were developed by Stephen Langton, an Archbishop of Canterbury. Langton put the modern chapter divisions into place in around A.D. 1227. The Wycliffe English Bible of 1382 was the first Bible to use this chapter pattern. Since the Wycliffe Bible, nearly all Bible translations have followed Langton’s chapter divisions.”

“The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into verses by a Jewish rabbi by the name of Nathan in A.D. 1448. Robert Estienne, who was also known as Stephanus, was the first to divide the New Testament into standard numbered verses, in 1555. Stephanus essentially used Nathan’s verse divisions for the Old Testament. Since that time,

beginning with the Geneva Bible, the chapter and verse divisions employed by Stephanus have been accepted into nearly all the Bible versions.”<sup>30</sup>

2:1,

1: “Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.”

1: “Hosts” is “tsabah” (צָבָא) and is consistently understood and translated as “armies.” It is translated this way nearly 250 time in the Old Testament. The phrase “Lord of hosts” occurs 239 of those times.

### **A BRIEF EXCURSUS ON “HOSTS.”**

The only assumption we can make is that this might refer to some of the angelic forces. The identification of “hosts” with angels does not occur in the Old Testament except in Psalm 148:2, shown below. It does occur in the New Testament.<sup>31</sup> In the Old, the context of the passages gives us a clue as how it could be understood. Psalm 148:2 uses both terms in a worship to God for His glory in creating the universe and all within it. The parallelism aligns the word “angels” with “hosts.” The entire creation is personified in the call to praise God.

1: “Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights!”

2: “Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts!”<sup>32</sup>

3: “Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all stars of light!”

4: “Praise Him, highest heavens, And the waters that are above the heavens!”

5: “Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created.”

6: “He has also established them forever and ever; He has made a decree which will not pass away.”

7: “Praise the LORD from the earth, Sea monsters and all deeps;”

8: “Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;”

9: “Mountains and all hills; Fruit trees and all cedars;”

10: “Beasts and all cattle; Creeping things and winged fowl;”

11: “Kings of the earth and all peoples; Princes and all judges of the earth;”

12: “Both young men and virgins; Old men and children.”

13: “Let them praise the name of the LORD, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above earth and heaven.”

14: “And He has lifted up a horn for His people, Praise for all His godly ones; *Even* for the sons of Israel, a people near to Him. Praise the LORD!”

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<sup>30</sup> From “Got Questions” online. This information is confirmed by many sources.

<sup>31</sup> Luke 2:13-15

<sup>32</sup> As in the New Testament, the Hebrew word for “angel” (malak) means: “messenger” and is so translated in passages like: Judges 6:35; 7:24; 9:31; 11:12-13; I Samuel 11:3-4 etc.

In Genesis 2:1, the word “hosts” can be understood as “and all the multitudes that accompanies them.” In Isaiah 34:4 we see the term is used this way as well. Speaking about the upcoming judgment of God, we read,

“And all the host of heaven will wear away, And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as *one* withers from the fig tree.”

In Exodus 7:4; 12:17 and 12:41 we read “hosts” corresponding to “Israel.”

7:4 "When Pharaoh does not listen to you, then I will lay My hand on Egypt and bring out My hosts, My people the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great judgments.”

12:17: “You shall also observe the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance.”

12:41: “And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.”

There is also the indication that the people of Israel left Egypt in military fashion. This is acceptable as there were warriors among the leaders. That many of the Israelites were in the Egyptian army is not unreasonable as they had resided in the land for hundreds of years. But along with this, the word hosts could also include “all those (the people) who accompanied the journey.” One might think that the word “multitudes” might be used here, but it is not, and that is another Hebrew word entirely.

Then, the application of this term to “armies” is seen clearly in Joshua 5:13-15,

13: “Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, ‘Are you for us or for our adversaries?’”  
14: “He said, ‘No; rather I indeed come now *as* captain of the host of the LORD.’ And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, ‘What has my lord to say to his servant?’”  
15: “The captain of the LORD'S host said to Joshua, ‘Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.’ And Joshua did so.”

Other Hebrew words are actually translated “army” “armies” or “battle forces” in the Old Testament. One is “Chayil” used 245 times and sometimes translated “wealth.” Others are “maarakah” and “machaneh.” These normally describe earthly armies.

In Luke 2:13-15 we read something interesting.

13: “And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14: ‘Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.’ 15: When the angels had gone away from them into

heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, ‘Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.’”

Here the word hosts is “stratia” meaning “armies.” In verse 15, they are described as “angels” from the word meaning “messengers.” It appears that some of the angelic forces mentioned in the Old Testament as a part of God’s “contingent” (“Lord of ‘*Hosts*’”) are a special warrior class of these beings and are seen many times as executing the will of God in judgment such as:

Jeremiah 19:3,

3: “Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Behold I am about to bring a calamity upon this place, at which the ears of everyone that hears of it will tingle.’”

And Jeremiah 50:25 and 31,

25: “The LORD has opened His armory And has brought forth the weapons of His indignation, For it is a work of the Lord GOD of hosts In the land of the Chaldeans.”

31: “Behold, I am against you, O arrogant one,’ Declares the Lord GOD of hosts, ‘For your day has come, The time when I will punish you.’”

But “hosts” is also used as those who protect and defend God’s people as in Isaiah 31:5, “Like flying birds so the LORD of hosts will protect Jerusalem. He will protect and deliver *it*; He will pass over and rescue *it*.”

There are a couple of passages of great comfort to God’s people that might reflect these “armies.” One is found in II Kings 6 where the King of Aram, at war with the King of Israel was enraged because Elisha the prophet was informing the King of Israel of the plans of the king of Aram. So, the king of Aram sent an army to capture Elisha. Here is the account,

II Kings 6:15-17,

15: “Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, ‘Alas, my master! What shall we do?’ 16: So he answered, ‘Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.’ 17: Then Elisha prayed and said, ‘O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.’ And the LORD opened the servant’s eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”

A similar theme is repeated in I John 4:4, “You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.”

**END OF EXCURSUS**

## The Third Secret

### DAY SEVEN – The “Sabbath.”

2:2-3,

2: “By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3: Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”

In these two verses we have the phrase “the seventh day” repeated three times. “Seventh” in Hebrew is “shebii” or “shebiith.” “Sheba” in the Hebrew is the number seven. From this root we get “shebii” or “shebiith” – seventh. And from this root we also get “shabat” or “sabbath.”

The pattern of this creation account is a “sabbath” account. Here is where it becomes clear that the God spoken of in this narrative is the God of the Hebrews because only the Hebrews kept the sabbath day as a day of rest reflecting this account and the command of God in Exodus 20:8-11,

8: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9: Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10: but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11: For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore, the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.”

This observance of the Sabbath Day identified the Israelites as worshippers of the God of creation, the “Almighty.” This observance was in the nature of a covenant between God’s people and Himself and was not to be broken. Exodus 31:16-17 says,

6: 'So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.' 17: "It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased *from labor*, and was refreshed."

But just ahead of Exodus 31:16-17, we have Exodus 31:12-15,

12: “The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 13: ‘But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for *this* is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 14: 'Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15: 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD;

whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death.””

The point is that the seven-day creation account is deliberately put into the preparation/ purpose/ fulfillment theme to establish the grounds for the relationship between the true God and all other so-called gods. It is a Sabbath establishment narrative as well as portraying all the reasons why God created the universe.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Fourth Secret

#### The second creation account

##### Introduction

Where the focus of the seven-day creation narrative is on God - The Almighty, and that He the highest God is supreme, the creator of all the universe and all that is within it by simply speaking it into existence, the following account focuses on the appearance of people on the earth and their relationships with God, each other and their environment. The goal here is not to establish some sort of genealogical or chronological table, but to portray the nature of mankind and how they chose to live the life that God had given them. The creation of the heavens and the earth are only mentioned as a brief introduction to the real story....our story. This is comprised of three verses while the remaining theme covers the next nine chapters. This narrative is not intended to be a scientific or chronological explanation of anything or anyone as is true of the first creation account. The writers of the Bible do not focus on those things as we do here in the westernized world. Their focus is on the spiritual and relational aspects of life, and how that becomes the means for the redemption of mankind.

2:4,

4: “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.

4: We now have the introduction to a second creation account. This narrative focuses not on the creation of the cosmos and the preparation of it for the arrival of man and beast, but on the relationship of mankind with the creator and how the mess we are in today came to be. The creation act itself is summarized in just three short verses. It is not really essential to the core of the narrative.

The most important feature to notice beginning in verse four is the change in the designation for God. We now have the English “LORD God” rather than just “God” as we saw in the first account. The English for “God” is the translation from the Hebrew “Elohim.” Here we have the English translation “LORD God” from the Hebrew “Yah-weh Elohim.” “Yah-weh” is the closest equivalent we have to the Hebrew as the ancient Hebrew did not have written vowels in the script. It was not until the 6<sup>th</sup> century A. D. that Jewish scholars began to reproduce and vocalize (by adding vowel symbols or “marks” to) the ancient text to produce the most accurate text possible. It took nearly four-hundred years to complete.

“Yahweh” is the name God calls Himself and is the sacred name of God. It is found more

than 6000 times in the Old Testament. The root meaning of God's name is found in Exodus 3:13-14 where Moses is at the burning bush,

13: "Then Moses said to God, 'Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?' 14: God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM; and He said, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

"I AM" is "Hay-yah" meaning "to exist or become (and in this tense) to cause to exist or become" or "The creator." In verses 15 and 16, God gives Moses more information about Himself and His name. He says to Moses,

15: "God, furthermore, said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations. 16: Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, 'I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt.'"

Now we have a fuller picture of God's name. "Yah-weh" is rooted in "hay-yah" but its fuller meaning is approximately, "The Ever-Existing Creator." God tells Moses that this is His "Memorial Name forever to all generations. This name used in the Old Testament is used primarily in narratives where God has a "covenant" or "faith" relationship with whomever is being spoken about. This is the name God commands not to be taken in vain in Exodus 20:7 and Deuteronomy 5:11.

In the New Testament (John 8:53-59) we have this account where Jesus identifies Himself as the I AM in a discussion with some Jews. They said to Him,

53: "'Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out *to be*?' 54: Jesus answered, 'If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God'; 55: and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word. 56: 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.' 57: So the Jews said to Him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?' 58 Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.' 59: Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple."

2:5-6,

5: "Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet

sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. 6: But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.”

5-6: These verses portray the creation account differently in that first, though the earth was empty as we saw in days one and three (1:2, 1:9-10), this author saw that even in that first account there was no rain mentioned to water the earth. In the commentary of 1:6-7, it is noted that “waters” were gathered above the “expanse” (sky), but never defined or mentioned again. So, no rain is mentioned, and no plant life existed. Faithful to that, this account notes that a “mist” rose up from the ground to water the earth. “Mist” is “ade” in the Hebrew and can be understood as a wet fog or enveloping vapor. Now, plant life can be introduced.

Now we come to the heart of the narrative.

2:7,

7: “Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

### **The Fifth Secret**

7: This is stated what would be to us, simple and concise. Yet, the author employs a great deal of word play, imagery and personification in this verse. There is much more here as revealed by the use of the Hebrew than is visible in the English translation. Here are those examples:

A. “Man” is “Adam” (אָדָם) in the Hebrew. The word is plural and not the word for “a man” at all. The word for a “man” is “eesh” (or “ish”) (אִישׁ) and the word for “a woman” is (“e-shah”) or (“ishshah.”) The first time in Genesis where “a man” is mentioned is in Genesis 2:23, “The man (*adam*) said,

"This is now bone of my bones,  
And flesh of my flesh;  
She shall be called Woman (e-shah or ishshah),  
Because she was taken out of Man (eesh).”

This verse is in a Hebrew poetic form, with rhythm and meter. This indicates that the author is communicating something other than a historical and chronological narrative.<sup>33</sup> Why the word “Man” is capitalized, I have no idea as in the remaining 2,242 uses, it is not. The word “eesh” is also translated “husband” in 3:6 and 3:16 plus numerous times throughout the Old

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<sup>33</sup> This will be discussed more fully when that verse is reached in the commentary.

Testament. And (“e-shah”) is translated “wife” hundreds of times.

Prior to 2:23, the word “man” in the English translations is consistently “Adam.” Translators, trying to fit their translation into a theological presupposition translate the Hebrew “adam” as either “Adam” or “man” depending on how they wish the reader to interpret the portrayal. They do this through the first five chapters of Genesis.

However, the reason the word “eesh” is used in 2:23 and sporadically through the first three chapters is to underscore the personification of the plurality into a single (Adam), then into a double image, (Adam and Eve). Neither “Adam” or “Eve” as we have noted are the words for a man or a woman. Thus, “Adam” and “Eve” become portraits of the human race – mankind. Both then become a portrait or personification of the entire human race. This transition from the story of many is encapsulated in a story about these two. The Hebrew “Adam” is translated “mankind” in 22 places in the Old Testament. Note Genesis 7:21 for example. This shows that much of the early translation of the word “Adam” is arbitrary and the idea of personification, a common technique to portray truth is left out.

B. “Adam” as a plural matches 1:26-27 where God made “man” in His own image, male and female. This is confirmed even in the English translations in 5:1-2. 1: “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man (adam), He made him in the likeness of God. 2: He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man (adam) in the day when they were created.” The word man (adam), if plural as is in the text would properly be “mankind.”

C. “Man” is formed out of the “dust” of the ground. The Hebrew for dust is “aphar” and “Adam” was made from the dust of the Adamah.” There is no error when the text tells us that “Adamah” was made into “Adam.” Identical root words and a play on, or pun, on the Word.

D. Further, “Adamah” has the same root as “Adam” and is translated “red” in passages like Exodus, 25:5, “... rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood...” Here “red” is “adam.” In Genesis 25:25, speaking of Esau’s birth we read, “Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau.” In this verse, “red” is “admoni” from the same root, “adam.”

E. The LORD God ‘breathed’ ... into his nostrils....” “Breathed” is (נָפַח) “naphach” and means to blow or exhale. The “breath” of “life.” “Breath” is a different word entirely, and is (נְשָׁמָה) “Neshamah” meaning to actually breathe in and out as living creatures do.”

Life is (חַיִּים) (chay-yim). This is the sign of creatures who are alive. The word “chay-yim” is plural because it is the antecedent of “adam” which is also plural. A popular toast among the Jews today is, “La Chayim” – “to life.”

F. “Became a living being.” The word “became” is “Hay-yah” the same root word for God’s name meaning “to come into being” or “existence.” “Living” is a Hebrew word related to “life” – “chay” (חַי). Here it is singular and now we have a technique used very often in Biblical literature as well as in other forms of literature and poetry, “personification.”

“Personification” is a literary technique of portraying a plurality in the guise of a singular individual. Similar to this is “anthropomorphism.” This literary technique gives non-human entities human characteristics such as the expression in Psalm 98:8, “Let the rivers clap their hands, Let the mountains sing together for joy.” Or Paul’s expression in Romans 8:22, “For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.”

Both personification and anthropomorphism is used in passages such as in Jeremiah 31:31-32,

31: “‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32: not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,’ declares the LORD.”

And in Proverbs 1:20-21 we have a classic personification,

20: “Wisdom shouts in the street, She lifts her voice in the square; 21: At the head of the noisy *streets* she cries out; At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings...”

So, what we have here is a transition taking place - from God creating mankind, to mankind being portrayed and personified as an individual and then later, as a couple. As this couple, we will find that they become the portrait of all of mankind, yes, all of us. Their story is not one that just takes place eons ago, but one that takes place right now, in our time, in our age, and in our experience, beliefs and conduct. The personification will be consistent throughout scripture. Now, we will see what we did with all of that.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> I am sure many objections will arise when I say that in my opinion what we have that follows seems to me to be a metaphoric dramatization portraying the condition and consequences the human race succumbs to in relationship to God and each other when people alienate themselves from Him and seek glory for themselves. There are just too many literary techniques to consider this a strictly historical and literal account in my opinion. Yet, God’s creation of the universe and all that is in it including people is not being questioned at all.

## The Sixth Secret

### The Garden of Eden

2:8,

8: “The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man<sup>35</sup> whom He had formed.”

2:8: “Yahweh Elohim” planted a “garden.” “Garden” is “an enclosed place” with a hedge or bordering wall around it.<sup>36</sup> “Toward the east.” “Toward” is also “on the way to” or “just before you get to” - or more like “eastward.” The “east” from the perspective of the writer in Israel, would be toward the Fertile Crescent. This designation is supported by Genesis 11:2, “It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.” Shinar is another name for the territory of Babylon, in the Fertile Crescent. Of interest, but not really applicable is that one of the “Cradles of Civilization” as scientists have determined, is this very area.

There, in an enclosed area, God places “Adam” whom He created. (*See footnote 34*) This place is called “Eden.” “Eden” is not a place specifically, but more of an experience. Eden means “joy”, “pleasure”, “peace”, “delight” “gladness” and so forth, and is called the “Garden of God” in Ezekiel 28:13;<sup>37</sup> 31:9 and “The paradise of God” in Revelation 2:7. This is “God’s garden” not man’s. This enclosed (“hedged in”) place cannot be entered unless God places someone or something there.

Further, the LXX<sup>38</sup> renders this word as “παράδεισος” (paradise) and this is the same word used in Luke 23:43 where Jesus tells the believing thief on the cross, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.” The Jews equated this with Eden. Now we may look at Eden as something other than a physical place. We begin to see a spiritual element in this account because “Eden” is where man, in relationship with God experiences all those lovely attributes. In Eden, all things are provided for man.

There are many references to “Eden” or, “the Garden of the Lord” in the Old Testament that gives us more clues as to how the ancients thought of the ideal paradise awaiting God’s own family.

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<sup>35</sup> All English translations noting “man” in the early chapters of Genesis are actually “Adam” in the Hebrew with few exceptions. Translators arbitrarily use one or the other word depending on their theological point of view as well as considering which translation will be acceptable to popular theology and thus avoid causing a controversy whereby their work might not sell as well. Yep, money determines how the word of God is handled.

<sup>36</sup> For this description note Jeremiah 39:4 and 52:7.

<sup>37</sup> Ezekiel 28:1-19 has been used to describe the “rebellion and fall of Satan from heaven” but this is a gross misinterpretation as the passage clearly states it is about the King of Tyre. The same is true of Isaiah 14 though this is clearly a taunt against Babylon. See the commentary by Keil and Delitzsch on these passages. The failure of interpreters to understand the techniques of Hebrew literary form have led to a great many false teachings. For more on Satan and his origins, see [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org), Studies, controversial topics.

<sup>38</sup> Septuagint

For example, in Genesis 13:8-10 we read,

8: "So Abram said to Lot, 'Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. 9: 'Is not the whole and before you? Please separate from me; if *to* the left, then I will go to the right; or if *to* the right, then I will go to the left.' 10: "Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere—*this was* before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar."

In Isaiah 51:1-3 we read,

1: "Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, Who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were hewn And to the quarry from which you were dug. 2: "Look to Abraham your father And to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain; When *he was but* one I called him, Then I blessed him and multiplied him." 3: Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places. And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody."

Ezekiel 36:24-35 reads,

24: "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. 25: "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26: "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27: "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. 28: "You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God. 29: "Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you. 30: "I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, so that you will not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations. 31: "Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations. 32: "I am not doing *this* for your sake," declares the Lord GOD, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel!" 33: "Thus says the Lord GOD, "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt. 34: "The desolate land will be cultivated instead of being a desolation in the sight of everyone who passes by. 35: "They will say, 'This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, desolate and ruined cities are fortified *and* inhabited.'"

Through Ezekiel God is speaking of the restoration of Israel from the Babylonian captivity and describes how He will turn the now desolate land into a land others will say has become like a “Garden of Eden.” Here a metaphor is used.

Joel 2:1-3,

1: “Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the LORD is coming; Surely it is near,  
2: A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, *So* there is a great and mighty people; There has never been *anything* like it, Nor will there be again after it To the years of many generations. 3: A fire consumes before them And behind them a flame burns. The land is like the garden of Eden before them But a desolate wilderness behind them, And nothing at all escapes them.”

Here we have a judgment from God reversing what Ezekiel wrote. The “Garden of Eden” as we will see takes on proportions that help us realize that more is involved other than a geographical territory.

2:9,

9: “Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

We now have a different presentation from the first creation account where God caused the entire earth to bring forth vegetation. This is deliberate because this account now peers into the nature of man and how all the mess the world is in came to be. There is a definite contrast presented between a spiritual and fleshly life. Plus, the story and images now placed before the reader are intentionally obscured so the reader will realize that the message withing the images is the real issue, not the geography or setting. We will see evidence of this as we proceed.

Of interest is that God caused the two trees to come from the “ground” – the “adamah” – the same word for ground that “adam” was created from. Is there a subtle reference to perhaps that within man are these two choices?

Now, in this enclosed place, “Eden” we have all the “trees,” and they are “pleasing” to the sight and good for food. So, we have the picture of physical people needing food to be sustained in a place with God who is a spirit. Yet, there is a personal relationship and communication between the two.

In the midst of the garden there are also two special trees. One is the “Tree of Life” and the other the “Tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” These two trees will reveal the nature of

people when they are told about them and their properties. Both are in the midst of the garden. Eating one will result in life, eating of the other in death. There is a choice to be made. Life or death. As is the story following to this day, people consistently choose death. Why? This is the crux of the matter and we will discuss it shortly.

Understanding that there exist no such trees in our temporal environment, these trees become something more significant in the story than that they grow and have distinctive different fruit and must be somewhere on this planet. But people have become fascinated by this story and have spent time searching for these trees. Like Juan Ponce de León who searched for the fountain of youth in Florida in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was unsuccessful, so some get caught up in this legend and miss the point and intent of the account. The trees are metaphorical so as to display the human nature and its pride filled self-exaltation.<sup>39</sup>

The “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil” itself consists of that which leads to death if partaken of. “Evil” is “ra” in the Hebrew and means “wickedness,” “rotten,” “wretched,” “bent on destroying” etc. In other words, essentially bonding with Satan. The term “knowledge” is a key. To “eat” and gain a bond with evil that becomes a significant part of man’s nature automatically excludes one from God as no evil can exist in His presence and thus, to be cut off from God is death.

2:10-14,

10: “Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. 11: The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12: The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. 13: The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. 14: The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.”

10: Out of “Eden” flowed a river to water the garden and from there it divided into four rivers. This would be the headwaters of the “rivers” as the word for “rivers” is “roshim” meaning “heads” or “beginnings.” The stated location of these four rivers should give the reader, once again, the understanding that the goal of the writer is not to record a geographical or scientific account. Further, the same effort has failed when the location of “Eden” is attempted. The intensity on this issue has distracted the students of the Bible from the intended message and teaching and has often led people away from God rather than to God and understanding of His message. (See: footnote 38 below)

11: The “Pishon” River. Many have attempted to identify this river with no success.

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<sup>39</sup> None of this will set well with the literalists and the ignorant who insist that their interpretation must be correct. That is unfortunate because they will miss God’s message, intent and point in having this told in this fashion. When asked what is God’s message to the readers in Genesis 1-5 they have no idea, just guesses. The guesses fall further from the actual Bible message than does mankind. Actually, as we will see, there is no “fall of man” ever mentioned in the Bible. More on that in chapter three.

“Havilah” also is not geographically identifiable. Used only seven times in the Old Testament, Genesis 25:17-18 says, 17: “These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people. 18: They settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled in defiance of all his relatives.”

Ishmael was the child of Abraham by Hagar, Sarah’s Egyptian handmaid. They resided in Hebron, just south of Jerusalem and both Abraham and Sarah are buried near there. Ishmael was there to bury Abraham. He became the progenitor of the Ishmaelites and they inhabited the territory we know as southwest Saudi Arabia, near the Sinai. Genesis 25:18 tells us that after his death, his family moved from “Havilah” to “Shur.” Some have tried to force “Havilah” into a territory up near the Caspian Sea so it would fit with the Tigris and Euphrates rivers somehow. This effort has failed. “Havilah” is actually the name of one of the sons of both “Cush” and “Joktan” as Genesis 10:7; 10:25-29 and I Chronicles 1:17-23 notes. “Cush” is descended from “Ham” one of Noah’s sons, and “Joktan” is descended from “Shem” another of Noah’s sons.

“Cush” is the Hebrew name for Ethiopia, in Africa south of Egypt and Sudan. “Joktan” was simply the patriarch of some small Arabian tribes. “Havilah” has no specific geographical identification whatsoever and though it is identified as a land, all we have is that in it is gold, bdellium and the onyx stone. Bdellium is an aromatic gum extracted from trees in and near Ethiopia, India and Afghanistan. “Onyx” is the consistent translation of “shoham” and found eleven times in the Old Testament. Onyx is found in many places around the world, but not much in the mid-east, if at all. The actual identification of “shoham” is difficult but if it is Onyx, the closest source would be Egypt, Yemen, or over in Pakistan/India. With the location of all the peoples associated with that name, the location of “Havilah” would normally be in the south west deserts of Arabia. But there is no way a river with the same head waters as the Tigris and Euphrates could be in any of these countries.

13: The “Gihon” mentioned six times in the Old Testament is not a river at all, but a underground stream that flows to the surface near Jerusalem. Hezekiah build his famous tunnel so the water from the Gihon could flow into the city undetected. (II Chronicles 32:30) There is also a “Gihon” river in Ethiopia. Some place the garden of Eden there, but that discounts the Tigris and Euphrates. However, this text says that the Gihon “flows around the whole land of Cush.”

14: The Tigris and Euphrates. The headwaters of these two rivers are in Northwestern Turkey, nearly in Armenia. They flow through Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf. If one attempts to put these together into one source, one will find himself discouraged. Many have spent their lives trying to do so with no luck. Perhaps this is a deliberate ploy on the part of the author of Genesis to remind the reader that the account is not for that purpose but might possibly have another point in the story.

What is actually going on, in the opinion of our study group is that the entire known world at the time of this writing is included in the territory of the garden. It seems that the idea was that at one time God had created the “mid-east” as a paradise, but it was exchanged to correspond with the consequences on man’s choices. Man’s garden now, not God’s just as man wanted it (and wants it) to be.

2:15-20,

15: “Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. 16: The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17: but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." 18: Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." 19: Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought *them* to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20: The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.”

15: Adam is placed in the garden to “cultivate” (till) it and to “keep” it. Oddly, the word “keep” means not to manage or preserve its pristine character, but “to guard”, “keep watch over” or “protect” it. From what or whom? Probably from himself. He fails miserably. Also, if indeed work is involved, it appears it will require no “sweat.” We will note that point in 3:19.<sup>40</sup>

16-17: What is significant is that there is no prohibition about eating from the “Tree of Life.” The reason this is significant is multifold. First, it shows that man was given the ability to choose. This implies “free will.” Second, it introduces us to ourselves in that when two things are offered to us and one is prohibited, one is prompted to ask “why” is that prohibited? This reflects the common nature of people (already known by God) that must find out what is prohibited.

Tell a child before whom there are two wrapped Christmas packages one of which is not to be opened under any circumstances, and then leave the room. What will normally happen? Third, even if one is told why he or she should not do something, there is still the desire to do it anyway. Why?<sup>41</sup> Well, we know ourselves, don’t we? Whom of us has always desired to

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<sup>40</sup> Dr. Ashley Lyon of the Israel Bible Center notes, “...an alternative translation of the Hebrew words for “cultivate” (עבד; *avad*) and “keep” (שמר; *shamar*) would be “worship and obey.” Based on the context of Genesis, it’s reasonable to assume that both pairs of meanings are at play: God places Adam in the garden not only to help the land flourish, but also to maintain a worshipful and obedient relationship with the Lord. The terms לעבדה ולשמרה are also used of the Levitical task of ministry in the Temple (cf. Numbers 3:8). The similar use of language in both Genesis 2:15 and Numbers 3:8 suggests that the Garden of Eden could be seen as a temple of God in which the first human being served in a priestly role.

<sup>41</sup> So often. We will warn children not to do things and tell them why. But, knowing human nature, we are forced to child proof cabinets, and install all sorts of safety devices, cameras, and keep watch out all the time because children will crawl into the pool,

do as God instructs and not once has the desire to do what he prohibits? Can you answer the “why” of this?

In the case of Adam, he is given the reason why he is not to eat of the “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.” He will die! Still.....

18-20: Immediately after this declaration God decides to make a “helper suitable” for Adam. The terms “helper” and “suitable” are found more descriptive in the Hebrew. “Helper” is one who cares for and supports. “Suitable” is one who corresponds and reflects the image of the man.

We saw in chapter one that man (“adam” - plural) were created in God’s image, male and female and told to rule the creation. Here, we have another view that displays the relationships men and women have with each other and with God and the intention God established in those relationships. None of the creatures God made on the earth were “suitable,” that is reflected or corresponded to the man.

2:21,

21: “So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.”

21: The translation is adequate. “So” is “Abandoning that...” The word “rib” is contested as to what it is supposed to describe. Some say the God carved off the man’s entire side, splitting him in two. The word for “rib” is “עֲלָצָה” (tse-lah). It is used many times in the Old Testament to indicate the side of a building. But, it is also translated “boards” in places. Others think that his reproductive organ was used. But the word “rib” is adequate and is used the point is not the exact definition of “עֲלָצָה” (tse-lah). The determining factor is the use of the Hebrew numeral “one” in that God took “one” of his ribs. This indicates one of many and so “rib” is an acceptable translation.

However, the debate over minutia like this is foolish as none of this needs to be taken literally as we have seen. There is a point within this story that is essential. The story is only the means whereby God intends to get His point across. Much like the parables Jesus taught, the point and lesson isn’t in the details of the story itself, but found within the story. This is such a common way the ancients had of writing a lesson to teach, it is amazing that the great majority of interpreters and teachers have no idea about this. Why? Pure laziness in my opinion.

2:22,

22: “The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.”

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get into cabinets, storage lockers, drawers and anything that is supposed to be put in a secure place. But because it is hidden or prohibited, it will drive children and even many adults to find out what is there.

22: “Woman” is “ishshah.” “Man” is “adam” both times.

2:23,

“The man 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.’”

23: We have here a poetic format and plays on words defining the transition of many into two representatives, and the drama of the upcoming narrative even more. In the first line, “man” is “Adam.” “bone of my bones” and “flesh of my flesh” are plays on words as the subject is “this.”

The words translated “this” in the Hebrew are (זֶה הַבְּרִיאָה) “Zoth Hah-pah-aam” meaning “this creature.” This phrase reflects the experience of having all the creatures of the earth being unsuitable for a companion for the man as we saw in verse 20, but this one is.

Then we have “she” called “ishshah” taken out of “ish.” In the Hebrew the forms are (אִישׁ) “ish” and (אִשָּׁה) “ishshah.” So, the word for “woman” is the feminine form of the word for man. Not “adam” here. This is the first use of “ish” in the Bible to define a man. It is singular. So now we have the completion of the transition from the plural “adam” – mankind - now personified and portrayed as a couple.

2:24,

24: “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”

24: An important editorial comment from the author. He is speaking of the sexual union between a man and his wife and, in this act, two become one. A reversal of the “ONE” becoming two – “male” and “female.” This is another example of a story telling technique often used by Biblical writers.

Now we are beginning to see the concept. God’s intention was that His image be reflected in His creation. One (God) is plural and plural (man and wife) is one.

Jesus quotes this verse in a discussion found in Matthew 19:3-8,

3: “Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, ‘Is it lawful *for a man* to divorce his wife for any reason at all?’ 4: “And He answered and said, ‘Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, 5: and said, ‘FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO

SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? 6: 'So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.' 7: "They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND *her* AWAY?" 8: "He said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.'"

This is significant because Jesus notes that God's intention for a husband and a wife is to be together as one and not be separated. And the reason man sets this aside is because of the hardness of heart. From when? Right after the beginning. Hardness of heart! Hardness of heart is defined by Matthew as "unbelief" in 16:14 of his gospel.

Paul writes in Ephesians 4:17-20,

17: "So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18: being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19: and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. 20: But you did not learn Christ in this way,

2:25,

25: "And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."

25: This pictures a harmony and innocence in those who are God's. They had no sense of anything out of the ordinary. All the creatures God had made were without clothes and they didn't even know what clothes were. The point is the contrast in the human spirit between this spiritual/relational reality and later when they succumbed to temptation and dismissed God and His Word from their lives.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Seventh Secret

Introduction:

The upcoming episode is mischaracterized as “The Fall” of mankind. That term is not found in the Bible. What this episode really depicts is the “self-exaltation” of mankind, the opposite of a “fall.” There are numerous comments, none, positive, about the “self” and “pride” to support the proper understanding of what is about to happen next in what we can now see as the story of humanity...our story.

Within the following portrayal of the encounter between the woman and the serpent is what we are after in terms of learning the lesson God wants for us to learn. The characterizations, objects and drama are a means to this end and not the things to focus our attention on even though they have significance. But that significance is to help us see the real truths about ourselves and why we make the choices we do when it comes to choosing God’s truth or the clever and persuasive lies that we are presented with every day. We can’t do both. We cannot exalt “self” and God simultaneously.

Jesus said to His disciples,

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?" Matthew 16:24-26

And in Matthew 23:12 He says, "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."

In Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

Luke 14:33, "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."

Thus, we need to be inserting ourselves into this drama for we are the man and the woman. We need to learn the lessons God is teaching.

3:1-5,

1: “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” 2: “The woman said to the serpent”, ‘From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3: but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” 4: “The serpent said to the woman, ‘You surely will not die!’ 5: ‘For God

knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

3: “The serpent” is (שָׁדָן) (nah-khawsh) and is a snake. The first letter of the Hebrew word is a “nun” that we have already discovered is the name of the Egyptian water god, a poisonous viper worshipped by the ancient Egyptians. But there is more to this word. The root and related words give the concept of “practicing divination,” “enchantments” or “sorcery.” Further, it is also the color of copper or bronze.

In referencing Egypt, we know there was a tremendous impact of their culture and religion on the ancient Israelites when captive there. One of the interesting things is that the Egyptian Pharaohs worshipped the snake, and especially Uraeus. Uraeus is associated with the gods, goddesses, and pharaohs of ancient Egypt. This “serpent” god is portrayed or represented by an upright cobra ready to attack. Worn as a head ornament by the pharaohs, symbolized divine authority, royalty, sovereignty, and supremacy. We can see an example of this in the death mask of Tutankhamun here with the cobra at the top center of the mask.



Speculation. Could it be that the “serpent” portrayed in Genesis 3 be a of the Egyptian god Uraeus whom the Israelites were forbidden to worship along with other gods yet were found to do so not long after leaving Egypt? Moses, to whom much of the writings of Genesis are attributed, certainly knew of this god as did all the Israelites.

Worship of the Egyptian, Canaanite, Babylonian, and Moabite gods continued all through the history of Israel for hundreds of years after the Exodus.

Recently in an excavation of ancient Samaria a signet ring thought to belong to Queen Jezebel was unearthed and it had a stone in the center with etchings of Egyptian gods.<sup>42</sup>



We know from Revelation 12:2 and 20:9 that this “serpent” is Satan (or the devil) himself portrayed in this form. But this word is used twenty times more in the Old Testament and simply is a snake. The “snake” depiction of the voice and temptation to turn away from God and His Word and truth is clever. The first thing we have is the typical manipulative solicitation that points to a need and then offers a solution. In this case, a distortion or misapplication of the truth.

So, in this portrayal we have the key method evil has in seducing people. First, a probing question deliberately requiring correction to suck the hearer in.<sup>43</sup> Then the half-truth to further draw the listener in. Then the sales pitch claiming that what they have heard is not true but that the truth lies with what will be told to them. Then the clincher. What is offered will result in greater benefit than what has been offered. “Taste and see!”

Satan is called a “liar,” “deceiver,” “tempter,” and evil. But the actual evil is not accomplished by Satan but by what those that believe him do. In Egypt, Pharaoh was apparently proud to be the voice of the serpent. We see that during the confrontation in Exodus.

Where do people hear those lies and are swept away by them in belief? Mostly from the “lecterns” of political centers, educational centers, religious centers, news centers, and anywhere else someone with “authority” stands up and speaks. These are the “serpent” of Genesis three.

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<sup>42</sup> See: [biblicalarchaeology.org](http://biblicalarchaeology.org) queen Jezebel’s ring. This would be used as her personal royal seal. Ahab and Jezebel ruled Israel for twenty years from about 874-852 B.C.E. Some four hundred year after the Exodus. The Egyptian influence was still strongly present.

<sup>43</sup> An example of this is given in Stuart Chase’s book, “The Luxury of Integrity” where a door to door encyclopedia salesman asks a mother, “Don’t you care enough about your children to buy them these encyclopedias?”

Jesus said to the Pharisees in John 8:43-45,

43: "Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. 44: "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45: "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me."

Paul, on his first missionary journey at Paphos on the island of Cyprus encountered a false prophet named Bar-Jesus who attempted to turn the proconsul away from the truth. In Acts 13:9-12 we read,

9: "But Saul, who was also *known as* Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him, 10: and said, "You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord? 11: "Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time." And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand. 12: Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened, being amazed at the teaching of the Lord."

Those who hear Satan's lies and reject him produce no evil. That is why the Bible and God is focused on a person's spiritual life and faith. One will place their heart and faith either in God or in Satan and his lying servants (or in themselves). The consequences of either are consistently noted all through the scripture. The probing question now, is where do we place our heart and faith? Jesus says it is where we place our earthly treasure.<sup>44</sup>

"Crafty" is "cunning," or "shrewd." It is important to notice that the LORD God created this creature. There is a popular view that somehow Satan was an angel of the Lord who rebelled and was cast out of heaven. This is a fantasy based on the misinterpretation of Isaiah 14 (that tells of the Lord's taunt against Babylon), and Ezekiel 28 (that is speaking about the king of Tyre).<sup>45</sup>

The serpent, (very shrewd with a question requiring it to be answered correctly) – (appealing to the pride and knowledge of the woman?) asks the woman ("ish-shah"), Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" No question he is a "snake oil salesman."

Important is that in the first phrase in verse three the author uses LORD God (Yahweh Elohim). But thereafter the serpent, having no relationship with the LORD God uses "God"

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<sup>44</sup> Luke 12:34

<sup>45</sup> For a full discussion and study on the origin and character of Satan, visit my website; [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org) and see the articles under Controversial topics, topic III in eight parts.

(just “Elohim”) from this point on as does the woman through verse five. This shows the beginning of the alienation of man from God as the serpent is listened to and then believed.

So, the woman, apparently eager to express her superior knowledge to that of the serpent answers, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"

God did not say anything about “touching” the fruit. The man obviously conveyed the prohibition to the woman and may have added this condition. Plus, the “Tree of Life” is also in the midst of the garden.<sup>46</sup>

4-5: Now the serpent tells two convincing lies that give “hope.” First, “You surely will not die!” This, of course, is a direct contradiction to what God had said to the man in 2:1:7, “...but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

We are also aware that to disobey a command of God is to “sin” and “sin” is the knowledge of “evil” and that the wages of sin is death including here. This consequence is mentioned sixty-one times in the Bible. What exactly is “evil.” I believe the best definition is that “evil” is anything other than that which embodies the righteousness and glory of God. As Paul says in Romans 3:21-23,

21: “But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22: even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..”

Second, the serpent adds the clincher, “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Again, we need to be inserting ourselves into this story.

3:6,

6: “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.”

6: I suggest that the sequence of this pattern is universal throughout time. First, whom or what do we choose to believe? The truth of God or manipulative and clever lies? Once we make that choice, we will act on our “faith.” Then we will reap the consequences of our

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<sup>46</sup> Once again it is suggested that these two “trees” may really be metaphors for the inner nature of man as he sets out to make choices.

choice, i.e., our “eyes will be opened.”

This is a clear picture of the nature of man and why he chooses poorly. He chooses based on what he deems best for himself. The “self” becomes the controlling entity not God.

So, the hook is set. They wanted to be like God. In so doing, they removed themselves from God’s provisions for them. The excuses to eat are common; “good for food” – not told them by God, “delight to the eyes” – first time this is noted, and the “hook” – “desirable to make one wise.” “Wise” is סָכַל (sakal) meaning to have “insight,” “understanding,” “intelligence.” This is not the same as חָכָם (hoch-mah) meaning experienced, skilled, knowledgeable, wise.

Why succumb to the serpent’s temptation to disobey God and make this choice?<sup>47</sup> Could the serpent be in the guise of Uraeus and that is why what he says is so persuasive? Regardless, is it simply because people feel that gaining power and knowledge is more fulfilling than what God has provided? Or to assume that this fulfillment is to be God. Or is it because they are so self-absorbed and self-centered that setting God aside in disobedience in favor of that which is forbidden is assumed preferable for their own well-being? What I want rather than what you want? Is this the most important factor in today’s world? In our marriages and family?

I have found that most people, including “Christians” will eagerly submit to and believe a lie then act on it because they rationalize (like the woman) it is in their own best interest to do so. “Self” is “god.” And as such men have removed themselves from god and His provision.

The entire story shows the universal nature of mankind and the exercise of free will. This was by God’s design. We know this because He established the plan of redemption before creation was initiated. Certainly, He knew that this would happen beforehand.<sup>48</sup>

3:7-8,

7: “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. 8: They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

7-8: They now experienced the consequences of their choice. They now had knowledge of what was good and what was evil in their own heart. Their response when they saw each

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<sup>47</sup> Sadly, over the decades of studying and teaching, I have discovered that the majority of so called “Christians” would rather believe and cling to lies they have been taught than believe God’s truth. This may sound terrible and cynical, but it is a fact I cannot ignore. This early account proves the point as the people displayed therein represent the entire human race, including those who propose they have a “close fellowship with God” like the couple pictured in Genesis three.

<sup>48</sup> Review the excursus on pages 28-31.

other was to make an apron and cover up their “loins” because they saw each other’s “nakedness.” Could the modern term “cover-up” be derived from this picture?<sup>49</sup> This act pictures embarrassment and shame because they knew they had ignored God, disobeyed Him and now fear has entered their hearts as they anticipate His response.<sup>50</sup> This is seen in verse eight where they hid themselves from God.

This is a contemporary behavior in all its aspects. The human race, let alone God’s own people have yet to grasp this lesson. Properly understood and responded to, this fear can act as a stimulus to restore one’s relationship with God. But one must believe in God and His Word, confess one’s sins and ask for mercy. As Psalm 111:10 says,

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*; His praise endures forever.”<sup>51</sup>

And Proverbs 1:7,

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 9:10 says,

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

So, as they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the evening, they hid themselves from Him within the trees of the garden. Now we are back to “the LORD God” as God seeks a personal encounter with those He has made in His image. Now, the “image” is that of people shutting themselves away from God, not wanting Him around...preferring their own ideas and ways to His. Yet, the tree of life is right in front of them. They still refuse its fruit. Same today.

In my opinion, the primary motive for the behavior of the majority of people on the planet is fear – not “fear of the Lord” but fear because they do not have the Lord, or real faith in the Lord - or hope or life. This includes even “Christians” who seem more eager to believe lies than the truth and then wonder why their lives are filled with such discontent, frustration and discouragement. Usually, this fear is about the possibility of losing something or not gaining something due to the emptiness they have or fear. For the man and woman in this story, it appears to be both.

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<sup>49</sup> A Wikipedia definition is: “A **cover-up** is an attempt, whether successful or not, to **conceal** evidence of wrongdoing, error, incompetence or other embarrassing information.”

<sup>50</sup> Perhaps the “nakedness” could picture of them seeing each other’s evil heart and motives. Now we see the encroachment of spiritual death as they have shut themselves off from God.

<sup>51</sup> The italicized words “*His commandments*” are supplied by the NASB. Literally it is basically, “...a good understanding have all those who accomplish, (practice or achieve) it.” Speaking of either the “fear of the Lord” or “wisdom.” Perhaps both.

3: 9-11:

9: Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10: He said, 'I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so, I hid myself.' 11: And He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?'

9: "Where are you?" Of course, God knew exactly where they (we) are and what they (we) had done. He knew it before the creation was formed. The question shows that God seeks after man. And the question also forces the couple to tell why they were hiding. They were "afraid." "Fear", the emotion that reveals itself in a multitude of ways, among those the most problematic, "self-centeredness."<sup>52</sup> Then anger, blame, frustration, down to disappointment, discouragement, depression, and death.

10: There was a sense of shame and when the Lord drew near guilt and shame were the emotions. The desire to hide to avoid the gaze of God is immense.

11: "Who told you that you were naked?" This question is "Why are you thinking that being naked is something to be ashamed of? Then, "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" As we reflect on the future from this passage and realize it was during the time after the law of Moses was given, we might see a reflection of that which is to come here. God's Word is "law." A violation of it and disobedience to it results in death.

Paul said it clearly in Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." "Sin" is defined as a violation of the law. In I Corinthians 15:56, Paul writes, "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law..." In Romans 4:15 he says, for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation." But to clarify, in Romans 5:12-13 he states,

12: "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— 13: for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law."

John, in I John 3:4 notes, "Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness" (*violation of the law*).<sup>53</sup>

Having eaten from the tree they now had personal knowledge and experience of good and evil. The image of "nakedness" shows this to have been accomplished and that all is revealed. We can confidently say that surely people are foolish to assume they can elude His notice.<sup>54</sup> We now begin to see the spiritual core of the story.

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<sup>52</sup> Please see my work entitled, "Self-centeredness the Problem with Everything and Everyone" on my website; [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org) under studies, topical.

<sup>53</sup> The KJV, NLT, and GNB

<sup>54</sup> Note Psalm 139

In Luke 2:34-35 we have Mary and Joseph bringing the infant Jesus to the temple to accomplish the requirements of the law and they are stopped by an old prophet named Simeon and we read,

34: “And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this *Child* is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed— 35: and a sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

Luke 12:1-3 reads,

1: “Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another, He began saying to His disciples first *of all*, ‘Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2: But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.’ 3: ‘Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops.’”

I have on occasion used the illustration of our ears becoming loudspeakers and our eyes projectors of every ungodly thing we have ever said, thought or done being projected in full color and sound for the world to view. Would you like that? How many would want to run for cover in a garden?

So, God asked the man, “Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” “Commanded” is “tsavah” – to order, lay charge. This is a different word used for the ten commandments. That word is: “mitzvah” meaning “an order of precepts or laws. We are familiar with the terms “bar-Mitsvah” or “bat-mitsvah” – son of the law, or daughter of the law.

Yet the accusation was levied. When confronted, a sinful man has choices once again. 1. Fall on his knees and confess and ask for forgiveness and mercy promising to repent and obey, or 2. Defend oneself with excuse and blame someone else. The man chose the latter as did the woman. We see here sinful man before a Holy God. Without Christ, this is the reaction all will feel when they stand before Him. All the excuses and blaming will be silenced.

3:12-13,

12: “The man said, ‘The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.’ 13: “Then the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ “And the woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”

12-13: The man did not directly admit to the transgression but pointed at the woman and blamed her and God who gave her to him as the cause of his eating. The “LORD God” then addressed the woman and pointed at her with accusation. Her response, blame the serpent.

“He deceived me” she claimed. How? Did she not know the truth and command of God? Yes, she did. So, the so called “deception” was due to her own choice to believe a lie rather than God. Hmmm. Still going on today. Notice that verse 13 is the last time a person sought after or addressed God. However, God continues to seek out and speak to them.

3:14-19,

14: “The LORD God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;

15: And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.’

16: “To the woman He said”, ‘I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you.’

17: “Then to Adam He said”, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

18: Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field;

19: By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”

Note: Verses 14-19 are in Hebrew poetic form. In other words, this section is poetry, and that tells us to look at the intent and message within, and not interpret this literally. This helps us understand the metaphoric character of the entire story.

14: God’s judgment begins with the serpent, not the man or woman. Liars and deceivers are to be cursed. Here, we find that the “serpent” is apparently upright, perhaps picturing an exaltation above man.<sup>55</sup> The judgment is that he is now grounded, destined to eat dust. One in the study group noted that in this portrait, Satan confronts man. But afterward he is in the dust – the shadows. As we see this as a universal condition picturing the creation and its inhabitants, the spiritual essence becomes more apparent as does the condition of the creation itself. Notice that the serpent is not killed or prohibited from continuing to lie.<sup>56</sup> He is diminished but not destroyed. God still has a use for him.

15: This is a promise. Though there will be a continuing conflict between the serpent and mankind, and both will be injured, the serpent will ultimately be defeated. Often this scene is looked upon as ultimately fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ who called Himself

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<sup>55</sup> The “cobra” image of Uraeus (see page 54) might have relevance as it is one of the few snakes in the world that threaten attack by being upright.

<sup>56</sup> See once again John 8:43-45

the son of man (adam). The serpent (Satan) bruised Him, but Jesus is victorious in the conflict. In Luke 10 Jesus sends out seventy disciples in pairs ahead of His arrival in villages to prepare them for His coming. In Luke 10:17-20 we read,

17: The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18: And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. 19: "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you. 20: "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

Paul writes to the church in Rome,

19: "For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. 20: The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you." (16:19-20)

But then in I Corinthians 5:5, Paul says of one in the church committing adultery with his stepmother,

*"I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."*

And in his first epistle to Timothy, 1:18-20 he writes this,

18: "This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my son*, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, 19: keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. 20: Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme."

We should come to understand these things about who we are in Christ, the power and victory over Satan and his schemes as well as being on guard against the lies and deceptions that attack us. As Paul says in Ephesians 6:14-18,

**"Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, 15: and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; 16: in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*. 17: And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18: With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints..."** Ephesians 6:14-18

After the Genesis three event, Satan is elevated to the “ruler of this world,”<sup>57</sup> the prince of the power of the air.” He is not elevated by God or self-elevated, but man exchanged his own dominion giving it to Satan when they obeyed him. Paul wrote,

“Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone *as* slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?” Romans 6:16.

So, mankind goes from having dominion given to him by God to being slaves to the devil.

16: The Lord God addresses the woman, (still in poetic form) and we find that disobedience to God and alienation from Him results in a disruption of all human relationships. First, bearing and raising children. Initially, all this was blessed by God and found to be very good (1:28-31). Now the consequence of her choices and actions are that she will experience pain and sorrow in bearing and raising children.<sup>58</sup> This is repeated twice in this verse emphasizing the difficulty this procedure and responsibility will be.

Yet, she will have the desire, (the longing) for her husband’s caresses and will succumb to his presence and power for this reason. Now, rather than being equal in role and authority, she will be under his power and rule. The word “rule” here is “mashal” and means “have authority over,” “be in charge of,” “be responsible for,” and “be a shepherd” to her. This is not the same word translated “rule” as to have dominion and subdue another, such as in 1:26-28 where God gives “rule over” all creation and “subdue it” to the couple, or “reign like a king” or “conquer”, “lord it over” and such as the English word “rule” is used to translate many different Hebrew terms. However, men have subjugated and demeaned women since the beginning. Some religious groups, including “Christian” institutions also use this phrase (in English) to teach that men should treat their wives as a lesser and second-class person to be “lorded over.’

Both the spiritual and natural existence of humanity is damaged and degraded when separated from the creator. So, after disregarding the word and truth of God, and then doing that which he prohibited, they suffer the consequences of their choices and the actions prompted by their choices. Their choices were; 1. To choose to listen to the serpent’s speech and believe it rather than God. 2. They acted on this belief and acted in total disobedience to God. 3. Then, recognizing their sin and gaining knowledge of good and evil, they chose to run and hide from the presence of God. Something impossible to do. 4. Chose not to admit responsibility and confess their guilt asking for mercy, forgiveness and restoration, but instead chose to blame God, the woman and the serpent.

Sounds hmmm...familiar in our world. To recall, the narrative so far is a portrait of not

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<sup>57</sup> John 12:31; 16:11. Ephesians 2:1-2.

<sup>58</sup> “etseb” translated “pain” in the NASB can also be translated “sorrow” as in Young’s Literal Translation and the KJV and MKJV.

just a happening long ago, but one of all mankind to this day and beyond. It is our story. The only hope for us is the gift God gave to the world, His son Jesus. Who are you going to believe this time?

17-19: Addressing the man (still in poetry) God points out the disintegration in the relationship, equality, authority and roles of the man and the woman. Thus, the mess we have today in marriages, families, and gender confusion. This is simply due to man deleting God from his existence and suffering the consequences.

First, the ground is cursed “because (עֲבוֹרָה) – ‘abuhr’ - of you.” Man is the cause of the cursed ground.

Second, it will be in toil and pain that food is produced for them to eat, whereas it was provided for them without labor or cost by God (1:29; 2:9). And, although it appears that no weeds were in the garden, that provision is eliminated. Thorns and thistles will now have to be dealt with. The word “toil” here is the same word used of the “pain” or “sorrow” the woman will experience in childbirth in verse 16. For both, this word means their lives will be fraught with pain, hurt, sorrow, and grief.

Third, though the man was to “cultivate” the ground (2:15) now he would do so in great labor and sweat. Nothing like this is mentioned in 2:15. So to feed himself, this hard labor is now required until the day he dies and returns to the dust of the earth. So, we have the story of man’s exaltation to degradation and the consequences thereof by his own hand.

Yet, God promises this will not always be so. Isaiah 65:17-25 reads,

17: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind. 18: 'But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem *for* rejoicing And her people *for* gladness. 19: 'I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying. 20: 'No longer will there be in it an infant *who lives but a few* days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be *thought* accursed. 21: 'They will build houses and inhabit *them*; They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22: 'They will not build and another inhabit, They will not plant and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, *so will be* the days of My people, And My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands. 23: 'They will not labor in vain, Or bear *children* for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, And their descendants with them. 24: 'It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. 25: 'The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,' "says the LORD."

The apostle Paul wrote this to the church at Rome in 8:18-21 of Romans,

18: “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19: For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20: For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21: that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

3:20-24,

20: Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all *the* living. 21: The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. 22: Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— 23: therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. 24: So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.”

20: “Eve” – the first time this word is used of the two times in the Bible. The other is in 4:1. In the Hebrew it is “khav-vah” meaning “life” or “life-giver.” She is given this name “because” she became the mother of all the living though a first birth hasn’t happened yet.

21: Now, the first death takes place – an animal – it’s hide used to make clothes for the couple. Perhaps the first hint of a sin sacrifice that would soon occur with Abel. The coverings may be intended to be a constant reminder of their sin and shame before God. In this provision of God to commit a blood sacrifice on their behalf, perhaps we can see a picture of the final blood sacrifice God makes on behalf of mankind in the person of Jesus whose blood covers the sin of all.

They will need clothes as they are about to be cast out on their own from the garden into a world that would be ungodly.

22. Here we have the LORD God noting that “adam” (remember this is plural) has “become like **one of us**.” Here is, once again the clear statement that God is also plural. One, comprised of more than one.<sup>59</sup> Then, man also now knows “good and evil.”

It is not that God is evil, but He is aware of what this is and has full knowledge of it and its nature. The word “know” is “yada” and suggests an intimate relationship with evil. God intimately aware of evil as He experienced it in man even before creation. He knows how important it is to redeem mankind from it.

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<sup>59</sup> See the comment on this on page 32, paragraph 6.

Mankind on the other hand has now alienated himself from God and has actually committed evil. He is no longer welcome in the paradise of God in the unrepentant and self-centered state he has chosen. He has given his dominion over to Satan and is now under his lordship rather than God's by choice. Yet we see mercy from God as they are clothed and given opportunity to physically survive and consider their future.

No longer can they have access to the "tree of life" as no "flesh and blood can inherit the kingdom of God."<sup>60</sup>

23-24: Mankind is driven from the garden and the presence of God east of Eden to depend now on his own devices tilling (in bondage to) the ground ("adamah") from which he was taken. The "cherubim" the only winged creatures of God's arsenal (except the Seraphim)<sup>61</sup>- and a flaming sword<sup>62</sup> blocked access to the garden and the tree of life.

Now, all that God had provided is gone. The experience of "Eden" vanishes. As we look at this overall story, several things must be emphasized for the serious Bible student.

First and most important, we see the stark contrast between the portrait of man in fellowship with God and that which He provides and the portrait of man removing himself from God and the consequences thereof. The scenes we have read and placed ourselves into are a lesson about the choices we make and why and the consequences.

Second, this comes down to the core spiritual matter – the most important matter presented in the Bible from cover to cover. To whom do we believe, trust in and hope in? Ourselves and mankind, political and scientific demagogues? All of which history has proven over and over again to fail and cause a disintegrated and lost world? Or in God, the Creator?

Third, we must recognize that rather than spend our energies on whether the details of these accounts are literal, true, and attempt to ascertain the age of the earth, the location of the geographic descriptions or whether there really were those trees and if so where are they, and dozens of other time wasting and useless efforts over which people get into arguments, fights and even disputes and wars of hate (that I am sure was God's intention all along when He had this all written down for us) how about seeking the message God intends for us to learn from these accounts?

The Hebrew writers consistently use picturesque language to describe spiritual realities. There are thousands of examples of this in the Bible. Jesus' parables are a good example. The parable is well recognized as a picturesque story WITHIN WHICH the message and truth is supposed to be found. A vehicle, if you will, one must look inside of to find the lesson and the point. This is also true of allegories, metaphors, similes, riddles, poems, imagery, personification and anthropomorphisms and several other literary techniques used both in the Bible and by noted authors through the ages.

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<sup>60</sup> I Corinthians 15:50

<sup>61</sup> "Cherubim" are mentioned 90 times in the Old Testament, "Seraphim" twice - Isaiah 6:2 and 6:6. "Seraphim" are fiery, burning creatures with six wings only found in Isaiah's vision. "Fire" and "burning" are frequently found associated with the presence of God. Note Hebrews 1:7; 10:27; 12:18 and 12:29

<sup>62</sup> Only mentioned here in the Bible.

How foolish it would be for God's people to believe, (as literalists do) that when Jesus said "I am the vine and you are the branches" to actually demand that other Christians believe that Jesus was a woody plant that bore fruit and if you don't believe that then you are not a true Christian, but a heretic and deluded – when actually it is them. Then they spend their time writing theological books about the details of the plant and its fruit and then teach it in churches, seminaries and colleges as the real Biblical truth about what Jesus said and meant for us to learn. A dumb example you say? Maybe you should look with in this example to see its real intent. One of our study group, considering this, looked at a painting on our wall of the Napali Coast on Kauai and commented, "if you didn't know what that was a picture of one could make all sorts of conjectures about it.' Yep!

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Eighth Secret

#### The beginnings of civilization and the possible personification of the history of mankind in two people, and the consequences of those who journey without God and those who journey with Him.

Introduction: This account of Cain and Abel begs the question, “Why is this story even here?” “Couldn’t it simply read, ‘And children were born to the man and woman and ....’?” The story, like most of the first eleven chapters is a verbal transmission of tradition. Yet. God has inspired the writers to record all of it for His people to glean important truths within the narrative.

Some of the things we can grasp is that this narrative tells the beginning of civilization. In the case of Cain, doing so without God. Thus, we come upon the contrast between those who are responsive to God and those who are not.

So, as we look back on the history of mankind, we see our own world in much the same pattern. Is it possible that in this narrative we see, in Cain and Abel, the personification of the entire drama and history of the human race from beginning to end? Personification is a very popular way for the Biblical writers to illustrate a point or lesson. If not, then we do see a portrayal that becomes realized in the characteristics of all mankind from this point onward.

So, what is it about this story that God wants us to understand and see something in ourselves that relates to our spiritual life and faith in Him? Are we even close? Let’s see if we can find out!

4:1-2,

1: “Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have gotten a man child with *the help of* the LORD.” 2: Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.”

1: “Adam” “had relations with” (“yada” in the Hebrew meaning to “know” – here intimately) and she “conceived” (from the same root as we saw in 3:16 – “To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth. In pain you will bring forth children...’”)

She gave birth to “Cain” likely meaning “to gain or possess” - a play on the word Eve uses when stating “I have ‘*gotten*’ a manchild.” His name also is from the same root as “a spear”<sup>63</sup> and she credits this birth to the LORD - (“Yahweh”). The woman acknowledged that the LORD is the true giver of life.

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<sup>63</sup> Some say this could refer to Cain being a metalsmith.

2: “Abel” (habel) means “breath” or “vapor” and some commentators note signifies the vanity and purposelessness of this earthly life. For example, John Wesley notes that, “Abel signifies vanity. The name given to this son is put upon the whole race in Psalm 39:5. Every man is at his best estate vanity; Abel, vanity.”<sup>64</sup>

Psalm 39:5, "Behold, You have made my days *as* handbreadths, And my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; Surely every man at his best is a mere *breath*. Selah."<sup>65</sup>

Here, the same root used for “breath” does mean emptiness, vanity or vapor. It is also found in seventy other places translated as “vanity,” “useless,” “futility,” “emptiness,” “worthless,” “breath” and as “idols” seven times.

Using the same root word, Ecclesiastes 1:2 says, ““Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." The book is quite clear that without God everything man does is a waste of life. It gets him nowhere when all is said and done. He remains empty and without hope.

James 4:14 says,

“Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.”

Abel’s name may reflect the shortness of his life. Cain and Abel only appear in this chapter in the Old Testament. Again, this begs the question, “What is the purpose of this story?” The narrative could have simply noted that “children were born.” Perhaps keys can be found in both their names and the description of their occupations and what follows: “Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.” But the conclusion of the story of Cain and the tribes that descended from him seem more pertinent as those tribes multiplied and did not call upon the Name of the Lord and the nomads were descended from them that ultimately displayed the contrast between those of faith and those of flesh.

The Israelites were obsessed with knowing their lineage as we see in Genesis chapters 5, 10 and 11; I Chronicles 1, 2, 4, 6, 9 and 11 (and more) as well as in Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38. Both genealogies trace the lineage of Jesus back to Abraham (- not to Adam for obvious reasons as we have discussed.)

For the Israelites (later Jews)<sup>66</sup> their entire identity, authenticity of who they were, , purpose in life, and how they brought up and taught their children and more was wrapped up in their heritage. For example, those of the tribe of Levi were still priests or temple officials in the

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<sup>64</sup> John Wesley’s Note on the Bible, e-sword.net, commentaries.

<sup>65</sup> Though debated, the word “selah” seems to be a pause or place where one is to contemplate what has been said.

<sup>66</sup> The term “Jew” did not come into use until the tribe of Judah became prominent. Then it became generalized to depict all the descendants of Abraham who lived in Judah after the development of the kingdom. In Jesus’ day it had been generalized to describe the race.

time of Jesus, over a thousand years after that was established.<sup>67</sup>

This account could be the basic beginning of that lineage and identification. There is no question about that when we reach chapter 5:1.

4:3-5,

3: “So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. 4: Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5: but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.”

3-4: There is much discussion and difference between commentators on this passage. Why the different view God took of each offering? In examining the future sacrifices instituted prior to the formalization of the writing of this book, there is a clue to this question.<sup>68</sup> We must remember that the Old Testament was written by Jews for Jews so the content within will have a direct relevance and clearer message to Jewish readers right from the beginning.

Though not so instructed by God in our story, Abel’s sacrifice was that of a slain animal of his flock.<sup>69</sup> Further, it was a first born and Abel brought the “fat portions.” All of this reflects the offerings God requires in the book of Leviticus.<sup>70</sup> In Leviticus 4:31 we read,

“Then he shall remove all its fat, just as the fat was removed from the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall offer it up in smoke on the altar for a soothing aroma to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him, and he will be forgiven.”

This is a “sin” offering and though the “law” had not been formally given yet, Cain and Abel brought what would have been recognized as a sin offering. (Verse seven makes reference to “sin.”)

Then in Exodus 13:2 we read,

"Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me."

Abel’s offering reflects this later command of God. Apparently, both brothers were told to bring the first fruits of their “harvest” to the Lord. We are told Abel did so, while Cain

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<sup>67</sup> See John 1:19.

<sup>68</sup> From many texts in Genesis and subsequent books of the Pentateuch, it is clear about this matter. The key is noting the similar phrases like, “...to this day.” What “day?” The day when this was written down as a formal document. The context of these phrases tells us that the Pentateuch and the subsequent books through II Samuel were done in the time of the early kings of Judah, the majority most likely during the reign of Solomon.

<sup>69</sup> The Hebrew “Tson” is translated “flock” but includes cattle, goats and sheep.

<sup>70</sup> Chapters 6-10. Also see Exodus 29:13. This presentation is my opinion.

“brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground.”

Any Jew reading this would immediately recognize Cain’s error and Abel’s acceptance. It wasn’t the produce of the field that was the problem, it was that the produce Cain brought was not noted as being from among the first fruits of the harvest. Later, this is especially commanded by God and apparently expected here. Exodus 23:19 states,

"You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. "

For the Jew, this account would display the reality of their sin but also the gracious offer of the mercy of God from the beginning of time – an early example and understanding of the will and provision of God. Verse seven underscores this.

5: The failure to have his offering accepted made Cain angry. The word “angry” is “charah” meaning to burn or be kindled with anger.<sup>71</sup> God didn’t do things the way Cain wanted Him to. But Cain did not bring the offering God asked for either. Like his parents, there was no apology, nor humbleness, no confession or plea for mercy. Just blame. And who did he blame? His brother who had done as God required, and blame God of course. What’s new?

The New Testament comments on this story. In Hebrews 11:4 we read,

“By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.”

I John 3:11-13 says.

11: “For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; 12: not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous. 13: Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you.”

4:6,

6: “Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7: ‘If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.’”

6: Here is a wise word of grace from God for all peoples. There is no reason to take this attitude and become angry. If Cain does what is pleasing to the Lord, his countenance will be lifted up to a cheerfulness and joy. But, Cain is angry at God. And this overshadows and ignores God’s offer of mercy.

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<sup>71</sup> I wonder if we get our word for char (coal, broiled) from this root?

The word sin here is from the common root “chattah” used nearly 300 times in the Old Testament. Here it is pictured as a beast or demon stretching out to seize Cain. But he must rule over it. This suggests that Cain is already thinking of killing his brother. Cain has no response for God except anger. In fact, other than Cain’s complaint in verses 13-14, no person seeks the Lord for generations to come (4:26) and this does not come from the lineage of Cain.

4:8,

8: “Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field<sup>72</sup>, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.”

8: What did he tell his brother? Sometime later Cain joined or accompanied Abel to the pasture where Abel tended his livestock. Had Cain debated his situation in his mind and began to seethe over it? What was the cause in Cain’s mind that made him, once again, so angry that he chose to kill his brother? The Hebrew hints at a possible heated argument between them resulting in Cain murdering his brother. We already know that Cain has a volatile temper. But we are not given the thoughts of Cain that drove him to murder his brother. This first murder is especially heinous as it was of a brother and a good man (Matthew 23:35).<sup>73</sup>

4:9-14,

9: “Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ And he said, ‘I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?’ 10: “He said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground.’ 11: ‘Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.’ 12: ‘When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.’ 13: “Cain said to the LORD, ‘My punishment is too great to bear!’ 14: ‘Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.’”

9: Cain’s callous answer is both belligerent and an outright lie. Of course, we know that the LORD knew the answer from the next verse. For some reason people tend to respond in this defensive and belligerent way whenever faced with the Lord or any question He might have for them. As if it is either they don’t believe God knows all or they just want God to mind his own business – unless of course they desperately need Him. As in the garden where the

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<sup>72</sup> The countryside.

<sup>73</sup> One of our group suggested that in this account we have a portrait, perhaps even a prophetic picture of the same circumstances that brought our Lord Jesus to be murdered on the cross. A portrayal of those who desired to kill Jesus and all of us who are His. He said, "You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved." (Mark 13:13 And, "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name." Matthew 24:9

man and woman covered themselves and fled to hide after their sin, so Cain attempts to cover himself and hide the truth of his act from God. Very contemporary.

10-11: The Lord knew what Cain had done and that he had buried his brother. The blood of Abel is portrayed as crying from the ground, the earth, which is also portrayed as opening her mouth to receive his brother's blood from Cain's hand.

Again, we see personification as the technique to present this horror. The "earth" is "adamah" from which came "adam" and the word is a feminine noun thus it could be "her mouth." The picture is sobering and disturbing.

Over a thousand years later, the writer of Hebrews refers to the blood of Abel as he writes to us in 12:22-24,

"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel."

The blood of Abel in Genesis cried out revealing the sin of Cain and called for judgment. The blood of Christ birthed the New Covenant speaking of the forgiveness of sin and the invitation to life making perfect all who respond to the invitation.

Cain was given the opportunity to "do well" and exercise self-control but failed and murdered his brother. Cain's failure to acknowledge his sin and humble himself before God results in the ground itself cursing Cain because of himself. Just as the ground was cursed because of his father's sin.

12: As a result, God told Cain that the ground he cultivates will barely produce, and he (his descendants) will become "vagrants and wanderers" on the earth. "Vagrants" is from the Hebrew root "nua" and means to "shake" or be unstable or unsettled. "Wanderers" is a form of the same root ("nud") and means the same except with the addition of the idea of "mourning." The Septuagint renders this στενων και τρεμων εση, "...you shall be groaning and trembling upon the earth." Could the Bedouin nomads be descendants of Cain? Their history goes back thousands of years.

13-14: The penalty for murder under the Law was death. What is Cain's response in being given a chance to live and continue on? Well, among the possibilities could be confession, regret, repentance, sorrow over what he did and gratitude to God by giving him an opportunity, once again, to get it right.

But what is found is self-pity, whining, pleading, complaining, accusing, blaming (God of course) - but no sense of responsibility as he complains that God has "driven him from the ground" when, after all, he has done this to himself and is fully responsible.

He understands that he will be, “a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth” and that there is nothing he can do about this because God said it, period.

He also says that he will be no longer able to converse with God. God never said this. Then, where did he come up with, “I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me?” Interesting, but don’t tell the literalists that this statement reveals the existence of other people on the earth. Even cities perhaps.<sup>74</sup>

The other thing that is so common among us humans is attributing words to God He never said. Not just words, but attributes he never possesses, actions he does or does not have any responsibility for and so on.

However, it looks like Cain feared that there would be others finding out he is a murderer or that other children of Adam and Eve and would know and vengeance would be exercised. We know that the story continues with more children from his parents (5:4). 4:15 talks about those “finding” him.

4:15-16,

15: “So the LORD said to him, ‘Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.’ And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.’ 16: Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

15: In the midst of Cain’s pitiful condition, God provides mercy for him. Yet there is an odd contradiction in the next two phrases. First, his life is not protected from someone who slays him, but whoever slays him (or his descendants), God will avenge totally, thoroughly and completely – the meaning of seven times seven or “sevenfold.”

Then second, God “appoints” a “sign” or “mark” to prevent anyone finding him from slaying him. This sign or mark is nowhere defined. It may or may not be a sign or mark on his flesh. Most commentators, including myself, do not think it is a sign or mark on his flesh anymore than the “mark of the beast” is one. The word “appoint” does not lend itself to this idea. It is more like God establishes something about him that warns and wards people off.

16-17: The legitimate question asked of those literalists - and in the face of those who insist that the story is of two people only and their offspring is, “Well then, where did Cain get his wife?” The answers are always absurd and defensive and involve convoluted nonsense (including incest) so that their point of view will not be challenged or changed by the facts or the truth. We saw the techniques from chapter one onwards of the plurality of mankind as God created “him” and the personifications that tell our story. 5:2 will bear this out.

Cain leaving the presence of the Lord is a message in itself for all mankind. He settles in the

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<sup>74</sup> Jamieson-Fausset-Brown agree. See their commentary, on this verse. Others agree also.

land of “Nod” in the East of Eden. Banished. “Nod” is a place of grief and wandering, lostness and futility. Life without God. A life of purposelessness, darkness and trembling, with “self” as the only consolation. Just like today.

The verse could read, “Then WE went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Our lives came to and end in a land of wandering - without purpose, unstable, without hope, empty, futile and lost.”

“East of Eden” is a place of desolation where mankind must survive, not by the gracious provision of God, but by the hard labor and sweat of their brow. Geographically, it is thought to reflect the desert regions of the mid-east, typical of this environment.

4:17-21,

17: Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son. 18: Now to Enoch was born Irad, and Irad became the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael became the father of Methushael, and Methushael became the father of Lamech. 19: Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah. 20: Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and *have* livestock. 21: His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.

### **The Ninth Secret - The Purpose of Genealogies**

Here, once again we must remember that these genealogies are for the purpose of establishing one’s identity and the nature of their lineage. As we shall see, there are characteristics of the descendants of these patriarchs that have significance. The peoples of the Bible had a firm tradition called “the solidarity of the family line.” Later generations identified themselves with their ancestors in a close way even using the pronoun “we” as inclusive of all who had gone before as if they were all current family. We do not do this like that in the west these days. But genealogists tend to see their heritage as a lineage with characteristics that effect themselves today. We are now familiar with the idea of genetics from our ancestors affecting our looks, body shapes, size, color, nature, personality, health and much more. The people of the Bible also saw it as guiding their lives, occupations, spiritual life and destiny, family traditions, diet, and about everything they were and did.

For example, at Passover the contemporary Jewish patriarch will say, “When we were in Egypt, the Lord brought us out with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.” Well, of course these folks today were not in Egypt. But those in Egypt are family. In Hebrews 7:5-10 we have a revealing passage:

5: “And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. 6: But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises. 7: But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. 8: In this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. 9: And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, 10: for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.”

Levi was not born until about a hundred years after the death of Abraham. But he is credited with this act because he was a direct descendant of Abraham, his great, great, grandson.

In Exodus 20:5, Numbers 14:18, and Deuteronomy 5:9 we read that God will visit, “the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me...” Ezekiel, chapter 18 reverses this judgment.

So, when we read these genealogies, we ought to also read the history of the entire family lineage throughout the ages, past, present and future.

17: Cain’s wife’s name is not given. The word “wife” and the word “woman” are the same in Hebrew, “ishshah.” Enoch was born and Cain built a “city”<sup>75</sup> (or “settlement”) and named it after his first-born son. The Hebrew root for the name of “Enoch” is uncertain and the choice is one of two or three possible roots all with different meanings. Among them is “Teacher, initiator, mouth, dedicated, narrow, discipline, to strangle, begin, train up - and there is no support as to the best root to build a comment upon.

18-20: Here we have a genealogy tracing the line of Cain. The names parallel the line of Seth but are slightly different. Here we have:

In Cain’s line:

Enoch, Irad, Mehujael, Methushael, Lamech, Jabel and Jubal.<sup>76</sup>

In Seth’s line are:

Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah.

“Irad” may mean “one who flees” or “fugitive.” Mehujael looks to mean “smitten by God- (Elohim).” “Methushael” means “man of Elohim.” But is a distortion of “Methuselah” in Seth’s lineage. One can see this in the Hebrew as Methushael is מְתוּשָׁאֵל and Methuselah is

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<sup>75</sup> The word “city” is misleading here. More like a settlement.

<sup>76</sup> After these seven names, and the two sons of Lamech and their descriptions, there is no further record of Cain’s descendants. The number seven symbolizes “completion” or “finished” and this might apply to the line of Cain. The portrait shows the corruption of a family lineage devoid of God.

מתושלח meaning “man of weapons.” Lamech is the same in both lineages but the name derivation is unknown. “Jabel” (yah-bel) may be from the root “יָבֵל” (yah-bel) “a stream of water.” His description fits his description of a nomad who “dwell in tents and herds livestock.” “Jubal,” his brother has a similar name “יֹבֵל” (yu-bal) and seems to mean “bring forth” which fits his description as a musician. Both names along with Irad and Methushael are only used in this passage in the Bible. The names Enoch and Lamech are frequently used, but only in reference to the men in Seth’s lineage as we shall see.

22-24:

22: As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. 23: Lamech said to his wives, ‘Adah and Zillah, Listen to my voice, You wives of Lamech, Give heed to my speech, For I have killed a man for wounding me; And a boy for striking me; 24: If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.’”

22: The meaning of “Zillah” (Lamech’s wife) is unknown, and she is not mentioned outside of this passage. The name “Tubal-cain” fits his occupation – “restorer of weapons (spear).” He is mentioned as a forger of bronze and iron. The “bronze age” began around 3,300 B.C. and the “iron age” around 1,200 B.C. Copper was the early metal smelted and formed into vessels, blades and instruments. Tin was added as an alloy around 3,000 B.C. to form bronze. Placing “Tubal-cain” in both eras is an indication that he and his descendants were blacksmiths. These “implements” could include tools for farming as well as weapons.<sup>77</sup>

Naamah’s name, (Tubal-cain’s sister) means “pleasant,” “beautiful” or “delightful.” Though she is only mentioned in this passage, the same name is given to an Ammonitess.<sup>78</sup>

23-24: These two verses are in Hebrew poetry<sup>79</sup> with parallelisms. As such, we have need to understand what is being said with a wider and introspective application.

Verse 23 repeats the address from Lamech to his wives three times. The “man” and “boy” are the same person in a parallel phrase.

What are we to understand and gain from this poem? In it Lamech tells both his wives that, in self-defense, he killed a young man who had hit him hard with something that was painful and caused a bruise. He then cites the promise God gave to his great-grandfather Cain and multiplies it seventy times. Anyone who tries to attempt vengeance upon Lamech, his sons or descendants will reap ten times more wrath than God told Cain.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> The author’s mention of Tuibal-Cain being a “forger” of copper and iron implements places the writing of this notation after the founding of the iron age. As we have said, these documents were transcribed and formalized during the time of the kings, beginning with Solomon and the erection of the temple and installation of the priesthood and scribes.

<sup>78</sup> I Kings 14:21, 31; II chronicles 12:13. This name is also used in Africa (Neema) and has the same meaning.

<sup>79</sup> The NASB Study Bible and some other publications put Hebrew poetry in a special typeset.

<sup>80</sup> Or seventy times depending on the understanding of the Hebrew.

What the motive was for this person to strike Lamech is not known. He may have well deserved it considering the ungodly and violent nature of his clan. The viciousness of Lamech and this lineage is well illustrated. This reflects Habakkuk 1:11 describing the Babylonians, "Then they will sweep through *like* the wind and pass on. But they will be held guilty, They whose strength is their god." And now, the story of this lineage comes to an end.

4:25-26,

25: "Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, *she said*, "God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.' 26: "To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then *men* began to call upon the name of the LORD."

25-26: "Relations" (again, yah-dah – to know). In 4:1 it says, "the man had relations with his wife Eve..." Here it says, Adam had relations with his "wife." In both cases the Hebrew is "Adam" and here Eve's name is not mentioned again in the Old Testament. The word "wife" and the word "woman" are the same in the Hebrew. The translation is arbitrary.

A son was born named "Seth." "Seth" means "one who is appointed" or "set in place." She named him thus because "God has appointed me another offspring..." Same word. In the author's record, she uses Elohim, not Yahweh Elohim. The estrangement is suggested here.

Little is said about Seth. His claim to fame is giving birth to "Enosh." This is not from the same root as "Enoch." In fact, it could be pronounced "en-eesh" and the meaning of this name is simply "a man" or "a frail man."

However, of vital importance is that "Seth" ("appointed") reestablishes the redemptive line to fulfill God's purpose for mankind. This is no coincidence. Seth's name suggests that his descendants will be those whom God chooses to fulfill his purpose ultimately fulfilled in Christ. And so, it came to be. So, we may have here an early picture of a fulfilling process. Abel, a shepherd, made an offering pleasing to God and in due course was killed by his brother Cain – whose line faded away. But God "appointed" a new son to Adam and Eve who became the ancestor of our Lord. For me, if this is true, we have additional evidence of the inspiration of this Book!

All this time God had reached out to man without a positive response, and man had not initiated a communication or reached out to God – ever - so far in the Bible. With Enosh this changed. The story of mankind without God and the disastrous consequences thereof may have motivated Enosh to reconsider the spiritual darkness and devastation of his world. This condition still exists and some follow Enosh's example. Most do not.

There is a message for us here today.

## CHAPTER FIVE

5:1-3,

1: “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2: He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. 3: When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of *a son* in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.” (Note 1:27)

1: We have a deliberate return to the beginning in order to establish a genealogy we discussed in chapter four. This verse is the introduction to what follows culminating with the birth of Seth. “Generations” is to be understood as “the record of births” or “genealogy.” As we have seen, “adam” is used throughout but defined arbitrarily as either “Adam” or as “man” depending on the choice of the translators.

2: Fortunately for us, we have here, even in the English translation the revealing that “adam” is indeed plural and includes both “male” and “female” and that this is a technique to portray the history of mankind in or out of a relationship with God.

3. In this chapter, we see and the notations of ages to each person in the genealogy. This has caused some people to add these ages up and calculate the time of creation. To be sarcastic, I am absolutely sure that this is the reason God put these in so that in our time people could argue, fight, and accuse others who are not so sure about this. They are often labeled unbelievers, ungodly, heathens, and heretics if they believe that the universe, or at least the earth is less than 10,000 years old, i.e., created in 4004 B.C. according to Bishop Ussher.<sup>81</sup> Of course, Bishop Ussher is a far superior authority than the Biblical writers themselves as well as superior to all the science that has proven differently. I know a man who is so adamant about the “young earth” he condemns anyone who disagrees with this, believer or not. Perhaps God should move over. Could whatever God intends to convey here not be for the purpose of causing all this conflict and ridicule from the scientific community?<sup>82</sup>

My view is that God does not look like this  
God is not a joker - in that He created the universe  
a few thousand years ago but made it so the evidence  
appears millions of years old and is totally misleading  
us as to just screw with us and cause conflict and  
confusion.



<sup>81</sup> James Ussher (1581-1656), Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of All Ireland, and Vice-Chancellor of Trinity College in Dublin.

<sup>82</sup> There is not one single word in the entire Bible referring to the “age of the earthy” or any importance attached thereto or how important it is or that if one does not believe as these people do, you will be condemned. Not one mention at all about this. Perhaps there is another reason for the inclusions of these ages.

There is another view of the purpose of these ages in the appendix under the title, “The Super Oldies of Genesis 5.” It will be worth your review.

In verses 4-23, we have a genealogy - the point being to lead us to Noah and then to Abraham who were responsive to and believed in God - obeying His word. And, as we have said, this gives all the descendants a link to God through their ancestors.

The ages of the patriarchs are often used to date the creation of the universe, or at least that of Adam. I propose that this is not what the narrative is about and, is a false way to determine these things due to the nature of ancient far and near eastern literary techniques to express a message, the nature of which is seldom known (or cared about) in the western world.

However, there are some scholars who do realize that the genealogy in this chapter may be expressing some other matters than the age of the earth. The age of the earth is not mentioned as all in the Bible, nor does it have any importance to the writers. So, the question is, what is important about this chapter and the ages of the patriarchs? For this, once again, please see the document in the appendix entitled, “The Super Oldies of Genesis 5.”

Did these patriarchs really live that long? Regardless, one of the things we do know is that the Hebrews attributed symbolic images to their numbers and to the combination of those numbers. For example, most agree that the number 6 is often used to symbolize man. 666 then becomes “the number of a man” (Revelation 13:18) The number 666 is used in other places also. The number 7 is that of completion as in the Genesis creation account and is the number of the “Sabbath” (Seventh Day Rest) also from Genesis 1. Eight looks to be the number of purification. Nine the number of gestation and ten often relates to the commandments or the righteous and judgment of God, and twelve is the number for Israel after the 12 tribes. For example, we have in Revelation 14:1, 144,000, a multiple of 12. The number 40 and its multiples are used to mean “as long as it took for this period to come to and end.” And so on. The ages below may simply be symbols referring to the character or importance of the person so described. The lengthy years were used by many in the ancient Mideast to express the importance of the person described. Birthdates and death dates are not given in the Bible, but we spend years trying to find out when these occurred for people in it. Even Jesus’ birthdate is not given, yet the Roman Catholic church sets it on December 25<sup>th</sup>, while the Greek Orthodox set it on January 7<sup>th</sup>. But there is no command to celebrate it at all. We just love to do this.

4: “Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 5: So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died. 6: Seth lived one hundred and five years, and became the father of Enosh. 7: Then Seth lived eight hundred and seven years after he became the father of Enosh, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 8: So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died. 9: Enosh lived ninety years, and became the father of Kenan. 10: Then Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years after he became the father of Kenan, and he had *other* sons and

daughters. 11: So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years, and he died. 12: Kenan lived seventy years, and became the father of Mahalalel. 13: Then Kenan lived eight hundred and forty years after he became the father of Mahalalel, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 14: So all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died. 15: Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Jared. 16: Then Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Jared, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 17: So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years, and he died. 18: Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and became the father of Enoch. 19: Then Jared lived eight hundred years after he became the father of Enoch, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 20: So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died. 21: Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. 22: Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 23: So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.”<sup>83</sup>

There is a frequent use of the number “40” in the multiple of 800 in this genealogy suggesting something interesting. Remove 800 hundred years designation from the ages and you get what we would call a normal age.

5:24,

24: “Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”

24: This verse is isolated due to its statement about Enoch. Enoch “walked with God” meaning he conducted his life in belief, living his life in a manner pleasing to God. The same phrase is used of Noah in Genesis 9.<sup>84</sup>

As to the remainder of the verse, translators scratch their heads to try to grasp the meaning of what transpired between Enoch and God. In this passage in Genesis 5, neither the original Hebrew nor Greek (LXX) gives any help. The Hebrew suggests he came to nothing and was carried away by God, and the LXX suggests a “new placement.”

It seems that Enoch just disappeared one day, and that God placed or took him somewhere else.

In Hebrews 11:5 we read, “By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up, he was pleasing to God.”

This statement about Enoch is often compared to the event in II Kings 2:1-14 where Elijah was taken up in a chariot of fire by the Lord. But in II Chronicles 21:12, some years later, a

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<sup>83</sup> See the Appendix for a more detailed study of genealogies – “The super oldies of Genesis five.”

<sup>84</sup> These are the only two places in the Bible where this phrase is used. Two men, Enoch and Noah.

letter by Elijah was written to Jehoram, king of Judah condemning his leadership and life. This has caused consternation for many commentators.

One of our group proposes to consider that Enoch's "taking up" and putting him in a "new placement" might not refer to a place at all but a new placement in time. Since God is outside of time and sees the end from the beginning, we find Jude 1:14 quoting the Book of Enoch regarding the end time judgment of God upon the earth.<sup>85</sup> Perhaps Enoch appears again as one of the two witnesses discussed in Revelation 11:1-11.

In Acts 8:39 after Phillip ministered to the Ethiopian Eunuch, we read, "When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities, until he came to Caesarea."

I just leave this to the Lord.

5:25-32,

25: "Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and became the father of Lamech. 26: Then Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years after he became the father of Lamech, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 27: So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died. 28: Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. 29: Now he called his name Noah, saying, "This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands *arising* from the ground which the LORD has cursed." 30: Then Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 31: So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died. 32: Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth."

25-32: These ages are again subject to the comments above. The obvious point as this genealogy ends is to bring us to the birth of Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. We then begin a new narrative/prologue leading to the judgment of God on mankind and the rescue of His chosen from the flood in Noah and his immediate family. Basically, we are given an interlude between 5:32 and 6:9 explaining the cause for God's decision to eradicate mankind from the earth. The actual story of Noah continues at 6:9.

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<sup>85</sup> The Book of Enoch is a pre-Christian writing from around 300-200 B.C. It is an apocryphal book of 108 chapters as well as apocalyptic. Part of the pseudepigrapha it was not recognized as canonical either by the Jews or the church. However, it had a great influence on the early Jewish community well into the first century and was preserved. It's first chapters speak a great deal about the "sons of God" in Genesis 6 and Jude quotes from it and II Peter refers to it as well as the book called 'The Assumption of Moses.' This does not mean that these writers thought these books were inspired, but like other New Testament people, such as Paul and even Jesus, quotations from extra-biblical sources were employed to illustrate a point or lesson.

## CHAPTER SIX

6:1-3,

1: “Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2: that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. 3: Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”

1-2: This description through verse 10 reverts back to a period of time prior to the decision of God to bring the flood upon the earth and assign Noah to build the Ark. The motivation to bring the flood was due to the irreversible corruption and wickedness of mankind - with the exception of Noah. For redemption plan to be fulfilled, there had to be a continued line of people to Abraham. Noah becomes that line.

A great deal of speculation surrounds these “sons of God” - (“Elohim”). They married the “daughters of men” (“Adam”). Keil & Delitzsch spend a great deal of time debunking all the contrivances people have come up with.<sup>86</sup>

These sons of Elohim may well be outside the men God chooses for His redemptive line. Normally, if God is addressing or describing His redemptive line, the word Yahweh” is used (LORD) in the English as it is in subsequent verses 5-8.

Further, though the focus is most often on these “sons of God” perhaps we should look more closely at “the daughters of men.” In these ancient times, it was often that women were mentioned as the cause of the spiritual decay of the people God was working with.<sup>87</sup> It is immediately after this that we have verse 3.

3: Whatever took place as a result of the “sons of Elohim” and the “daughters of Adam” prompted the LORD (Yahweh) to comment that His “Spirit would not strive with man (Adam) forever.” A difficult phrase to translate. That is His “breath of life” (ruach) will not “rule within,” “attempt to guide,” “draw him to God” or even “remain” with mankind forever. It could even suggest that the air available to breathe (supplied by God) will be removed. The These “sons of Elohim” took wives, and the civilization began to deteriorate into corruption, ungodliness and wickedness.

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<sup>86</sup> All the ideas about this passage may be found in Keil & Delitzsch’s Commentary on the Old Testament, e-Sword on line. A full study on the “Sons of God and the “Nephilim” and this passage can be found in the appendix as well as online at:

[www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org).

<sup>87</sup> See for example, besides Eve, in Genesis, chapter 19 where Lot’s daughters had children by their father and both subsequent tribes, Moab and Ammon stood as the enemies of Israel for all time. Also, see: Genesis 39; Numbers 25:1-9; Judges 16 (Delilah).

6:4-8,

4: “The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore *children* to them. Those were the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown. 5: Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6: The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7: The LORD said, ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.’ 8: But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.”

4: Though an awkward sentence, the theme is repeated but the author deems it important to place the Nephilim in the description. As much as has been speculated about the “Nephilim,” this work only appears in two places in the Bible. Here and in Numbers 13:33 where it says, “There also we saw the Nephilim [the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim]; and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.” This is the negative report of the spies sent in by Moses to examine the “promised land.” In the midst of the sentence, the author puts in an editorial comment; (‘the sons of Anak are part of (or from) the Nephilim’). With the sentence noting that the “Nephilim” were on the earth in those days and afterwards and that the sons of Anak (a Canaanite) are from the “Nephilim” it is difficult not to conclude that this race survived the flood since Numbers was written a long time after.<sup>88</sup> In verse 4, however, the intent is that the Nephilim were on the earth both before and after the sons of God came into the daughters of men and bore children to them.

A few comments from the study mentioned in the footnote above. Verse 4 of Genesis, chapter 6 is both awkward and can be confusing due to the way it is phrased. First, let’s determine that these Nephilim were **not** the offspring of, “...the sons of God and the daughters of men.” These were simply formidable men.

The “sons of God” were also “men” and likely not of the redemptive line as they are “sons of Elohim” not “Adam.” “Yahweh” would be the term used if God has a relationship with them. There is no indication, despite what some commentators put forth that these were some sort of angelic beings. In Matthew 22:29-30 and Luke 20:33-44us makes it clear that angelic beings can neither marry nor procreate.

Apparently, the daughters of “Adam” and the “sons of God” did not conduct themselves in a manner pleasing to God. Though they bore children who became men of “old” and “men of renown” it is after this and the mention of the Nephilim that God decides to obliterate mankind from the earth.

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<sup>88</sup> For a thorough study of this passage, please see my work: “The Sons of God and the Nephilim” in the appendix as well as on my website, [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org). topical studies.

5: The Lord saw that the “wickedness” (‘rah-ah’ – evil) “...of man (adam) was great on the earth (eh-retz), and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil (‘rah’) continually (kol–yom) every day.” This comes immediately after the description of human activity and gives us the motive for God’s next move.

6: Human emotions are now attributed to the Lord, and the phrase “He was sorry” (regretted) He had made man on the earth (eh-retz). He was “grieved” (aht-sahb) in his “heart” (lev).

Obviously, as is so very common, it is impossible to describe a spiritual reality and so anthropomorphisms like this are common. God is a spirit. He does not have a heart, hands, arms, eyes, ears and so on. Biblical writers find it necessary to give human attributes to God so we can identify with Him and understand the cause of the great flood.

7: This tells us that God would not allow His plan to bring redemption to mankind through the giving of His son to the world to be derailed. All through the Old Testament and into the New, people have set out to distort God’s Word, His will, and derail the coming of Jesus and His redemptive work for the world. Once that was accomplished by the power of God, there was no need to destroy the world and begin again. Now, the weight of choosing life or death lies with mankind to this day. “He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.” I John 5:12

This verse expresses what God may have felt, but it is not quite in agreement with what follows as creatures were preserved including birds.

8: The entire narrative brings us to Noah, the direct ancestor of Abram.<sup>89</sup> And thus we have a further genealogy. The next three and a half chapters are dedicated to Noah. In chapter ten, we have another more extensive genealogy. Noah found “favor” (chen) or “grace” from the Lord (Yahweh).

6:9-13,

9: “These are *the records of* the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. 10: Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11: Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12: God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. 13: Then God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.”

9: The italicized words “*the records of*” are supplied and unnecessary. Leave them out and the sentence makes perfect sense. The meaning of the name “Noah” is uncertain, but a Babylonian root word (nuh-ku) may have been the source for the Hebrew “Noach” meaning “rest,” “repose” or “comfort.” This coincides with 5:29 where we read that Lamech,

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<sup>89</sup> See comments on verses 1-2.

“...called his name Noah, saying, ‘This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands *arising* from the ground which the LORD has cursed.’”

The description of Noah is that of being “righteous” and blameless” that is, he lived morally and honestly with integrity. The reason for this is that he “walked with God.” That is, he conducted his life with the purpose of knowing and pleasing God, and, in the view of the author, was obedient according to the Law. His great-great grandfather Enoch also walked with God and was the grandfather of Methuselah who was the father of Noah’s father, Lamech. All were of the line of Seth.

10: These three names became to source of three races, “Ham” the Hamitic or black race, “Shem” the Semitic or mid-eastern and “Japeth” the Caucasian.

11-13: We have, for the third time, the reprise of God’s decision to wipe mankind off the earth. He communicates this to Noah.

6:14-16,

14: "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. 15: "This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. 16: "You shall make a window for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.”

14: The word “ark” is “tey-bah” in the Hebrew, meaning “box” by most scholars. Keil and Delitzsch make this appropriate comment, “...the ark was built in the form not of a ship, but of a chest, with flat bottom, like a floating house, as it was not meant for sailing, but merely to float upon the water...” This word is also used in Exodus 2:1-5 translated “basket,”

1: “Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. 2: And the woman conceived and gave birth to a son; and when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months. 3: But when she could no longer hide him, she got him a papyrus *basket* and covered it with tar and pitch. Then she put the child in it and set *it* among the reeds by the bank of the Nile. 4: And his sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him. 5: Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her female attendants walking alongside the Nile; and she saw the *basket* among the reeds and sent her slave woman, and she brought it *to her*.”

This is not the same word as “ark” of the covenant. That word is “aron.” We know this word means “box” or “chest.” The dimensions are indeed of a “box” or “chest” as Exodus 25:10 tells us,

“Now they shall construct an ark of acacia wood two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high.”

This would be just over three feet long, about two feet wide and the same in height.

Both Noah's ark and the box Moses' mother put him in were covered with "Pitch" to make them waterproof. The words for pitch in each case are different and the word used for the ark only found once in the Bible and the word used for Moses' "box" only found here and in Isaiah 34:9 where it was aligned with "burning." This suggests that it was bitumen based while the "pitch" for the ark could have been plant resin based, or possibly bitumen based, as this product was well known in ancient time.

"Gopher wood" is an unknown wood source, but speculation is that it is Cypress.

15-16: The word "tey-bah" is translated "ark" in Noah's case. The dimensions here are also of a "box" shaped vessel. The measurements tell us that the ark was about four hundred feet in length, seventy feet wide and roughly forty feet tall. Though many representations of this ship have been drawn or built, not one comes close to the actual look of this ship.

Normally we see something like this built at the "Ark Encounter" in Kentucky<sup>90</sup> or a model such as pictured below.



or



Neither of these types of images are close to the real thing. In the movie "Noah" the "ark" built is much closer to the actual measurements and the possible "look" of what we have in Genesis except that the door was designated in the side of the ark, not at the end. The two following pictures are this author's approximation of the Genesis description, a scale model.



<sup>90</sup> Humorously, the "Ark Encounter" had to sue the insurance company because it leaked badly during a rain storm. Washington Post, May, 2019.

6:17-22,

17: "Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. 18: 'But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19: 'And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every *kind* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20: 'Of the birds after their kind, and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every *kind* will come to you to keep *them* alive. 21: 'As for you, take for yourself some of all food which is edible, and gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be for food for you and for them.' 22: Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did."

Note: The flood account was the transmission of "oral tradition" as there were no records kept at that time. In fact, all of the early Genesis narrative was "orally" transmitted. The tradition or legend of a great flood is found in numerous cultures from ancient times and though they differ in many respects, they are found on nearly every continent including North America, Asia (both the near and far east), South America, Europe and Oceania.<sup>91</sup>

The account in Genesis presents many problems and begs lots of questions to those who are trying to prove the literal accuracy of this event regardless of their perspective. But the point of the narrative is that the nature of mankind from the beginning of creation has been resistant to God, His word and His will. The flood is a portrait of both God's judgment on the wicked and unbelieving and of His grace on those who believe. In it we will see one of many patterns of the end times and of the redemptive plan and purpose of God for humanity.

17: God's planned action is once again confirmed to Noah (verse 13).

18: God's covenant with Noah is not revealed here. It is a promise yet to be stated and fulfilled.

19-22: The loading of the Ark is underway and completed. This always raises questions about the extent of the flood and what creatures exactly were taken onto the Ark considering that species unknown to the peoples in those days existed all over the planet. The extent of the flood debate ranges from the view that it was universal and planetary to the view that it affected only the known world in the day of the ancients, primarily Mesopotamia and the mid-east...or a partial flood over the planet.

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<sup>91</sup> Scientific American published an article entitled, "Ancient Chinese Megaflood May be Fact, Not Fiction" in their august 5, 2016 issues online by David R. Montgomery. The famous "Gilgamesh Epic" found on twelve stone carved in cuneiform in Sumeria and is very similar to the Genesis account. Apparently, someone survived in order that these accounts might be recorded.

I tend to lean toward the latter. Here is why. Allowing me to note the absurd so that the absurdity of the fundamental literalists attempt to manipulate the narrative to fit their viewpoint will be clearly noticed.

For example, the discussion over dinosaurs is always fun. One woman said that Noah gathered dinosaur eggs and hatched them later. Dinosaur eggs from all over the world apparently. These people must create “scripture” themselves to answer questions like these. Well, they had about eighty years to both build the Ark and gather, not only dinosaur eggs from all over the planet, but pairs of 900,000 insects, over 5,000 pairs of mammals, 10,000 species of reptiles, and so on, plus travel to the Arctic to gather polar bears, Australia to gather kangaroos, wallabies, koalas and all their unique species, then to Antarctica for penguins, North America for Bison, Elk, Moose, and all the rest, South America for Llamas, Alpacas and primates, and then different species of crocodiles and alligators from all over the world, millions of egg laying creatures, then to Africa for all those hundreds of species of animals and then to the top of the Himalayas for the Snow Leopard ... and need I go on with the millions of others? Ten arks, or even a hundred, maybe a thousand could not hold all of this let alone the food to feed them. Oh, they had to gather that also for all the specific creature needs from all over the entire planet and store it all.

But perhaps all these creatures climbed down from the mountains, swam across the oceans to get on the Ark? Or, like He did with Phillip in Acts, chapter 8, maybe God miraculously transported them to the Ark. How did they all get loaded in one week? Or, how did they all appear all over the world after the flood? Evolution? Heaven’s no. And then, how did they get where they are after the Ark unloaded? United Airlines? It sure would have been nice if God would have told us how Noah and three sons did all this by themselves.

But not a word. Maybe there is another point to this account. The theories and the additions by these “scholars” to the Biblical account to explain all this are more miraculous than the story itself. Could there be another explanation outside of the angry literalists who will accuse you of not being a believer or a Christian if you don’t buy into their “theology.” Yep, they do this, and I have heard it myself as have others who dare question their viewpoint or have honest questions about Biblical narratives. There is nothing anyone can do to persuade these people of a different view. Jesus couldn’t do it with the Pharisees or Sadducees, so what is the point? I have always said that we are not saved by the perfection of our theology or understanding. As I said, often the absurd must be pointed to in order to open our thoughts to the intent of the narrative, God’s redemptive plan and His promise to fulfill it in spite of human evil to derail it.

But, was there a great flood? Historical records and tales seem to confirm this along with our text. To what extent was this flood? And, what is the message we are to glean from all of this? We will continue.

One thing that becomes apparent is that this story seems to set a pattern of how God relates to mankind. In this story, mankind has become so depraved and evil that God decides to

eradicate it off the earth. In the midst of all this evil and corruption, Noah and his family are favored by the Lord due to Noah's faith and are rescued just as the flood commences. Later, in Genesis chapters 13-19 we have the situation with Abraham's nephew Lot, living in Sodom and Gomorrah with his family. God again sees the exceeding wickedness of the city and that Lot's family is suffering under the oppression. He brings Lot and his family out of the city and then just blows it to pieces. In Exodus, we see the oppression and persecution of the Israelites under Pharaoh and his order that all male children born at to be killed. So, Moses's mother builds an "ark" (a box - translated "basket" in the English), coats it with pitch inside and out and sets it onto the water where Pharaoh's daughter would find it and care for the baby. Sound familiar? Then, later when Moses is sent with Aaron to deliver the Israelites out of bondage, they are gathered into houses where the blood of an unblemished sheep or goat is splashed on the doorposts and lintel of the houses so that when the Lord comes to kill all the firstborn of Egypt, they will be "passed over." This is done, Egypt is judged, and the Israelites released and miraculously delivered from bondage to the promised land. Are we seeing a pattern yet? There are more.

As we look ahead in the New Testament, we see that at the end of this world's era ruled by Satan and his skill politicians, that again the people of God are persecuted and even executed in another exceedingly wicked and evil time. When the Lord is done with all this, He sends His son and angels to deliver His people from the earth and then just plasters the remaining population with judgment.

There are many more examples, but numerous patterns exist, and we ought not ignore them.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

7:1-5,

1: “Then the LORD said to Noah, ‘Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you *alone* I have seen *to be* righteous before Me in this time.’<sup>92</sup> 2: ‘You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; 3: also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth. 4: For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made.’ 5: Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him.”

1-3: “Righteous” is “tsaddiq” meaning “just,” “honest,” “fair” and one who does right. In this case it would include a person who attends to God and lives in a manner pleasing to God, and one who lives in obedience to the Law. Though the Law has not been given, the author sees Noah as one who would be so. “Time” is actually “the present world or generation.” So, in verse 1 The Lord tells Noah to enter the Ark with his household and take with him all the creatures designated to be rescued. This repeats 6:17-22. Where did all these creatures come from and how did they get there? That is discussed in the comments on chapter six.

Again, though the Law had not been given yet, there was the instruction to Noah to board the “clean” animals by sevens and the “unclean” by twos. How was Noah to know the difference between the clean and unclean since this had not been taught? And who gathered them and sorted them according to this command?<sup>93</sup> Of the clean animals, fourteen of each species (seven pairs) were to be on the Ark (7:2). These are also not designated. Some of these, one supposes, were to be utilized for food until provisions could be restored. Leviticus, chapter 11 and Deuteronomy, chapter 14:3-21 give a comprehensive listing of both.

4: Seven days after the Ark is loaded, the rain will come for forty days and forty nights. Seven is the number of completion and “forty” is also symbolic and could mean; “As long as it takes to complete this action” and is a key number relating to redemptive history in both testaments.

“Blot out” is “wipe out,” or “destroy” every living thing (or - all existing life) God has “made.” This is not the same as all He has “created.” This means what he has accomplished

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<sup>92</sup> II Peter 2:5 states that Noah was a “preacher of righteousness” suggesting he spoke out about the need to turn to God. And Hebrews 11:7 notes that his building of the ark was a visible demonstration of the condemnation of the world. A message to all regardless of the era.

<sup>93</sup> In my opinion, the Genesis account may have been supplemented by the later writers after this oral tradition had arrived at the desk of the scribes in the time of the early kings of Israel. The “great flood” account is so prevalent among many cultures, that framing this account of Noah’s expedition in the fashion we see today, may have been done to accommodate the obvious lineage and customs of the people descendant from Noah. This would distinguish this account from others as God is seen as the source of the entire narrative, both before, during and after the flood.

in terms of giving life to man and all creatures on the land. But fish and vegetation did not seem to be affected. The judgment is on breathing entities.

5-6: Noah was “five-hundred years old” (5:32) when he fathered Ham, Shem and Japheth. He was “six hundred years old” when the flood came (verse 6). When entering the Ark, the sons all had wives (7:12). Assuming the sons were old enough to assist in the Ark building, it would have taken about seventy to eighty years to build the Ark.

7:6-12,

6: “Now Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth.” 7: “Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood. 8: Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, 9: there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10: It came about after the seven days, that the water of the flood came upon the earth. 11: In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. 12: The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.”

6-9: A third repetition of the description of the event but with the addition of Noah’s age.

10-11: Seven days after the Ark was loaded, the rains came (reprising verse 4) Seven days is obviously the indication of all that which needed to be completed. The seventh day would be a rest day and then all the waters of the earth and the heavens burst forth.

The exact date listed here is a “backwriting” as the Hebrew calendar had not even begun to be thought of, and the Hebrew people were a long way from even being in existence.

Why this specific date? In the Hebrew sacred calendar, the second month would be the month of “Iyar” about our May. Then 17<sup>th</sup> day of this month, the waters burst upon the land, both from below and above. The exact date seems to be significant. Why? We may have a clue as the story concludes in chapter 8, verse 14. Certain specific dates, some with significance are mentioned.

12: For “forty days and forty nights” the waters come upon the earth. Again, possibly noting the symbolic fulfillment of the number forty, “as long as it took to complete the event, and again associated with the redemptive history and God’s dealing with mankind.

At this point, we have more constant repetition of the story and its details. In my opinion, there were a great many accounts of this event, and the compilers of the book included them all because each had a small addition to the story. We have at least six repetitions of the details of the same account from chapters six through eight. For example, verses 13-15 are the fourth recounting of the gathering of creatures to the ark. The prior accounts are 6:18-20,

7:1-3, and 7:7-9.

7: 13-16,

13: “On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, 14: they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds. 15: So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the ‘breath of life.’ 16: “Those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the LORD closed *it* behind him.”

13-14: The fourth repetition of the story. In each account, the Hebrew has slight variances. The compilers were sensitive not to exclude anything that might be the Word of God. For example, in 6:18-21, there is no mention of clean versus unclean creatures, nor the names of sons. There is also a command to gather food for all the people and creatures. In 7:2-3, the unclean and clean creatures are noted, but no “crawling creatures” or anything else. In 7:6-9, we have a summary, including Noah’s age, but no details. We also have the statement, “Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that crawls on the ground...” In 7:13-16 above, we have a more detailed account, but no mention of the clean versus unclean creatures. In an interesting statement we also have in verse 14, “and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds.” We also have the addition of “the breath of life” in verse 15.

The names of Noah’s three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth have no distinct meanings in themselves other than they match the major racial lines known in that region in ancient times, “Shem”, the first born, progenitor of the “Semitic” race, “Ham” progenitor of the “Hamitic” race, or the black and Egyptian Africans, and “Japheth” progenitor of the Caucasian race.

15: (“Breath of life” - “ruach chayyim”). This phrase is only found in the Hebrew here and in 6:17 and 7:22 (where it is translated “spirit of life” for some reason.) The Hebrew “ruach” tends to relate more to the physical air needed to live but is used on occasion to describe the “spiritual” element of life.

The English has “breath of life” in Genesis 2:7, but it is “neshamah chayyim.” “Neshamah” relates more to the breath of God that brings life and is used only 28 times in the Old Testament, whereas “ruach” is found 375 times and is also used to describe a multitude of emotions like “grief,” “wrath,” “sadness,” “power,” and the inner life and core of people often translated “spirit” (lower case.)

16: After all were on board, God himself closes the door to the Ark. This is a portrait of God’s protection when His judgment is about to fall on the earth. This theme is carried throughout both testaments and seen in many stories, psalms (like 18), prophecies, and teachings of the writers of the Bible and Jesus Himself.

7:17-24,

17: Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. 18: The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. 19: The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. 20: The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered.<sup>94</sup> 21: All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; 22: of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. 23: Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. 24: The water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.”

17-24: The discussion about both the depth and extent of the flood is debated by scholars of Jewish, Christian and Scientific scholars to this day. The questions and ramifications of all the thoughts are so extensive that to assume an additional thought here could be futile.

Ronald Youngblood<sup>95</sup> writes in his footnote to Genesis 6:17,

“Some believe that the deluge was worldwide, partly because of the apparently universal terms of the text – both here and elsewhere (vv. 7, 12-13; 19, 21-23; 8:21; 9:11,15). Others argue that nothing in the narrative of chaps. 6-9 prevents the flood from being understood as regional – destroying everything in its wake, but of relatively limited scope and universal only from the standpoint of Moses’s geographic knowledge. ‘Earth,’ e.g. may be defined in the more restricted sense of ‘land.’<sup>96</sup> “All flesh...under “heaven” may mean all life within the range of Noah’s perception. (See the universal language used to describe the drought and famine in the time of Joseph – 41:54.57; see also note on 41:57). Since the purpose of the floodwaters was to destroy sinful mankind (see 6:13) and since the writer possibly had in mind only the inhabitants of the ancient Near East, this flood may not have had to be worldwide to destroy them. The apostle Peter, however, seems to assume that the flood and its devastation were universal and total, except for Noah and his family. (II Peter 3:6; but see note there.)”

However, it has come to my attention that a great deal of geological evidence evidences one or more catastrophic planetary events eons ago.

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<sup>94</sup> This assumes the idea that the depth of the water was to keep the ark from running aground.

<sup>95</sup> The NASB, Zondervan Corporation, 1999, The Lockman Foundation, Genesis comments by: Ronald Youngblood (See Bibliography)

<sup>96</sup> The Hebrew word for “land” – Adamah – is found within this flood narrative as well in: 6:7; 7:4; 7:22-23; and 8:8. The word for “Earth” is “erets.”

For example, in the U.S., Arizona, California, Utah, Washington State, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Missouri, Mississippi and Colorado all have been found to have “petrified forests” as well as in Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, North Africa (especially the Sahara) Egypt, Libya, Europe, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, The Ukraine, The United Kingdom, Germany, The Czech Republic, Australia, and, in of all places, Antarctica (discovered in 2017).

In a recent BBC telecast about Africa and the Sahara, it was revealed that the largest, hottest, and driest desert in the world was once a forest with grass lands. Apparently, this is true of most of the places where these petrified forests have been found. What happened and how come these places disappeared? And does this relate to the flood stories found in many of these same places?

In Arizona, for example, the trees that once lived, and are now extinct were conifers that grew in a wet environment. Volcanic eruptions saturated the water with ash and this ash dissolved in the moisture and microscopic minerals were absorbed and sent throughout the trees through transpiration causing them to die and petrify. Ninety-one below ice volcanoes have been discovered in Antarctica with two still active. But what about the planetary climate? Many of the areas where these trees grew are now dry or desert areas.

One of the recent theories about this is that the planet underwent an orbital shift in the not-too-distant past. This is described as an adjustment of the tilt of the axis of the planet and perhaps even a slight movement in its orbit around the Sun and distance from the sun of that orbit. Any planetary shift would have caused catastrophic effects. We have ample evidence that there have been massive uplifts in the earth’s crusts. We know that much of the earth was at one time covered with seawater. Our own Colorado Plateau encompassing western Colorado and western New Mexico, half the State of Utah (diagonally N/E/ to S/W) and North Eastern Arizona with the Grand Canyon dead center in this land mass was at one time thousands of feet underwater and a cataclysmic event lifted it thousands of feet.<sup>97</sup> It has been determined that our planet’s rotation wobbles bit on its axis.<sup>98</sup> This is also a contributing factor to the climate.

This sounds something like Genesis 1:9-10 where the earth was totally covered with water and God commanded the dry land to appear. It apparently rose from the water. No matter where one goes, one can see the massive uplift of the mountains and cliffs having taken place.

Now, if the earth was considerably flatter and all this forest and grassland existed even in Antarctica, and then a planetary shift of some kind happened, could huge earthquakes have taken place, the tectonic plates moved, volcanoes erupted, and perhaps a giant flood occurring effecting much of the world along with the climate, even covering the then lower hills and

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<sup>97</sup> Even I saw evidence of this years ago when I picked up a partially buried sea shell near the south rim of the canyon.

<sup>98</sup> See: ScientificAmerican.com, orbital shift. And “Earth’s axis tilt.” Online.

mountains? There are those who insist that the Grand Canyon, for example, was carved out by the flood in Noah's time.

Combined with all the other geological cataclysms listed and the uplift of the Colorado plateau, perhaps it was affected as well to some degree. Will we ever know for sure? It is a fun study. But the Bible is not a textbook on geology any more than it is a cookbook.

One thing that stands out and may be significant is that verse 19 says, "The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered."

The words for "earth" and for "heaven" are the same used in Genesis, chapter 1. This portrait recreates the creation account of verse 2, where it says, "And the earth was a formless and desolate emptiness, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters." Afterwards, in verses 9 and 10 we read, "Then God said, 'Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land 'earth,' and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good.'" We have a nearly identical account in this story.

Then in Genesis 1:24-25, we read, 24: "Then God said, 'Let the earth produce living creatures according to their kind: livestock and crawling things and animals of the earth according to their kind'; and it was so. 25: God made the animals of the earth according to their kind, and the livestock according to their kind, and everything that crawls on the ground according to its kind; and God saw that it was good."

In the flood story, we have these comparable statements,

Genesis 6:20: "Of the birds according to their kind, and of the animals according to their kind, of every crawling thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every *kind* will come to you to keep *them* alive."

Genesis 7:14: "...they and every animal according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kind, and every crawling thing that crawls on the earth according to its kind, and every bird according to its kind, all sorts of birds."

It seems more than a coincidence that these accounts have so much in common. We see the portrait of God beginning again with a new creation. In Isaiah 65:7 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind." Isaiah 66:22, "For just as the new heavens and the new earth, Which I make, will endure before Me," declares the LORD, "So will your descendants and your name endure. II Peter 3:13, "But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." Revelation 21:1, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea."

Could the beginnings of the book of Genesis, and especially the story of Noah and the flood be reflecting in narrative and story form these geological events. The actual geological and chronological details are not relevant to the Biblical writers. As Professor Bernard F. Batto states,

"...Biblical writers were less interested in reporting historical data than in symbolizing for their contemporaries the salvational significance of their traditions."<sup>99</sup>

The redemptive history God initiated at the creation is the key focus of the scriptural writers. The Bible it is written to convey a message and our goal is first and foremost to seek the lessons and messages that are within the account.

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<sup>99</sup> Assistant professor Old Testament Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland, 1971-1975. Assistant professor religion Willamette University, Salem, Oregon, 1975-1979. Associate professor theology University Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1979-1986. From associate professor to professor religion DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana, since 1987. Quoted in the online edition of the Biblical Archaeological Society, August 15, 2021, referring to the Exodus account.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

8:1-14

1: “But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided. 2: Also, the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky was restrained; 3: and the water receded steadily from the earth, and at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased. 4: In the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. 5: The water decreased steadily until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains became visible. 6: Then it came about at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; 7: and he sent out a raven, and it flew here and there until the water was dried up from the earth. 8: Then he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water was abated from the face of the land; 9: but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him into the ark, for the water was on the surface of all the earth. Then he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark to himself. 10: So, he waited yet another seven days; and again he sent out the dove from the ark. 11: The dove came to him toward evening, and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. So, Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth. 12: Then he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove; but she did not return to him again. 13: Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first *month*, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up. 14: In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.”

1-3: The flood now begins to recede. God caused a “wind” – the same word as “Spirit” in Genesis 1:2 (“ruach”) and the image is similar. The flood remained for 150 days after the waters burst forth for forty days and nights. Though a story of judgment, we also see within the reality of God’s redeeming love for those who would believe.

4: Now we come to midst of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, (Tishri – our October) when the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat. This indicates a mountain range, not a single mountain.<sup>100</sup> This is the time of the New Year, “Rosh Hashanah”, (the new year) “The Day of Atonement” and the “Feast of Booths.” From the time of Iyar (c. May) when the waters of the flood burst forth to this time is about five months.

5-12: In the tenth month (Tebet – our January), the tops of the mountains became visible. After a time, Noah sent out a raven and later a dove that returned finding no resting place.

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<sup>100</sup> Located in north eastern Turkey and north western Mesopotamia approaching Armenia.

Yet we have been told that the mountain tops were visible. Perhaps the intent was that there were no trees yet viable. Then, later it went and returned with a fresh olive leaf. Then, released once more it did not return. So, Noah assumed the land was no longer flooded as olive trees grow in the lowlands and now Noah sees fresh sprouts.

13: In the first month, Nisan, the month of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the water had fully receded. Another “new year” memorial

14: In the second month (Iyar again – one year later) on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of the month, it was dry enough and departure was possible. All were confined in the ark for approximately a year and ten days depending on the calculation based on the Lunar calendar, not the solar we are familiar with. We are now one year and ten days since the flood began. This time of year corresponds with the Feast of Weeks (50 days after Passover) culminating in the Day of the first Fruits” (Numbers 28:26) where the first loaves from the spring harvest are given as an offering to the Lord. The Day of Pentecost also comes at this time, the birth of the church.

Whether these dates and numbers of days from 7:11 to this point have more significance remains to be seen.

8:15-19,

15: “Then God (Elohim) spoke to Noah, saying, 16: ‘Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. 17: ‘Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you, birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.’ 18: So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. 19: Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by their families from the ark.”

As suggested in the comments on pages 96-97, there is a reprise of the theme in Genesis 1:21-22,

21: “And God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind; and God saw that it was good. 22: God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’”

The departure is seen in the same orderly fashion as the entrance into the ark, by “families.”

8: 20-22,

20: “Then Noah built an altar to the LORD (Yahweh), and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21: The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, ‘I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I

will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

22: While the earth remains,  
Seedtime and harvest,  
And cold and heat,  
And summer and winter,  
And day and night Shall not cease.”

20: The first altar (high place) mentioned in the Bible. Noah built it, likely out of earth or stone or both. Even lumber from the ark might have been used. We do not know of what it was made as later, God had altars built in different ways from different materials depending on the purpose. How Noah knew to even do this and how is once again a reflection of a future practice God defines in the Law. All we can surmise is that the Lord directed Noah in this sacrifice.

There is a model here for us as we see Noah’s first act after the horror of the deluge is to honor God for His mercy and deliverance and protection of his family and lineage. That lineage will ultimately result in the supreme act of God’s redemptive plan, the birth of His son Jesus and the subsequent ultimate sacrifice on behalf of all mankind.

21-22: The “soothing” aroma. God’s wrath in judging mankind was satisfied, justified and calmed because of the faith and worship Noah exhibited. The use of anthropomorphisms (The Lord “smelled”) is a common method of describing the Lord in human terms even though we know he is not a physical person with a nose.

Verse 22 is in poetic form so the reader will remember God’s promise.

The LORD “speaking to Himself” is actually a message to the readers. All things of the earth, including the seasons, and its produce will remain without intervention of the Lord even though the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth. This is a striking statement considering that Noah was considered “righteous” in the eyes of the Lord. Yet, all mankind still had the evil intent from this day onward. Chapter nine reiterates this.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> What we seem to have in the Book of Genesis through chapter ten is a stylized narrative with an important meaning and message, but not necessarily a chronological, geographical, or geological account as the ancient Biblical writers had less interest in these things than in the message and intent of what God wished to convey to the readers. One of our study group likened the style to George Orwell’s “Animal Farm,” “...a satirical allegorical novella by George Orwell, first published in England on 17 August 1945. The book tells the story of a group of farm animals who rebel against their human farmer, hoping to create a society where the animals can be equal, free, and happy. Ultimately, the rebellion is betrayed, and the farm ends up in a state as bad as it was before, under the dictatorship of a pig named Napoleon. According to Orwell, the fable reflects events leading up to the Russian Revolution of 1917 and then on into the Stalinist era of the Soviet Union. Orwell, a democratic socialist, was a critic of Joseph Stalin and hostile to Moscow-directed Stalinism. The Soviet Union had become a totalitarian autocracy built upon a cult of personality while engaging in the practice of mass incarcerations and secret summary trials and executions.” (Wikipedia)

## CHAPTER NINE

9:1,

1: “And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

1: We have an exact duplication of the first sentence of Genesis 1:28 here, even in the Hebrew - with the addition of the phrase, “Noah and his sons...” in place of “them.”

“Genesis 1:28, ‘God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...””

### THE TENTH SECRET-A NEW BEGINNING

#### EXCURSUS- PATTERNS, IMAGES, STYLIZATION, THEMES AND THE MESSAGES.

Several things need to be made apparent. Any student of this part of the Bible and a familiarity with the overall writings both in the Old and New Testament will recognize some things becoming apparent at this point in the study.

I. We have a basic theme of how God relates to mankind beginning at Genesis, chapter one.

First, a new creation. Then provisions created and supplied for the later appearing of mankind. Giving of dominion to mankind over creation. Then mankind’s activation of free will and the development of resistance to God and His Truth and Word in favor of the manipulative efforts of evil. Then mankind’s rebellion and alienation from God and shame or anger at his sin being known and judged. Then mankind turning on himself and evil is the controlling factor, and this anger is turned into persecution of God’s faithful. All due to the turning away from God.

But all along, God reaches out in mercy and grace offering redemption. God’s plan of redemption is the key thread throughout scripture. However, man neither calls upon the Lord or accepts God’s grace and mercy. From Genesis 1:27 when man is created to the birth of Enosh in Genesis 4:26, mankind never calls out to or seeks the Lord. When mankind is about to disrupt God’s redemptive plan, God renders judgment upon the wicked and preserves those who believe in Him and trust in Him. This remnant is preserved.

Then, in due time a new creation is once again established. Noah’s story is the second one. The pattern continues. Mankind is given full authority over the earth and his own affairs without a world judgment by God. But it will come again. Apart from the next new creation, this pattern is repeated from Genesis through the Book of Revelation. Examples of this

pattern are found in the stories about: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, the lineage of Cain, the days of Noah, Sodom and Gomorrah, the Egyptian captivity and Exodus, Daniel and the Lion's den story, and more. We also have the birth, life death and resurrection of Jesus illustrating this same pattern. This is the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan and work prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and recognized in Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25; II Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8, 13; 9:15 and 12:24. And of course, this pattern is found in the prophecies of the end times both in the Old Testament and the New.

The end of the pattern is told to us by Jesus. In Matthew 24:36-42 He says,

36: "But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. 37: "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 38: "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39: and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40: "At that time there will be two *men* in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. 41: "Two *women* will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. 42: "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming."

Luke 17:26-30 records an additional comment,

26: "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so will it also be in the days of the Son of Man: 27: *people* were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, *and* they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28: "It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, *and* they were building; 29: but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30: "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed."

II Peter 2:7-10a notes another nuance,

7: "...and *if* He rescued righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the perverted conduct of unscrupulous people 8: (for by what he saw and heard *that* righteous man, while living among them, felt *his* righteous soul tormented day after day by *their* lawless deeds), 9: *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from a trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, 10: and especially those who indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt passion, and despise authority."

The third new creation is prophesied in Isaiah 65:17, 66:12-23<sup>102</sup> and carries over to II Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1-5. With these passages is the theme of judgment on the wicked and much of the rest of the pattern with God's faithful rescued and preserved.

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<sup>102</sup> See also Isaiah 42:1-17.

Throughout God's redemptive plan in the world of humanity, it perseveres and is fulfilled regardless of man's or Satan's evil attempts to overthrow or derail it.

## II. The significance of "water."

Water plays a major role in the pattern discussed above. Beginning at Genesis, 1:2-3,

2: "And the earth was a formless and desolate emptiness, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

3: "Then God said, 'Let there be light;' and there was light."

There was no land, only water. Water, from the beginning, represented cleansing and purification to Israel. It also represented deliverance and the emergence from darkness to light, from the old to the new and from death to life. In other words, there is a spiritual meaning and a divine redemptive message in many instances where water is significantly employed in the event.

This tradition is based on Genesis 1:2-3 as the water God created must have been the purest water ever and all life sprang from it and God deemed it "good."

In Jesus' day, mikvehs,<sup>103</sup> washings, baptisms, immersions, were a part of Jewish tradition and practice for well over a thousand years. Christian baptism stems from this but the meaning of Christian baptism has been distorted and changed by many denominations and churches just as has the "Lord's Supper" (or "Communion.")

In the story of Noah, water obviously plays a major role and illustrates the pattern discussed in part I. Of interest are the exact or similar statements made during this account as in Genesis 1-2. For example, in the quote from Genesis 1:2-3 above, "...the Spirit (ruach) of God was hovering over the surface of the waters..." and in 8:1 we read, "and God caused a wind (also "ruach" or "spirit") to pass over the earth, and the water subsided." Then, in both cases, dry land appeared, and God repeats His command for the creatures to "be fruitful and multiply" both in 1:22 and 8:17.

So, we have a first creation in Genesis, chapter one where land and life spring forth from water, and then a reprise with the flood featuring Noah and then a new beginning. In 9:11, God promised, "I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be eliminated by the waters of a flood, nor shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth."

But the meaning and symbol of "water" continues through to the Book of revelation, and

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<sup>103</sup> A pool built below ground level, lined with stone with steps leading into it that has fresh water dedicated to the cleansings and washings commanded by the Law. Ideally, it has running water. Often, as in the case of John the Baptist, a river or stream is used for these purposes.

beyond to the true meaning of Christian baptism.<sup>104</sup> The idea of new life springing up out of water is seen many times in the Bible, even in the birth of a child. Romans 6:4 says,

“Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.”

The next major event featuring spiritual meaning through a physical event involving water is the birth of Moses and the subsequent Exodus. In Egypt, the Israelites called out to God for deliverance from the bondage they had been placed in by Pharaoh. Out of fear of the numbers of the Israelites, He decreed that all male children of the Israelites be put to death. (Exodus 1:16) In Exodus 2:1-3 we read,

1: “Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. 2: And the woman conceived and gave birth to a son; and when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months. 3: But when she could no longer hide him, she got him a papyrus basket and covered it with tar and pitch. Then she put the child in it and set *it* among the reeds by the bank of the Nile.”

The “basket” was actually a woven box<sup>105</sup>, much like Noah’s ark, and also like Noah’s ark, covered in and out with pitch and set on the water. In 2:10 we read, “And the child grew, and she (the nursemaid) brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she named him Moses, and said, ‘Because I drew him out of the water.’”

The man God chose to redeem His people from Egypt was introduced to the world through his retrieval from a pitch covered papyrus box in the water. One might think of the future where Jesus, God’s redeemer for mankind was immersed in the Jordan and rose from it initiating His ministry of redemption.

Years later, as Moses and Aaron led the Israelites from Egypt their escape was blocked by the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s army was in hot pursuit. The people cried out, blamed Moses for getting them in this mess but we read in Exodus 14:21-29,

21: Then Moses reached out with his hand over the sea; and the LORD swept the sea “*back*” by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. 22: So the sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters *were like* a wall to them on their right and on their left. 23: Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. 24: But at the morning watch, the LORD looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. 25: He caused their

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<sup>104</sup> This subject is discussed on my website: [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org) under studies, topical.

<sup>105</sup> Hebrew – “tebah”, a box or chest.

chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians *each* said, “Let me flee from Israel, for the LORD is fighting for them against the Egyptians.” 26: Then the LORD said to Moses, “Reach out with your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.” 27: So Moses reached out with his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28: The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, Pharaoh’s entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained. 29: But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters *were like* a wall to them on their right and on their left.”

Once again, we see as with Noah, God’s deliverance through water. Oppression of God’s people, God delivering through water and that water destroying the enemy.

When Israel was about to enter Canaan under Joshua’s leadership, they faced the Jordan river from the east. Again, God caused the river to be halted so that the people could cross on dry land into the land promised to them. When all had crossed, the waters were released, and the Jordan flowed again. Deliverance through water.

In II Kings 5:1-14, Naaman, commander of the Syrian army under the king of Aram was afflicted with Leprosy. His wife’s servant was a little girl captured from the Israelites who knew of a prophet who could bring healing for Naaman. So Naaman went to Samaria to Elisha’s house. There, he was told by Elisha’s servant to go and wash in the Jordan, dipping himself in there seven times and he would be cured. Angered at this unexpected treatment claiming Syria has better rivers, he was finally persuaded by his own servants and, relenting, and did so. II Kings 5:14 says, “So he went down and dipped *himself* in the Jordan seven times, in accordance with the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.”

Could he have been cured by the Lord another way? Of course. But this account tells of the need to humble oneself at the instruction of the Lord and Naaman did so and was healed.

In the New Testament, Matthew 3:5-17 is an important picture of this meaning in the early days of Jesus life. We begin with John’s baptizing. The word “baptize” means to “dip,” “immerse,” “sink” or “submerge” and is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew “tabal” meaning to dip into. “Rachats” in the Hebrew is “to wash”, either a part of or the entire body.

5: “At that time Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan; 6: and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins. 7: But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, ‘You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8: ‘Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance; 9: and do not assume that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham *as our* father’; for I tell

you that God is able, from these stones, to raise up children for Abraham. 10: ‘And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore, every tree that does not bear good fruit is being cut down and thrown into the fire. ‘As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12: His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.’ 13: “Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan, *coming* to John to be baptized by him. 14: But John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I have *the* need to be baptized by You, and *yet* You are coming to me?’ 15: “But Jesus, answering, said to him, ‘Allow *it* at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ “Then he allowed Him. 16: After He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove *and* settling on Him, 17: and behold, a voice from the heavens said, ‘This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’”

The Jewish understanding of baptism under the Old Covenant is to be immersed as an act of cleansing. With John, it washed sin away after one confessed his or her sins as an anticipation of the coming of the Messiah who would complete this act forever and eternally. This was a new practice as sacrifice for sin was to take place at the temple and be performed by a Levitical priest.

When John says to Jesus, “I have need to be baptized by you and do you come to me?” Jesus answered, “Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” What does this mean? First, it is not necessary that Jesus be baptized for His own sake but because of the time. It is for the present occasion that it is important, as Jesus identifies Himself with the nation or people of Israel as being one with them. Plus, Jesus uses the term “we” and “fulfill all righteousness” which portrays the future when Jesus will indeed do so at the cross. He looks to the future fulfillment of the “Law of Righteousness” He will fulfill for all mankind. 12 So, Jesus is actually the personification of Israel and all God intended Israel to be (Hosea 11:1, Matthew 2:15).

His being baptized is a symbolic act, yes, but more. It has actual efficacy for those that will come to repentance and belief and will be baptized in identification with Him as He is with them. In this context, the statement that “all righteousness may be fulfilled” is understood. This expression is found nowhere else in the Gospels. This “righteousness” represented in the baptism of Jesus is a vicarious act representing the beginning of the cleansing reality Jesus is bringing to the world. A death, burial and resurrection is pictured in baptism as well as the beginning of the walk in “newness of life”. Jesus’ coming is the entrance of a complete “righteousness” not based in the works or practices of the flesh (or The Law), but in the inner workings of the Spirit on the heart of every believer. (Note: Mark 1:8; Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:29-33). In short, John’s baptism was one of repentance from sin and looking ahead, in preparation, for the One who was to come. Jesus’ baptism was the fulfillment and

completion of what John pointed ahead to and prepared others for. In Jesus, all righteousness is fulfilled. It is fulfilled on behalf of the world. The kingdom of God is entering human history in the person of Jesus.<sup>106</sup>

In Isaiah 59:14-21 we read an interesting passage that reflects all of this and ties it together,

14: “Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands far away; For truth has stumbled in the street, And uprightness cannot enter. 15: Truth is lacking, And one who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey. Now the LORD saw, And it was displeasing in His sight that there was no justice. 16: And He saw that there was no one, And was amazed that there was not one to intercede;”

“Then His own arm brought salvation to Him, And His righteousness upheld Him. 17: He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing And wrapped Himself with zeal as a cloak.<sup>107</sup> 18: According to *their* deeds, so will He repay: Wrath to His adversaries, retribution to His enemies; To the coastlands He will deal retribution. 19: So, they will fear the name of the LORD from the west And His glory from the rising of the sun, For He will come like a rushing stream Which the wind of the LORD drives.”

20: ““A Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those in Jacob who turn from wrongdoing,” “declares the LORD.” 21: ‘As for Me, this is My covenant with them,’ “says the LORD:” ‘My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring’s offspring,’ “says the LORD,” ‘from now and forever.’”

Verse 19 speaks of the Lord coming “like a rushing stream.” This is to both bring judgment and rescue as seen in the passage. In addition, we have a foretelling of a “redeemer” coming to Zion in verse 20.

Psalms 29:2-11 uses “water” to describe the “voice of the Lord” to both destroy and also to bless.

2: “Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; Worship the LORD in holy attire. 3: The voice of the LORD is on the waters; The God of glory thunders, The LORD is over many waters. 4: The voice of the LORD is powerful, The voice of the LORD is majestic. 5: The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; Yes, the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon in pieces. 6: He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And

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<sup>106</sup> Christian Baptism reflects the provisions of the New Covenant and is discussed in my article entitled, “Christian Baptism and its True Meaning” found online at: [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org) under “Studies, Topical.”

<sup>107</sup> Ephesians 6:11-17 reflects verse 17 here.

Sirion like a young wild ox. 7: The voice of the LORD divides flames of fire. 8: The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; The LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. 9: The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, ‘Glory!’ 10: The LORD sat *as King* at the flood; Yes, the LORD sits as King forever. 11: The LORD will give strength to His people; The LORD will bless His people with peace.”

Ezekiel 43:2 and Revelation 1:15 also describe the voice of the Lord as the “sound of many waters.”

A thought-provoking statement occurs in Revelation 21:1, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea.” No “sea.” What does this suggest? There is no clear answer to this question, but could it relate that there is no more need of cleansing or redemption?

### **END OF EXCURSUS**

9:2-4,

2: The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. 3: Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as *I gave* the green plant. 4: Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood.”

2: A similar statement is also found in Genesis 1:26 and the second half of Genesis 1:28, “...and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” So, man is once again given dominion over the earth. Yet, the truth remains as God noted in 8:21, “...for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth...” So, as we know and shall see, Noah’s son Canaan succumbs to evil in due time.

3: Again, a similarity to Genesis 1:29-30,

Genesis 1:29-30, 29: “Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; 30: and to every animal of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, *I have given* every green plant for food”; and it was so.”

We should be seeing the pattern of creation of the new, mankind’s rejection of God and turning to evil and inflicting this upon His faithful, God’s determination to judge those offenders, His rescuing of those who are His, and then pouring out His wrath upon the evil

and unbelieving. This pattern begins in the first chapters of Genesis and is repeated numerous times throughout the Bible all the way to Revelation 22. This includes the messages of the prophets and the entire history of Israel.

4: A somewhat awkward command as even if you drain meat as much as possible, blood still remains in it. It looks here, that the prohibition is against pagan practices who would drink the blood of animals before or after killing them. The reason is that the Israelites were not to think of drawing strength from the blood of animals as the pagans around them did because the life of the animal is “in the blood.” They were to draw their strength from the Lord only.

In Leviticus 17:10-14 we see repeated commands against this practice.

10: “And anyone from the house of Israel, or from the strangers who reside among them, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats the blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11: For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.’ 12: “Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, ‘No person among you may eat blood, nor may any stranger who resides among you eat blood.’ 13: “So when anyone from the sons of Israel, or from the strangers who reside among them, while hunting catches an animal or a bird which may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dirt. 14: “For *as for the* life of all flesh, its blood is *identified* with its life. Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, ‘You are not to eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off.’”

9:5,

5: “Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from *every* man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man.

In verse 5, we seem to have God seeking or requiring the lifeblood of all living things should the lifeblood of a person be taken by any of them. In murdering another human being, the perpetrator shows contempt for God who made man in His image<sup>108</sup> as we see in verses 6-7.

9:6-7

6: “Whoever sheds man's blood,  
By man his blood shall be shed,  
For in the image of God He made man.

7: As for you, be fruitful and multiply;  
Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it.”

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<sup>108</sup> This is true of those who engage in sexual perversion and depravity as well.

6-7: This phrase is in poetic form. This is so it will be remembered.

In verse 6, the word “whoever” is supplied, and it is better read, “Spilling the blood of a man by man that blood shall be spilled.” This is because the verse will also apply to the “beasts.” This will correspond with verse 5 much more smoothly. Referring to beasts, in Exodus 21:28-29 we have a corresponding command:

28: “Now if an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall certainly be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall go unpunished. 29: “If, however, an ox was previously in the habit of goring and its owner has been warned, yet he does not confine it and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.”

9:7-17,

8: “Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, 9: ‘Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; 10: and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. 11: I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.’ 12: “God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; 13: I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. 14: It shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow will 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 never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16: When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ 17: “And God said to Noah,” “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

8-12: “Covenant” in the Hebrew is “berith.” Promised in 6:18, we now have the actual promise. The word “berith” is used 285 times in the Old Testament. It has a colorful and profound meaning. First, it includes an intimate relationship as with a marriage.

God uses the marriage image often when speaking to Israel. For example, In Isaiah 54:5-7 we read,

5: “For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of armies; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth. 6: For the LORD has called you, ‘Like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, Even like a wife of *one’s* youth when she is rejected,’ “Says your God.” 7: ‘For a brief moment I abandoned you, But with great compassion I will gather you.’”

Malachi 2:14 reads,

“Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ ‘Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your marriage companion and your wife by covenant.’” (Berith)

Second, it is established between two parties, in this case, between God and Noah and Noah’s descendants and all the creation. [In the Bible, there are numerous “covenants.” The principal covenants are: This one with Noah; The covenant with Abram and his descendants;<sup>109</sup> The covenant at Sinai (Horeb) with Israel and their descendants;<sup>110</sup> The covenant with David and his descendants;<sup>111</sup> and the New Covenant in Christ’s blood for all mankind – fulfilling the covenant with Abraham.]<sup>112</sup>

Third, as we see in Genesis, chapter 15:9-10, the covenant God made with Abraham involved cutting an animal in half. This corresponds with the “two party” relationship. Normally and later, all of this would be validated by priests and ceremonies involving two parties walking between separated pieces, but In Abraham’s vision a fire pot and torch passed between the pieces noting that God alone would assure the covenant would be fulfilled. The word “berith” carries with it the image of cutting and a blood oath. In the sacrificial system, animals were killed, and parts were sacrificed, and the remainder eaten by the priests. The New Covenant was created in the blood of Christ. The memorial supper (communion) was a symbolic “eating” of the body of Christ represented in the bread and wine. It is to be a recognition of The New Covenant that creates the oneness of God’s family who are one in Christ. It is to be eaten with humble gratitude and mutual respect.

Fourth, as we see in this chapter, God’s covenants often involve water. Particularly when He has initiated a redemptive act on behalf of mankind as seen in part II of the excursus on pages 103-110.

13: “Bow” is “qesheth” meaning an archer’s bow. An archer’s bow is designed to kill, shed blood and the meat eaten by the family of the hunter. The “bow” God placed in the sky sustained by moisture in the air is to be a sign that His covenant with Noah and mankind would no longer be a threat of extinction. The bow, as one rabbi pointed out, is faced away from the earth.<sup>113</sup>

14-17: The rainbow created by God is the sign of a covenant to all living things upon the planet that never again shall a flood occur that will destroy them. Verses 14-15 are repeated in verses 16-17 with verse 17 a repetition of verse 13. This is for people everywhere to remember not just this promise but also God’s pattern of redemption and judgment. In the

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<sup>109</sup> Genesis 15:1-21, chapter 17.

<sup>110</sup> Exodus, chapters 19-24.

<sup>111</sup> II Samuel 7-5-16.

<sup>112</sup> Genesis 22:15-18.

<sup>113</sup> Martin Lawson as quoted in the, “Commentary on the Torah” by Richard Friedman, HarperCollins Books, 2001, page 43.

plagues of Revelation chapters 8-9 upon the earth against evil, rebellious and unrepentant people, the only thing not included is a flood. Most of the plagues have to do with fire and heat. Fortunately, His people are removed from the earth during that time.

9:18-24,

18: “Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem and Ham and Japheth; and Ham was the father of Canaan. 19: These three *were* the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated. 20: Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. 21: He drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. 22: Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. 23: But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness. 24: When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him.”

18-19: See the “Table of the Descendants of Ham, Shem and Japheth” in the appendix. Canaan, the son of Ham, is especially mentioned due to his lineage and the curse upon it that later was fulfilled when Joshua and the Israelites conquered Canaan.

20-21: After some years, a vineyard Noah planted was capable of producing grapes to be processed for wine. Noah, imbibing a bit too much on his product passed out naked in his tent (a material covered dwelling).

22: Ham, looked in his father’s tent and saw him naked. He had a choice as to what to do. It is clear from the ensuing story that there were principles in place about respect and attitude regarding one’s parents and siblings. For example, “honoring one’s father and mother” could have well been in place, especially as Noah is described as a “righteous man” in 6:9 and 7:1. Ham could have chosen to cover his father and said nothing to his brothers. To do so obviously would cast shame on their father. But that is what he chose to do. Verse 24 confirms that this was the case. Habakkuk 2:15-16 comments on this,

15: “Woe to him who makes his neighbor drink; To you who mix in your venom even to make *your neighbors* drunk, so as to look at their genitalia! 16: You will be filled with disgrace rather than honor. Drink, you yourself, and expose your *own* foreskin! The cup in the LORD’S right hand will come around to you, And utter disgrace *will come* upon your glory.”

9: 25-27:

25: So he said, ‘Cursed be Canaan;  
A servant of servants  
He shall be to his brothers.’

26: He also said,

‘Blessed be the LORD,  
The God of Shem;  
And let Canaan be his servant.  
27: ‘May God enlarge Japheth,  
And let him dwell in the tents of Shem;  
And let Canaan be his servant.’

25: And that is what happened to Ham’s lineage. The reason it was Ham’s son that was cursed and not Ham himself is because of the exposure of Noah’s genitals and thus his lineage. All of Noah’s unborn descendants are within his “loins.” Thus, it is Ham’s unborn descendants that are cursed. As Hebrews 7:9-10 points out,

9: “And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, has paid tithes,  
10: for he was still in the loins of his forefather when Melchizedek met him.”

Once again, verses 25-27 are in poetic form for remembrance.

26: Shem is first to be blessed as he is the first born.<sup>114</sup> He is also the patriarch of the “Shemites” the “Semitic race” from which sprang the Israelites and Jews. So, the “LORD, the God” (Yahweh Elohim) of Shem is to be blessed. Canaan is to be the servant of the descendants of Shem. This was fulfilled at the Canaanite conquest under Joshua and the Israelites.

27: “Elohim” is to “enlarge Japheth.” Japheth” becomes the patriarch primarily of the Caucasian race, and of the gentiles (goyim) or nations. He is to dwell in the “tents” of Shem whose God is the Lord. This is a remarkable prophecy as the Jews ultimately excluded all from a relationship with God except themselves. Yet God told Abraham in Genesis 17:5-6,

5: “No longer shall you be named Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6: I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.”

And in 22:18,

“And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

And 26:4, “I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed...”

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<sup>114</sup> Though the list of Noah’s sons is consistently Shem, Ham and Japheth, usually noting eldest to youngest, verse 24 says the Ham is the youngest. Though unimportant in the overall scheme of things, there is an inconsistency often attributed to scribal error or manuscript differences.

28: Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. 29: So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.”

28: Noah’s life span, take away the 800 years discussed in chapter 5, page 83, and we have 150 years.

## CHAPTER TEN

Genesis 10:1-7,

1: “Now these are *the records of* the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood.

Again, the added “the records of” is unnecessary.

2: The sons of **Japheth** *were* Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras.

3: The sons of Gomer *were* Ashkenaz and Riphath and Togarmah. 4: The sons of Javan *were* Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim.

5: From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.

These peoples have been identified in the territories north of the Black Sea in the Ukraine, west to Poland and even Germany and also east to Russia the territory of the Caucasus mountains between the Black and Caspian Seas. The general territory of these peoples has been proposed as the land north and east of the Mediterranean Sea including Turkey, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and west to Greece, Macedonia and Italy, essentially the Caucasian race.

6: The sons of **Ham** *were* Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. 7: The sons of Cush *were* Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah *were* Sheba and Dedan.”

The general territory of these peoples is the land east and south of Japheth. “Cush” is Ethiopia, “Mizraim” is Egypt, the rest being the Mideast and Arabia. An odd selection of races as “Cush” is “Hamitic,” and the people of Arabia and the Mideast are essentially Semitic and often a blend with Caucasian as well as Hamitic. So, these peoples of the mid and western far east are of a mixed heritage. Please note the comments on verses 10-12.

To this point, we have the nations descended from Noah and Japheth and Ham.<sup>115</sup> The descendants of Shem, though the first born, is listed later at verse 21, and is the most important for the writers.

10:8-12,

8: “Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. 9: He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod

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<sup>115</sup> Please see the table of these descendants and a map of their probable locations in the appendix.

a mighty hunter before the LORD." 10: The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11: From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah, 12: and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.”

8-9: “Cush” (Ethiopia) spawns “Nimrod.” The derivation and numerous spellings of the name in various cultures differ but indicate a man of power and possibly rebellion.<sup>116</sup> His description as a “mighty hunter before the LORD could be easily misunderstood as the word “before” could mean “in the face of” or “against” or, “in the presence of.” The word for LORD is “Yahweh” indicating a relationship. On this issue, great discussion has taken place. On the other hand, he was a descendant of Ham through Cush. Ham is also seen as the ancestor of the Canaanites whose progeny is described in verses 15-20.

10-12: We now will see a migration of peoples and many of a mixed racial ancestry of the three major races based on the sons of Noah. For example, the Ethiopians (Cush) slowly intermarried with the early Egyptian dynasties of the Pharaohs of Egypt. The first Egyptians look to be more Semitic, but as the centuries progressed, they became much more native African in appearance.

In this passage, Nimrod migrated to Mesopotamia and built the cities mentioned. Among the territories he built include all of Mesopotamia, and Assyria, northwest territories of Mesopotamia where Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah have been located.

From other sources, these early dark-skinned people also migrated north into the western portions of the Fareast as far as Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The peoples there trace their racial uniqueness to a mixed heritage of all three groups, Semitic, Hamitic and Caucasian. We will see more evidence of this as we travel along.

10:13-14,

13: “Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim  
14: and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim.

Comment: Again from verse 6, the sons of Ham – Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan all describe different peoples, Ethiopians (black), Egyptians (a blend), Put [...denotes the *Libyans* in the wider sense of the term (old Egypt. *Phet*; Copt. *Phaiat*), who were spread over Northern Africa as far as Mauritania, where even in the time of Jerome a river with the neighboring district still bore the name of *Phut*; (cf. *Bochart*, *Phal.* iv. 33.)<sup>117</sup>

“Canaan” is the patriarch of the people and country later inhabited by Abraham and his entourage. These peoples are also of mixed racial heritage.

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<sup>116</sup> For more on this, see Biblical commentaries. The work on this is too extensive for this document.

<sup>117</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*.

13-14: “Mizraim” (son of Ham – see comment above) is seen as the “father” of the peoples who inhabited the northern and south-eastern land masses surrounding Egypt. The “im” plural in Hebrew and indicates a people, not a person.

The “Cashulim” are noted as the ancestors of the Philistines. There is some debate as to the actual origin of the Philistines. Was it from North Africa or from Crete? Why?

Well, on the one hand, we have the Philistines descendant from the “Cashulim” in verse 14.<sup>118</sup>

But in Amos 9:7 we read,

“‘Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to Me, You sons of Israel?’ ‘Declares the LORD.’ ‘Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, And the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?’”

And in Jeremiah 47:4,

“Because of the day that is coming To destroy all the Philistines, To eliminate from Tyre and Sidon Every surviving ally; For the LORD is going to destroy the Philistines, The remnant of the coastland of Caphtor.”

In these two verses we have the Philistines descended from “Caphtor.” Where is “Caphtor?” The answer is not concrete. We are told that the “Caphtorim” were descendants of Mizraim in verses 13-14, which places their origin in Egyptian North Africa. But many commentators agree that a migration was likely as evidenced in verses 31-3 and other places. Mizraim had seven sons divided into seven nations, all scattered from the southern Mediterranean coast into the mid-east. Due to historical, archaeological and Biblical evidence, the opinions are that the Caphtorim migrated and settled in what were to become the Greek Islands, especially Crete and possibly Cyprus.

Deuteronomy 2:23 reads, “And *as for* the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and lived in their place.)”

The final phrase in Jeremiah 47:4 regarding the “coastland of Caphtor” suggests that this is actually connected with the ancient Greeks of Crete. Zephaniah 2:5 reads, “Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast, The nation of the Cherethites! The word of the LORD is against you, Canaan, land of the Philistines; And I will eliminate you So that there will be no inhabitant.” “...the nation of the Cherethites” is “goy kerithy” understood by many interpreters as the “nation of Crete.” On some maps, Crete is labeled “Caphtor.” The “Cherethites” are also mentioned in ten other places in the Old Testament.<sup>119</sup>

There is no way to be absolutely sure about this issue. But I propose that these ultimate

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<sup>118</sup> I Chronicles 1:11-12 reads, 11: Mizraim fathered the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, 12: Pathrus, and Casluh, from whom the Philistines came, and the Caphtorim. Both territories are mentioned here as in 10:14, “Casluh” being Cashulim.

<sup>119</sup> I Samuel 30:14; II Samuel 8:18, 15:18, 20:7, 20:23; I Kings 1:38, 44; I Chronicles 18:17; Ezekiel 25:1; Zephaniah 2:5.

conquerors of the Gaza strip called “Philistines” may be a mix of both as blended races are now taking place. They held this territory adjacent to that held by the Canaanites, also descended from Ham and distant relatives.

10:15-20,

15: “Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth 16: and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Gergashite 17: and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite 18: and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite; and afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad. 19: The territory of the Canaanite extended from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; as you go toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. 20: These are the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, by their nations.”

15-20: Canaan (son of Ham) is listed as the ancestor also of all the tribes of the Canaanites, but by person, not by peoples as in verses 13-14. “Sidon” would likely be the Phoenician people, “Heth” the Hittites, the “Jebusites” inhabited ‘Jebus’ which was to become Jerusalem, the “Amorites” found on both sides of the Jordan River, and the remainder inhabited the more northern and southern territories of the Palestine-Lebanon countries.

10:21-32,

21: “Also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, *and* the older brother of Japheth, children were born. 22: The sons of Shem *were* Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram. 23: The sons of Aram *were* Uz and Hul and Gether and Mash. 24: Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. 25: Two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one *was* Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan. 26: Joktan became the father of Almodad and Sheleph and Hazarmaveth and Jerah 27: and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah 28: and Obal and Abimael and Sheba 29: and Ophir and Havilah and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. 30: Now their settlement extended from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the hill country of the east. 31: These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations. 32: These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.”

21-24: Verse 21 appears to be the inclusion of an editor to complete the genealogies in this account. We will see the genealogy of Shem in its entirety in 11:10-26. But, we have an extensive lineage of Shem here and there, the key patriarch from whom Abraham is descended. It is to be noted that I Chronicles, chapters 1-9, has an extensive genealogical record of these same people all the way to the time of the kings of Israel.

Our main interest are the sons of Shem as his descendants through Arpachshad lead to the birth of Abraham. All the names in verses 22-24 are found in Mesopotamia, primarily in Ur of the Chaldees, in present day southern Iraq nearer to the Persian Gulf.

It is to be noted that the entire focus of the genealogies beginning in Genesis chapter 4, verse 25, is that of the birth of Abraham. Eleven chapters are dedicated to bringing the reader to his birth, and the remainder of Genesis, thirty-nine chapters are about Abraham and his descendants. In actually, the remainder of the entire Bible is the story of Abraham and his descendants that flows into eternity and the eternal kingdom of God.

Thus, we establish again that the main theme of the Bible in its entirety is a revealing of God's redemptive plan.

25-30: Eber, Shem's great grandson bore two sons, Peleg and Joktan. "Peleg" is associated with "a division in the earth" as his name means "division" or "split." This is explained in the final two verses of this chapter we will review shortly. Joktan bore thirteen sons, and the designated place of habitation is not clear by the statement "Now their settlement extended from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the hill country of the east." These territories have been placed all the way from southwest Saudi Arabia to India.<sup>120</sup>

31-32: Here we see a separation of families, territories, nations and even languages. (The Tower of Babel story is yet to come.) It is presumed that "Peleg's" name reflects this "division." But notice that we do not have the lineage of Peleg yet. He is definitely important, and his lineage is picked up in chapter 11:10 ff.

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<sup>120</sup> For more on the name Havilah, see the comments on page 49, Genesis chapter 2, verse 11.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

Genesis 11:1-9.

1: “Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. 2: It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.”

1-2: The term “the whole earth” is a translator’s choice. The word “earth” is “eretz” and is translated “earth” some 700 times but “land” nearly 2,500 times and that almost always describes a specific territory such as “The land of Canaan” or “The land of Egypt.” The common reasons for translations like this are due to church traditional teaching and to translate it as “land” could detract from monetary income as fundamentalists and literalists who make up much of the customer base might not purchase this translation. Sound unfair?<sup>121</sup>

The fact that it should be translated “land” is proven in verse two, as the entire “earth” did not journey east and settle in Shinar.

This story is not in chronological order.<sup>122</sup> It most likely be set somewhere between chapter 10:1 and 10:10. The comment that the whole earth used the same language, and the same words likely refers to the families that settled in various areas of the mid-east. In 10:10 we read of Nimrod, the grandson of Ham that, “The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.” “Shinar” is the territory of Babylon.

This story, like much of the first eleven chapters, appears to be a narrative not explaining the historical, literal, or chronological matters, but designed to imprint a message and its theme upon the reader as the relationship between God and people is illustrated. It could easily be seen as answers to questions children might ask. The early patriarchs were not there to write down the events of these chapters. It is all oral tradition to this point and the fathers were to teach their children the ways of the Lord.

It is really hard to pin this story down chronologically in the text as the years that have passed by are impossible to track. It is inserted here, but the context seems to be more in the area of chapter 10:6-12 and the story of Nimrod. Many of the descendants of Shem settled in the same general territory (as we will see) and the time span between Nimrod and this settling is foggy. Also, 10:31 says, “These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations.” So, it appears that a different languages or dialects could already have been in use when this story is supposed to

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<sup>121</sup> For example, though all translations follow the KJV in Luke 2:7 where speaking of Mary it says, “And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” Well, there was no “inn” in Bethlehem as the Greek notes but describes a guest house or room. But in Luke 10:34, the good Samaritan did take the wooden man to an “inn.” Different Greek word altogether. It is a shame that money controls the proper translation of God’s Word in order to appease a customer base made up of uneducated, ignorant people.

<sup>122</sup> As we have noted, chronology is not an important issue for Biblical writers.

take place. So, again “land” is the proper translation.

11:3-9,

3: “They said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly.’ And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. 4: They said, ‘Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *will reach* into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’”

3: Due to the lack of stone in the central desert near the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, brick was used as a building material made of a clay-mud in forms and then sun dried or dried in a kiln. They turned whitish and then a bitumen pitch was used for mortar as they built. This system is still used today.

4. The motive to build a city and a tower reaching into “heaven” (the sky) is portrayed as the people wanting to make themselves “a name” indicating the show of power, and the tower was to be their rallying and inspiration point to secure unity and city walls to presumably provide defense. Otherwise, they could be invaded, conquered and become scattered everywhere. This was a common scheme among ancient conquerors.

Some suggest that the purpose could also be a drive to elevate themselves into the place of God, thus excluding Him from their existence and creating their own god in their own image. One person put it this way, “This is a picture of mankind elevating himself to the place of god and worshipping himself.” Considering human history and some religions even to this day, this is not a bad idea.

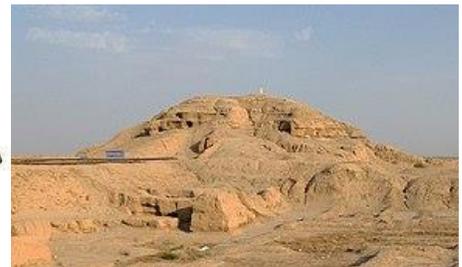
The “tower” may have been a ziggurat in the style of the early Egyptian pyramids, such as the “Steppe Pyramid” (pictured below) built for Pharaoh Djoser five to six thousand years ago. Also below are two pictures of the Uruk Ziggurat ruins in Iraq estimated to be about the same age. This area is just north of the Persian Gulf about 50 miles north of Ur (Abraham’s hometown) on the Euphrates River. Uruk is also the home of King Gilgamesh and the similar flood story to the Bible.



Steppe Pyramid of Egypt



Typical Babylonian Ziggurat



Uruk Ziggurat

11:5-9,

5: “The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. 6: The LORD said, ‘Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. 7: Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech.’ 8: “So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. 9: Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.”

5-7: The phrase “The LORD came down” does not mean that, “He lives up there somewhere” but that He was portrayed as present in the very sky the builders were reaching for. As Keil and Delitzsch put it, “...it is an anthropomorphic description of God's interposition in the actions of men, primarily a “judicial cognizance of the actual fact,” and then a judicial infliction of punishment.”<sup>123</sup> Of course, God doesn't need to move from place to place to see and know what is going on. This is the same kind of imagery used in Genesis three where God asks, “Where are you?” As if He didn't know, or “Where is Abel you brother?” (4:9) Again, language to illustrate God's relationship with mankind, not a physical description of God's lack of knowledge.

The people of the city all spoke the same language. This, of course, facilitates the accomplishing of their goal. The reason for the Lord's decision to halt the continuation of this enterprise has been guessed at by all the commentators. I add my own reflecting the basic theme of God's plan of redemption and His determination not to have it derailed. How He confused the language is also guessed at, as well as what the language was. These speculations draw us away from the point in my opinion.

Looking at that “point” we again have the plural “Let Us” in verse 7, but with the antecedent “LORD” (Yahweh) which is unusual but does give support to the idea that in God's foreknowledge he saw the possible interference in the plan of redemption as Abram was to be born in the same territory in the distant future. Thus, the intervention. The key for me to the propose of this is that the next section we final have the genealogy of Shem, the ancestor of Abram. The importance of protecting this series of events is critical to the entire plan of redemption, for the world to come in the birth, death and resurrection of Christ thousands of years later - the central theme of the entire Bible. The genealogy of Shem proceeds - and must proceed uninterrupted. The fulfillment of this goal would have the consequence of interrupting or corrupting the descendants of Shem.

8: Unable to communicate, families who could immigrated to areas and began their lives.

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<sup>123</sup> Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament

The project was stopped as well as its effect had they been able to accomplish their goal.

A fascinating reversal take place in Acts, chapter 2. There in Jerusalem, on the Day of Pentecost as all the disciples were gathered together, from heaven above a great sound as a violent rushing wind was heard and the Holy Spirit fell upon them, and they began to speak in the actual languages of thousands of people who had come from all over the empire but spoke different languages. They all heard the wonders of God and the gospel in their own tongue. We now go from limited communication as in Babel to full communication after the resurrection and ascension of Christ. God's plan of redemption came to completion, "it is finished." The word now spread to those same scattered territories where the citizens of Babel were also scattered.

9: The name "Babylon" is taken from this event where the language became nothing more than "babel" a term we adopted as well for people who, well, just Babylon.

11:10-32,

10: "These are *the records of* the generations of Shem. Shem was one hundred years old, and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood; 11: and Shem lived five hundred years after he became the father of Arpachshad, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 12: Arpachshad lived thirty-five years, and became the father of Shelah; 13: and Arpachshad lived four hundred and three years after he became the father of Shelah, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 14: Shelah lived thirty years, and became the father of Eber; 15: and Shelah lived four hundred and three years after he became the father of Eber, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 16: Eber lived thirty-four years and became the father of Peleg; 17: and Eber lived four hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Peleg, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 18: Peleg lived thirty years, and became the father of Reu; 19: and Peleg lived two hundred and nine years after he became the father of Reu, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 20: Reu lived thirty-two years, and became the father of Serug; 21: and Reu lived two hundred and seven years after he became the father of Serug, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 22: Serug lived thirty years, and became the father of Nahor; 23: and Serug lived two hundred years after he became the father of Nahor, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 24: Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and became the father of Terah; 25: and Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years after he became the father of Terah, and he had *other* sons and daughters. 26: Terah lived seventy years, and became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran."

10-32: As noted before, genealogies trace the lineage of the redemptive line and give it that significance, as well as identity and purpose.

As we compare the ages of the patriarchs before the flood to those after the flood beginning with Arpachshad, we see a regular reduction of those ages, first nearly half the years until

Peleg when we have another reduction by about half. Then another similar reduction at Nahor until we reach Abram. Nahor, Terah's father and Abram's grandfather has no comments about him other than he fathered Terah and other sons and daughters as is noted in verse 25.

The only people noted in this genealogy that have comments about them at all are Peleg, Terah, Abram and Haran in the following verses.

Of Peleg it is said, in Genesis 10:25, "Two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one *was* Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan." This passage is discussed in the comments on that chapter and verse.

11:27-32,

27: "Now these are *the records of* the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot. 28: Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

29: Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah. 30: Sarai was barren; she had no child. 31: Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran and settled there. 32: The days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran."

27-28: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. This "Nahor" is named after Terah's father. Haran fathered Lot, the nephew of Abram and Nahor and fathered daughters Milcah and Iscah (verse 29). Haran died in Ur of the Chaldees before his own father died as the Hebrew intends to convey.

29: Abram took Sarai as his wife. Her name may mean "princess." Sarai was Abram's half-sister, the daughter of his father but be a different mother.<sup>124</sup> Terah's wife's name is not told to us, but either she died and Terah remarried or Terah had multiple wives, one of which was Sarai's mother. Having concubines were a common arrangement for the patriarchs in those days. (Genesis 22:24 etc.)

Nahor, Abram's younger brother took Milcah to be his wife. She was the daughter of his deceased brother Haran. In other words, he married his niece. It may have been that both Haran and Haran's wife as well (unnamed) both died. Lot, Haran's son, could not marry his sister and was already married. Rather than give Milcah to an outsider, the family agreed to have her uncle, Nahor, take her to be his wife as he does not seem to have married. This would raise up heirs to Milcah's deceased husband Haran through Nahor which was in the

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<sup>124</sup> Genesis 20:12.

tradition of the Jews. This arrangement is noted in Genesis 22:20-23.<sup>125</sup>

30-32: Sarai was unable to have children. This is disturbing to a patriarch whose legacy is in the balance and, if he has no heir, his name and legacy will pass away with him. Yet there is no record of Abram having children with another until decades later in the story commencing in chapter 15.

Terah, still the patriarch, is seen here as the one who took his entire family out of Ur and traveled north-west some 450 miles where they settled for a time and named the place they built “Haran” after Terah’s deceased son. The intent was for the family to ultimately head to Canaan. They stayed at Haran long enough to build a city on the river Balikh, a major tributary of the Euphrates. Haran is in the crimson on the map below.



<sup>125</sup> Jesus discussed an attempt to trap Him over this issue with the Sadducees in Matthew 22:23-33 and Mark 12:18-27. This practice is outlined in Deuteronomy 25:5ff. The marriage of Ruth to Boaz follows this rule.

Here are the ruins as seen today.



The entire family remained in Haran until the death of Terah. They buried him there. It was in Haran that the Lord called to Abram and told him it was time to go to Canaan.

After a lengthy stay, likely some 30-40 years, God called Abram and told him it was time to go to Canaan. Chapter twelve and onward tell his story and the development of the people that would come to be called Israel. We now transition into a history with a chronology.

The Jews in Jesus' day trace their lineage to Abraham. The patriarchs are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This becomes the redemptive line, not of the flesh but of the promise believed in by the faith of Abraham's descendants, even to the Gentiles God told Abraham he would bless through his descendants. Abraham and Sarah only saw one son miraculously born, Isaac. One day, because of his faith, God will reveal to him the multitudes of people having entered the kingdom of God because he believed.

## APPENDIX

### **“Before The Book of Genesis: The Real Story of Creation”**

Rabbi Manus Friedman presents a video on YouTube with the above title. In it he proposes that the phrase in the first verse of Genesis “In the beginning” actually means a precreation plan by God for the origin of the world, not the act of creation itself. He believes that this phrase is introducing the vision God had and that the vision is the beginning of creation. “Creation” begins with the plan or blueprint of the “Creator” and reflects His desire.

The early accounts in Genesis are a picture of God’s plan enacted, but not a literal account of how it all came to be through people.

What is interesting about this came to the forefront when the question was asked, “What did God create first, spiritual beings like angels, or the physical universe and the earth with people to dwell on it for His plan to be accomplished.

This question introduces the idea of a time factor or sequence of events. In our discussion we pointed out that God is not bound by or subject to time. He sees the end from the beginning and thus designed the entire plan of redemptive history all at once.

“Declaring the end from the beginning, And, from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My plan will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’ (Isaiah 46:10)

Thus, it all happened simultaneously in God’s “mind” and then it was begun in time. Genesis, like much of the scripture, is seldom interested in time, dates, chronologies, and historically/scientifically correct narratives. It is far more involved with themes. So, we do not need to try and force the narrative into our western mold of such things as so many do.

I am not necessarily in accord with all that the Rabbi proposes, but gratified that he sees the unique way in which God has His activities expressed in scripture.

The Hebrew writers use literary styles, techniques and images to present truth, even though what they write may not be literally true itself. Much like parables, similes, allegories and metaphors are used for comparison in the Bible, we find nearly a hundred other ways God’s message is expressed that are the vehicles within which we must find the message, lesson or truth.

MODERN HEBREW ALPHABET AS WE HAVE IT TODAY.

י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
Yod (Y)	Tet (T)	Chet (Ch)	Zayin (Z)	Vav (V)	He (H)	Dalet (D)	Gimel (G)	Bet (B/V)	Alef (silent)
ע	ס	נ	נ	מ	מ	ל	ך	כ	
Ayin (silent)	Samech (S)	Nun (N)	Nun (N)	Mem (M)	Mem (M)	Lamed (L)	Khaf (Kh)	Kaf (K/Kh)	
ת	ש	ר	ק	ץ	צ	ף	פ		
Tav (T)	Shin (Sh/S)	Resh (R)	Qof (Q)	Tsadeh (Ts)	Tsadeh (Ts)	Feh (F)	Peh (P/F)		

BUT HOW DID IT COME TO BE IN THIS STYLE? AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

From Acts 7: 22 we know, "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians..."

And, in twenty-nine places in the Old Testament, we see that Joshua was the "son of Nun." "Nun" was an Egyptian god; a water serpent. We also know that in the hundreds of years Israel was in Egypt much of Egyptian culture, language and customs was absorbed by the Israelites to the extent that they had lost much of their identity. In fact, Moses didn't even know the name of God who was sending him back to Egypt (Exodus 3:1-16).

Further, the very ancient script the Israelites developed had images drawn from Egyptian hieroglyphics as well as Phoenician, Canaanite, Babylonian and other influences. We know that well into the period of the kings of Judah and Israel, Egypt continued to have an influence both political and culturally. Recently, for example, a ring thought to have belonged to Queen Jezebel had the Egyptian scarab god Khepri engraved on the stone. Khepri was the god of the rising sun, creation and life.

# ANCIENT HEBREW ALPHABET

						
Z	W	H	D	G	B	'
<b>Zayan</b>	<b>Waw</b>	<b>Ha</b>	<b>Dalat</b>	<b>Gimal</b>	<b>Bith</b>	<b>Alaph</b>

						
N	M	L	K	Y	T	H
<b>Non</b>	<b>Mam</b>	<b>Lamad</b>	<b>Kaph</b>	<b>Yod</b>	<b>Tit</b>	<b>Khit</b>

						
SH	R	Q	Tz	P	'	S
<b>Shin</b>	<b>Rish</b>	<b>Qof</b>	<b>Tzadi</b>	<b>Paa</b>	<b>Ayin</b>	<b>Samakh</b>

							
Waw	Vav	U	O	Ya	Yi	Paa	Faa

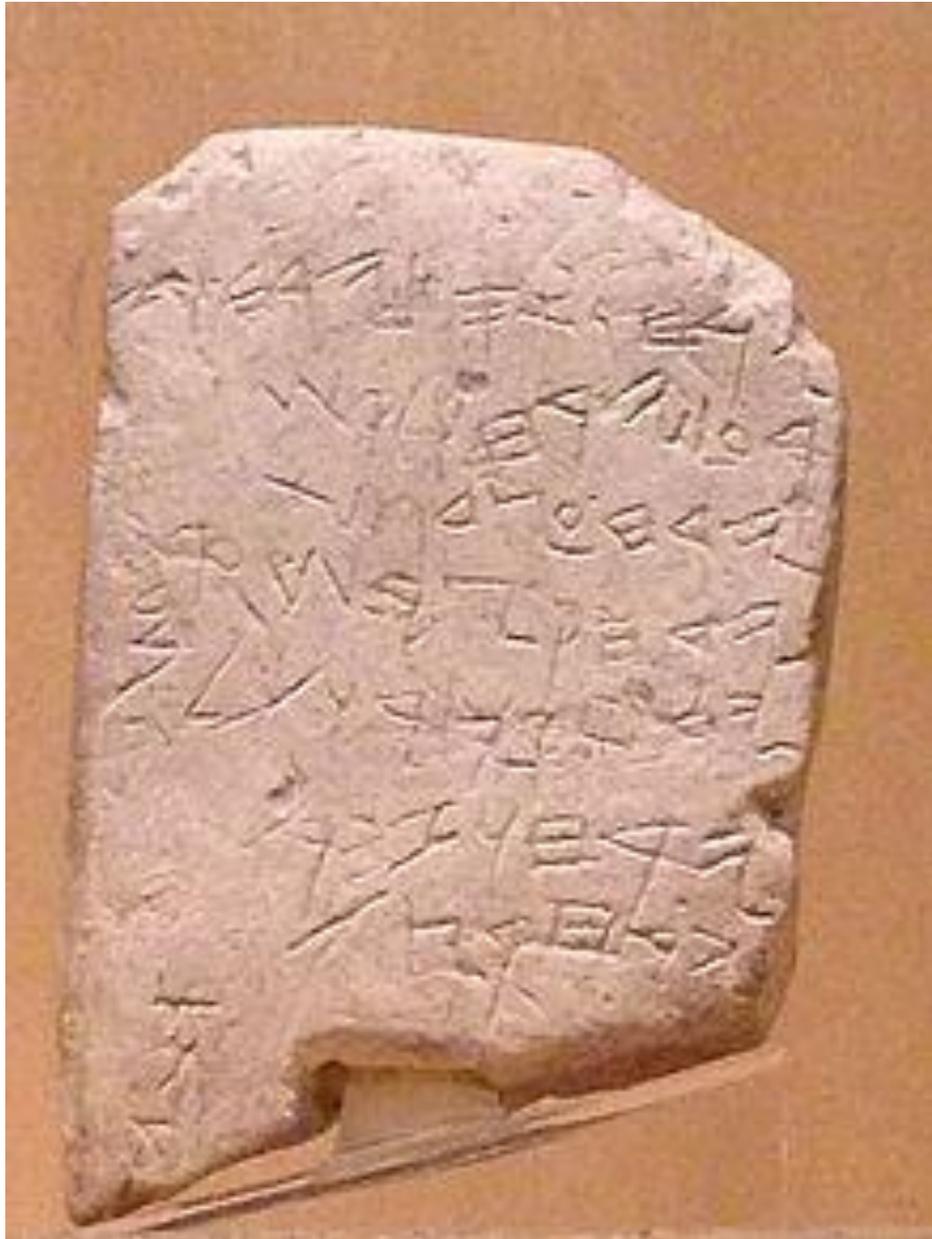
# ANCIENT PHONECIAN ALPHABET

Note the similarities with the Hebrew alphabet. The Hebrew writing system drew from the ancient Phoenician, Canaanite, and Egyptian system.

										
kaph	yōdh	tēth	hēth	zayin	wāw	hē	dāleth	gīmel	bēth	'āleph
palm	hand	good	wall	weapon	hook	window	door	camel	house	ox
k	y	t	h	z	w	h	d	g	b	'
[k]	[j]	[tʰ]	[ħ]	[z]	[w]	[e]	[d]	[g]	[b]	[ʔ]
										
tāw	šin	rēš	qōph	šādē	pē	'ayin	sāmekh	nun	mēm	lāmedh
mark	tooth	head	eye of needle	papyrus	mouth	eye	fish	serpent	water	goat
t	sh	r	q	š	p	'	s	n	m	l
[t]	[ʃ]	[r]	[q]	[sʰ]	[p]	[ʕ]	[s]	[n]	[m]	[l]

GEZER CALENDAR FROM TEL-GEZER, WEST OF JERUSALEM AND MENTIONED  
FIFTEEN TIMES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT c 1000 B.C.

The time of Kings David and Solomon. Compare the script style on the stone with the  
ancient Phoenician and Hebrew above.



## SILOAM STONE IN HEZEKIAHS TUNNEL



THE INSCRIPTION DESCRIBES THE TUNNEL EXCAVATION AND  
COMMEMORATES ITS COMPLETION

Note the similarity of this script with the ancient Phoenician and Hebrew above.

Another illustration also showing early Babylonian

ORIGINAL PICTOGRAPH	PICTOGRAPH IN POSITION OF LATER CUNEIFORM	EARLY BABYLONIAN	ASSYRIAN	ORIGINAL OR DERIVED MEANING
				BIRD
				FISH
				DONKEY
				OX
				SUN DAY
				GRAIN
				ORCHARD
				TO PLOW TO TILL
				BOOMERANG TO THROW TO THROW DOWN
				TO STAND TO GO

BY COURTESY OF ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

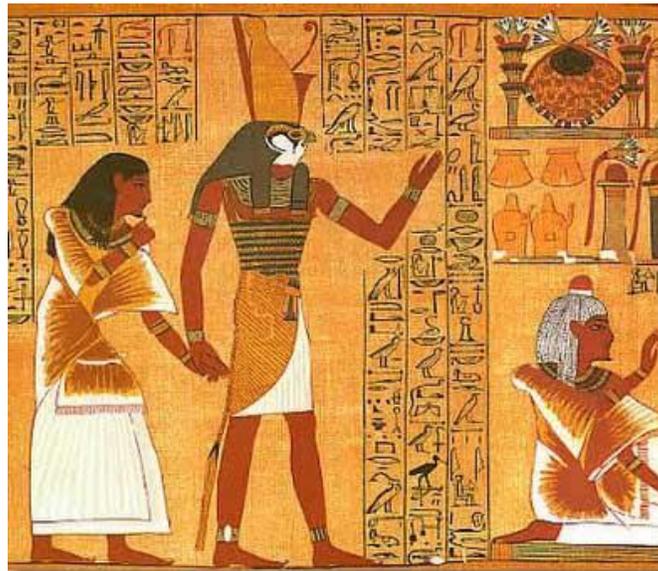
TABLE SHOWING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CUNEIFORM SCRIPT FROM PICTOGRAPHS TO ASSYRIAN CHARACTERS

Egyptian influence.

RIGHT TO LEFT WE HAVE THE IMAGE OF THE EGYPTIAN GOD HORUS FACING LEFT AND HIS EYE (RIGHT EYE) IN FRONT OF HIM. HIEROGLYPHICS READ THE WAY THE GLYPH IS FACING. HERE, THE GLYPH WOULD READ, "HORUS IS OBSERVING (SEEING, WATCHING).

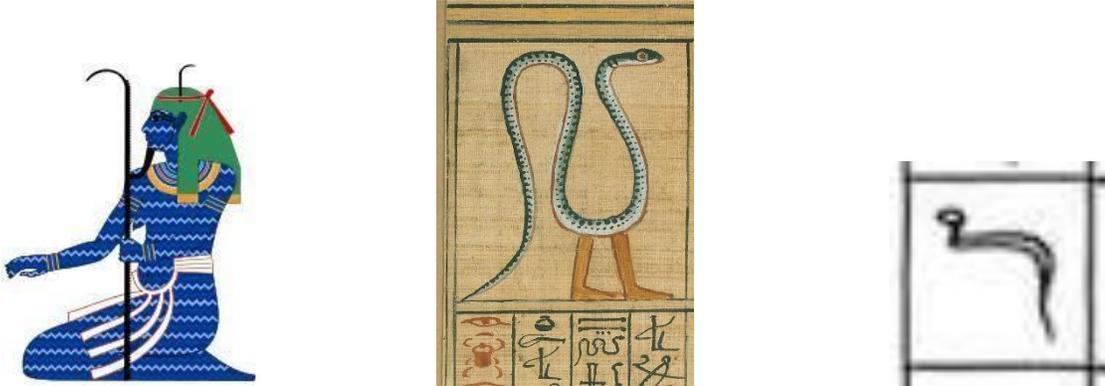


The printed hieroglyph.



Horus is pictured as a falcon headed god. He was worshipped as the god of the sky and of kings of Egypt.

THE EGYPTIAN GOD “NUN” – ONE OF THE OLDEST GODS OF EGYPT AND ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRIMEVAL WATER (THE NILE RIVER) AND WITH BEING THE FATHER OF RE, THE EGYPTIAN SUN GOD. HE ALSO REPRESENTS CREATURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRIMEVAL WATERS SUCH AS WATER VIPERS AND FROGS. THE SNAKE IMAGE IS THE MOST INTERESTING AS IT TRANSFERS TO THE HEBREW SCRIPT WITH THE SAME NAME – “NUN.” JOSHUA’S FATHER WAS NAMED “NUN.”



Letter		Name <sup>[22]</sup>	Meaning	Phoneme	Origin	
Image	Text				Egyptian hieroglyphs	Proto-Sinaitic
	ן	nūn	serpent (or fish <sup>[23][27]</sup> )	n [n]		

The modern Hebrew letter “nun.”



MEANINGS OF MANY OF THE ANCIENT ALPHABETIC GLYPHS AND LETTERS.

## Abryth / Hebrew Alaphbat

Letter Name	Picto	Peleo	Modern	Letter Meaning	Letter Sound
Alaph				<i>Ox, Strength, Leader</i>	Ah
Bat				<i>House, "In"</i>	B
Gam				<i>Foot, Pride, Camel</i>	G
Dal				<i>Tent Door, Pathway</i>	D
Ha				<i>Lo!, Behold!, The, Window</i>	H
Uau				<i>Nail, Peg, Add, And, Hook</i>	U / OO
Zan				<i>Weapon, Plow, Cut Off</i>	Z
Chat				<i>Tent Wall, Fence, Separation</i>	Ch - Like Bach
Tat				<i>Basket, Snake, Surround, Winding</i>	T
Ya				<i>Arm and Hand, Work, Deed</i>	Y
Kaf				<i>Palm of Hand, To Open</i>	K
Lam				<i>Staff, Goad, Control, Toward</i>	L
Mam				<i>Water, Chaos</i>	M
Nun				<i>Seed, Fish, Activity, Life</i>	N
Samak				<i>Hand on Staff, Support, Prop</i>	S
Ayan				<i>Eye, To See, Experience</i>	A
Pah				<i>Mouth, Speak, Word</i>	P
Tsad				<i>Need, Desire, Man on Side, Hook</i>	Ts - Like Hits
Quf				<i>Behind, Sun on Horizon, Needle Eye</i>	Q
Rash				<i>First, Person, Head</i>	R
Shan				<i>Destroy, Eat, Consume, Tooth</i>	Sh
Thau				<i>Covenant, Mark, Sign</i>	Th

Letter		Name <sup>[22]</sup>	Meaning	Phoneme	Origin	
Image	Text				Egyptian hieroglyphs	Proto-Sinaitic
	א	'ālep	ox, head of cattle	' [ʔ]		
	ב	bēt	House	b [b]		
	ג	gīml	throwing stick (or camel <sup>[23]</sup> )	g [g]		
	ד	dālet	door (or fish <sup>[23]</sup> )	d [d]		
	ה		window (or jubilation <sup>[23]</sup> )	1. ḥ [h]	 ?	
	ו	wāw	Hook	2. w [w]		
	ז	zayin	weapon (or manacle <sup>[23]</sup> )	3. z [z]		
	ח	hēt	courtyard/wall <sup>[24]</sup> (?)	4. h [h]		
	ט	ṭēt	wheel <sup>[25]</sup>	5. ṭ [tʰ]		
	י	jōd	arm, hand	6. j [j]		
	כ	kāp	palm of a hand	k [k]		
	ל	lāmed	goad <sup>[26]</sup>	l [l]		

𐎠	𐎡	mēm	Water	m [m]		
𐎢	𐎣	nūn	serpent (or fish <sup>[23][27]</sup> )	n [n]		
𐎦	𐎧	šāmek	pillar(?)	š [s]		
𐎨	𐎩	ʿayin	Eye	ʿ [ʿ]		
𐎫	𐎬	pē	mouth (or corner <sup>[23]</sup> )	p [p]		
𐎰	𐎱	šādē	papyrus plant/fish hook?	š [sʰ]	↓ ?[28]	
𐎴	𐎵	qōp	needle eye	q [q]		
𐎶	𐎷	rēš	Head	r [r]		
𐎺	𐎻	šīn	tooth (or sun <sup>[23]</sup> )	s [ʃ]		
𐎼	𐎽	tāw	Mark	t [t]	×	+

SOBEK, GOD OF THE EGYPTIANS AND FOUND RESIDING IN THE NILE RIVER. .  
EZEKIEL 29:1-4 LIKELY REFERS TO THIS. THE EGYPTIANS ACTUALLY BRED  
THESE ANIMALS AND USED THEM IN SOME SORT OF RITUAL. THOUSANDS OF  
MUMMIFIED CROCODILES OF ALL SIZES HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED.  
IN ASSYRIA, THEIR GOD “KUSU” MAY WELL BE THE CROCODILE.



## A PICTURE OF FAITH

The Hebrew word translated “faith” or “believe” is “Ah-man” from which we get our term “Amen”.

It looks like this in the Hebrew: אמן

The letters in Hebrew and Phoenician from right to left are; Aleph, Mem and Nun. The language also reads from right to left. Egyptian can be ordered right to left, left to right or top to bottom.

The NASB uses the translation “believe” exclusively for this word. It has a variety of nuances depending on the context. But basically, in English, it is an abstract word. That is, it is difficult to picture words like, “thought” or “truth”. But there are some ancient forms that give us some direction.

Believe it or not, to picture “faith”, the most ancient pictographs depict an Ox standing in the water calmly quenching his thirst while a deadly water serpent swims nearby. No fear. We see a complete trust that one will come to no harm in the midst of evil. Perhaps the Ox is pictured due to its strength and power of its legs.

One can begin to get the idea of “faith” here. The word evolved and many pictures came to represent “believing”. For example, the ideas of “firmness” or “steadfastness”, “un-moveability” (so to speak), came into use. Then the concepts of reliability, trustworthiness, security and so on developed. The picture of “faith” also changed. One can see how it went from the ox to indicating the doorposts, foundations or support structures for buildings. Note the bold italics in the following examples. Each is a form of “amen.”

So, it came to also be thought of as “that which guards”. The word Ah-man is translated in some of these terms. Note II Kings 10:1, “Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters and sent *them* to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, the elders, and to the *guardians* of the children of Ahab, saying... The word “guardians” is “aman.”

“Guardians”, “faithful ones”, “pillars”, “without fear” all suggest an idea of what “faith” or “believing” involves.

Note II Kings 18:16 as another example, “At that time Hezekiah cut off *the gold* from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from the doorposts* which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.”

In Isaiah 22:23-25, it is used in a different way. Note the purple italics. 23: “I will drive him *like* a peg in a *firm* place, And he will become a throne of glory to his father's house. 24: “So they will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, offspring and issue, all the least of vessels, from bowls to all the jars. 25: “In that day,” declares the LORD of hosts, “the peg driven in a *firm* place

will give way; it will even break off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off, for the LORD has spoken."

Little by little we begin to see the idea of the word. There are many more examples. One more interesting one will suffice. Isaiah 60:4, "Lift up your eyes round about and see; They all gather together, they come to you. Your sons will come from afar, And your daughters will be *carried* in the arms."

Sometimes the word is used of a nurse or of a child nursing at his mother's breast. This brings us back to the idea of security and comfort without fear. And it also brings us to an important distinction lost by many which I am addressing in this paper. "Faith" or "belief" is not something we believe in. It is not a set of doctrines or beliefs in which we place our confidence. In every case where "Aman" is used, there is an integral relationship between two parties or objects. There is a tangible relationship not just a theory, or idea, or thought or principle one "believes in".

When it comes down to it, faith is actually a relationship or intimate "knowledge" of God. It is being a part of a living organism – the "body of Christ" for example.

This is underscored by Jesus comments in Matthew 7 when He said, 21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. 22: "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23: "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

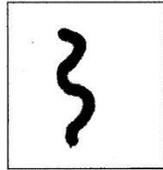
The word "know" in the Hebrew understanding is more than "head knowledge." For example, in Genesis 4:1 the KJV says, "And Adam "knew: his wife, and she conceived.... The NASB translates it, "Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived..." The idea "to know" conveys an intimate relationship not just "head knowledge" or a passing acquaintance. In the western culture, we have it reversed. So "faith" is more understood as "head knowledge belief" rather than intimate relationship. And, this is wrong to say the least.

Continuing, the symbols below are as follows:

From right to left, a picture of an Ox, Water and Serpent as they evolve from Egyptian, Phoenician and to Hebrew (top to bottom) AMN (right to left) are the representative English letters. But they picture nothing. Also, Hebrew is a developed language, not a primary language. It evolved from many other written and spoken forms. Among these are Egyptian, Phoenician, Babylonian (remember Abraham was a Babylonian), Canaanite, and so on. As time went by, the ancient forms began to take on additional meanings and often the ancient primitive form was abandoned.

# FAITH

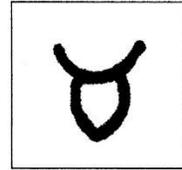
EGYPTIAN



N

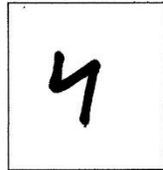


M

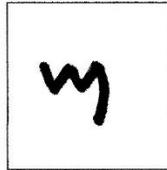


A

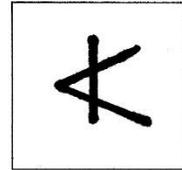
PHOENICIAN



N

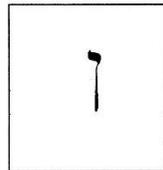


M



A

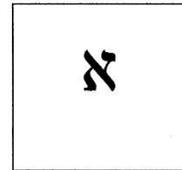
HEBREW



N



M



A

# DIVINE INTENTIONS

## From the Bethel Series

The Bible makes use of many literary media to convey its message. Our interpretive acumen will be sharpened and our understanding of God's message enhanced as we learn to distinguish some of the communicative modes often used of God's penmen.

Historical reporting of an event.

Luke 2:1-7

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.

Historical event in poetic media.

Judges 5:15b-18

Among the divisions of Reuben  
*There were* great resolves of heart.  
"Why did you sit among the sheepfolds,  
To hear the piping for the flocks?  
Among the divisions of Reuben  
*There were* great searchings of heart.  
"Gilead remained across the Jordan;  
And why did Dan stay in ships?  
Asher sat at the seashore,  
And remained by its landings.  
"Zebulun *was* a people who despised  
their lives *even* to death,  
And Naphtali also, on the high places  
of the field.

Personification

Isaiah 55:12b

The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap *their* hands.

Historical illusion through fable.

Judges 9:8-15

"Once the trees went forth to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us!' "But the olive tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my fatness with which God and men are honored, and go to wave over the trees?' "Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come, reign over us!' "But the fig tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to wave over the trees?' "Then the trees said to the vine, 'You come, reign over us!' "But the vine said to them, 'Shall I leave my new wine, which cheers God and men, and go to wave over the trees?' "Finally all the trees said to the bramble, 'You come, reign over us!' "The bramble said to the trees, 'If in truth you are anointing me as king over you, come and take refuge in my shade; but if not, may fire come out from the bramble and consume the cedars of Lebanon.'

## Allegory

Psalm 80:8-12

You removed a vine from Egypt; You drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared *the ground* before it, And it took deep root and filled the land. The mountains were covered with its shadow, And the cedars of God with its boughs. It was sending out its branches to the sea And its shoots to the River. Why have You broken down its hedges, So that all who pass *that way* pick its *fruit*?

## Parallelism

Proverbs 8:1-4, 7-8

Does not wisdom call, And understanding lift up her voice?

On top of the heights beside the way, Where the paths meet, she takes her stand;

Beside the gates, at the opening to the city, At the entrance of the doors, she cries out:

To you, O men, I call, And my voice is to the sons of men.

For my mouth will utter truth; And wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness; There is nothing crooked or perverted in them.

As we learn to recognize parable for parable, historical event as historical event, allegory as allegory, personification as personification, imagery as imagery we shall be spared from the abortive interpretive that does violence to the message found within God's Word.

Honest efforts to distinguish between the different avenues of expression used by the Biblical writers will prevent us from:

1. Reducing the Bible's message to a wooden literalism and thereby conveying distortions of the truth;
2. Forcing the Bible to say things it was not designed to say;
3. Being pre-occupied with the details of a story rather than the message cradled within it;
4. Recklessly denying the historicity of an account on the basis of the literary medium used to convey it.

**ONE STORY, TOLD IN FOUR DIFFERENT WAYS, WILL PROVIDE US A COMMON POINT OF REFERENCE FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THIS IMPORTANT INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLE.**

The story...

“A great fire raged through the northeast residential area of Centerville today, taking hundreds of lives and destroying millions of dollars of property. A strong northerly wind hampered the efforts of the firefighters to bring the flames under control. Tonight hundreds of Red Cross workers converged on the charred city to bring aid to the stricken citizens.”

The same story using personification as a medium...

"The loud voices of the winds bid the flames welcome, while trees mourned and hills grimaced in pain. A remnant of the living tried valiantly to silence the mouths of the flames, but fell useless under the belching breath of the conqueror. While midst the chaos stood a band of angels binding up the wounds of the fallen."

The same story cradled in imagery and symbolism....

"Remember the garden in the days of its splendor, before the evil days came, When the skies were reddened, and shrieks came up from the streets; when an enemy came upon us and joined forces with nature's breath. Ah, cursed hour, thou hast left behind thee scores of open pits, each claiming its dead. Men and women are cast down in the ashes. Mourners go about in the streets and red angels stretch out loving arms to lift up the fallen."

The same story told in poetic form....

"Oh tortuous memory of searing flames,  
and the cries of the dying,  
Begone and let us rest;  
What bleakness hast thou cast upon us,  
and cruel wind, why didst thou visit us in this ill appointed hour?

Why didst thou choose to heap sorrow upon sorrow?  
But for the angels of mercy crossed in red,  
We might all have gone down in pits,  
Oh tortuous memory of searing flames,  
Begone and let us rest."

## QUESTIONS

1. Is it the writer's intent that all the accounts be taken literally? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Would a literal interpretation of all accounts produce any distorted truths not intended by the writer? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does the literary form used in any way alter the historical orientation of the four accounts? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is any one of the accounts less true than the others? \_\_\_\_\_



## THE SUPER OLDIES OF GENESIS 5

By Bob Stewart

How do we introduce this subject? Bishop Ussher (1581-1656) is best remembered for compiling a Biblical chronology by adding together the ages of the Patriarchs in Genesis to the historical chronology from Moses on. He calculated (accurately, by this method) that the creation of the universe took place sometime in October of 4004 BC.

If the genealogies of Genesis 5 are to be understood as literal, intact and complete, written for no other reason than to date either the times of the patriarchs or the creation itself, then Ussher is correct in his calculation of what he believes the text to be teaching. But this leaves a host of questions and problems to be discussed and these are just as significant as anything a geologist might cast into the pot.

This paper is to explore these questions and report on some approaches interpreters have taken in order to understand the text in the manner intended by God's author. *None of them leaves us with a great deal of satisfaction.* Somehow, James Ussher is correct (in his addition and sincerity) but quite possibly wrong in his conclusion. So, the final determination is up to the reader and student.

In Edersheim's "Bible History", he does us the favor of reproducing the table of the age of the patriarchs descended from Adam.<sup>126</sup> It is reproduced below. Analyze it carefully so you will understand it before proceeding.

NAMES	AGE AT BIRTH OF SON	HOW MANY YEARS HE LIVED AFTER THE EVENT	TOTAL AGE	YEAR OF BIRTH AND YEAR OF DEATH FROM CREATION	
ADAM	130	800	930	1	930
SETH	105	807	912	130	1042
ENOSH	90	815	905	235	1140
KENAN	70	840	910	325	1233
MAHALALEL	65	830	895	395	1290
JARED	162	800	962	460	1422
ENOCK	65	300	365	622	987
METHUSELAH	187	782	969	687	1656
LAMECH	182	595	777	874	1651
NOAH	500 (600 at flood)	450	950	1056	2006

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<sup>126</sup> Alfred Edersheim, Bible History, Eerdmans Publishing, 1969, Page 34. Due to some differences in the Hebrew texts, this table is not necessarily perfectly accurate.

As we look at this table, several things of interest begin to appear. Notice that Adam's death did not take place until about a century before Noah. He was still living when Noah's father (Lamech) was still alive.

The flood itself commenced 1,656 years after creation (according to this system) in the "second month" (Tishri – roughly our September) on the seventeenth day of the month according to Genesis 7:11.

Though it rained and flooded for "forty days and forty nights,"<sup>127</sup> it was a full and ten days until the earth was dry enough for Noah and his family to step out of the Ark (8:14). It would be in the month of Cheshvan (our October-November) according to the civil calendar rather than the Mosiac ceremonial calendar that came over a thousand years later.

It is interesting to note that Methuselah and Lamech would have known Adam according to this chart. Methuselah died in the same year as the flood, in fact within the first two months of the year. Supposedly he was not taken by the flood. His son, Lamech (Noah's father) predeceased him by five years. But Lamech had "other sons and daughters" (5:30). This begs the question, "What happened to these other sons and daughters and the children of these sons and daughters when the flood hit?" According to the text, and though the flood destroyed all remaining life (7:20-24) including all of Noah's brothers and sisters. But we have no evidence that the Seth line was corrupt at all, and all indications are that they walked with God.

But more than that, none of the people (Noah's parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers or sisters) were included in the Ark according to the text, and, though the flood destroyed all remaining life (7:20-24). These very same people did not die until hundreds of years after the flood subsided. Further, we have no evidence that the Seth line was corrupt at all, and indications are that they walked with God.

Now, if we stand firm on the literalism in this genealogy as most conservative brethren do, these are only a few of the problems we face and questions we have. For example, "What is the point God is trying to make with this account?" "What are we supposed to learn?" "Is there a point at all?"<sup>128</sup>

There may be more here than God intending a simple case of mental gymnastics. Many believe that God is interested in more important things and so the account has a deeper significance than a first glance reveals. But it takes some work and an openness to ideas that might conflict with folks who feel that, "My view is the only view because I'm convinced of it and anyone who asks questions of the Bible or my view is a person without faith."

The following suggestions are designed to help us view the Bible in a way that, though not necessarily more accurate, open us up to learning to be better explorers and interpreters. They are in no wise intended to claim that the Earth is not younger than some postulate.

- I. The first view suggests that the length of life pictured in chapter five is deliberate in order to show the importance or success of the lives of these patriarchs. There is evidence of this being done in other Semitic literature of the time. In Mesopotamia, according to Speiser (The Anchor Bible-Genesis),

"We find a firmly embedded tradition about successive antediluvian rulers, a tradition which is attested as early as the end of the third millennium, and as late as the third century BC. The

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<sup>127</sup> As we will see, the number "40" is symbolic and simply means "as long as it took to complete the event." Multiples of 40 are also imbued with this concept.

<sup>128</sup> See also the study, "Secrets in the Creation Account Few Know About" – The study of chapters 1-11 in Genesis online at [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org) "Topical Studies" page 76 – 77 on "genealogies."

number of rulers (including the hero of the flood) vacillates between nine and ten (sometimes less) and their respective reigns run from 18,600 to nearly 65,000 years. For the same interval, the Cainite list, which gives no ages, records eight patriarchs, and the Sethite genealogy knows of ten. The relative figures in P's report turn out to be exceptionally moderate by comparison, since the entire lifetime of even a Methuselah fails to reach a millennium. Of far greater importance, however, is the fact that the Biblical names in the lists bear no demonstrable relation to the standard cuneiform series. The difference between patriarchs and kings is likewise worth stressing. It is thus apparent that the underlying tradition had been subjected to considerable modification in some immediate center."

What is being suggested is that the numbers for the ages represent the importance of these ancient leaders. Generally, in the Old Testament, old age is thought of as deserving great respect. (See Lev. 19:32a; Deut. 32:7; Job 32:7; and Prov. 16:31)

It might be well that the author really intended no genealogy at all in terms of chronology and our traditional ways of understanding them. They could be symbolic of importance or faithfulness in God's plan and purpose.

II. Let's look at this next possibility. The numbers actually used to designate the age are in themselves symbolic of certain important attributes of the person mentioned. Speiser considers this point as well in the same aforementioned article. He states,

"How such figures were interpreted at the time is something one may only guess at today. If a specific principle ever underlay these numbers, it is no longer apparent. Moreover, in marked contrast to the names, the numbers were not dependably transmitted or handled, for both the LXX (Septuagint) and the Samaritan readings depart from the Hebrew text as well as from each other. Only rarely is there any hint as to how a given figure may have emerged. Thus, Enoch's total of years corresponds to the 365 years in the solar year, and is surely related in some way to the notice of his unprecedented treatment by God, with whom Enoch walked; hence too, the prominence of Enoch is apocryphal in many apocalyptic writings. Lamech's total of 777 years appears to be linked up with the numbers 7 and 77 and his namesake's "song of the sword" (4:24; Matthew 18:22). And the number 500 which represents Noah's age at the birth of all three of his sons is a plainly round figure, as is the age of 600 at the onset of the flood.

A numerical puzzle of an entirely different sort helps to deepen the already profound mystery of Enoch. As the seventh in the line of the antediluvian patriarchs, Enoch parallels the Mesopotamian Enmeduranna, who is the seventh king before the flood according to the best textual evidence. Enmeduranna's capital city was the ancient center for the sun god Sippar, which might explain the number of 365 that is recorded for Enoch.

Finally, prodigious as are the life spans of the individual patriarchs, they are dovetailed to such an extent that the total elapsed time adds up to no more than 1656 years in the Hebrew version. The death of Adam has to be dated to the generation of Noah's father Lamech. In turn, Noah himself would have witnessed the sixtieth birthday of Abraham. All such results have to be evaluated in terms of the limited chronological horizons of the age that produced them."

What further significance these numbers may have is found in “The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible,” volume 3, pages 561-566.

Raymond Dillard<sup>129</sup> wrote the following regarding the genealogies in his introduction to I Chronicles in the NASB Study Bible.

“Analysis of genealogies, both inside and outside of the Bible, has disclosed that they serve a variety of functions (with different principles governing the lists), that they vary in form (some being segmented, others linear) and depth (number of generations listed) and that they are often fluid subject to change.”

“There are general areas in which genealogies function; the familial domestic, the legal political, and the religious. In the domestic area an individual’s social status, privileges and obligations may be reflected in his placement in the lineage (see: 7:14-19)<sup>130</sup>; the rights of the firstborn son and the secondary status of the children of concubines are examples from the Bible. In the political sphere, genealogies substantiate claims to heredity office or settle competing claims when the office is contested. Land organization and territorial groupings of social units may also be determined by genealogical reckoning – e.g., the division of the land among the twelve tribes. In Israel, military levies also proceeded along genealogical lines; several of the genealogies in Chronicles reflect military conscription (5:1-26; 7:1-12, 30-40; 8:1-40). Genealogies function in the religious sphere primarily by establishing membership among the priests and Levites (6:1-30; 9:10-34; Neh. 7:61-65).”

“As to form, some genealogical lists trace several lines of descent (segmented genealogies) while others are devoted to a single line (linear genealogies).”

“Comparisons of genealogical lists of the same tribal or family line often brings to light surprising differences. This fluidity of the lists may reflect variation in function. But sometimes changes in the status or relations of social structures are reflected in genealogies by changes in the relationships of names in the genealogies (see notes on 1:35-42; 6:22, 27) or by the addition of names or segments to a lineage (see notes on 5:11-22; 6:27; 7:6-12). The most common type of fluidity in Biblical materials is telescoping, the omission of names from the list. Unimportant names are left out in order to relate an individual to a prominent ancestor, or possibly to achieve the desired number of names in the genealogy. Some Biblical genealogies, for example, omit names to achieve multiples of seven. For the period from David to the exile Matthew gives 14 generations (2 times 7), while Luke gives 21 (3 times 7), and the same authors give similar multiples of seven for the period from the exile to Jesus (Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38).”

“The genealogies of Chronicles show variation in all these properties, the arrangements often reflect the purpose for which the genealogies were composed prior to them being adopted by the Chronicler as part of his record.”

In other words, the genealogies are constructed, like most all scripture, based on a theme, point or message. Actual chronological order of historical accuracy is not the priority.

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<sup>129</sup> (January 7, 1944 – October 1, 1993) Professor of Old Testament language and literature at Westminster Theological Seminary.

<sup>130</sup> All Scripture references are in I Chronicles.

So, perhaps we have a similar occurrence here in Genesis. Though foreign to our standard of writing, the Hebrew author under God’s inspiration was evidently trying to get more across than the mere fact that people had parents. It might also be noted that Jesus was called “The Son of David” quite often though David lived a thousand years before Christ was born. This is only an illustration of Hebrew thought and literary form as it relates to the solidarity of a family or national line. For example, even today at Passover, the head of the family tells the story beginning with, “When we were in Egypt....” Young people today might speak of World War II saying, “we fought the enemy....” The way terms are used and written suggests that perhaps the Hebrew author may only have listed the significant persons in the genealogy and not every person in succession such as seen above in Jesus being called the “Son of David”.

This argument is only suggested as a means of trying to understand what the Scripture is telling us and why. As the accounts stand, great difficulty exists as well as confusion if we attempt to force the material into our way of thinking. No one approach is satisfying or definitive in and of itself to all of us. But we can learn that there is much we don’t know about this literature that perhaps ancient people did. Could these techniques of writing be perfectly understood and acceptable in some symbolic way to ancient folks? Could it be we who are deficient in our ability to grasp the point and interpret correctly? Perish the thought!

III. It is also interesting to note that there are 10 names given before the flood and 10 names given after the flood. What makes this quite significant is that the Seth line parallels the Shem line in many respects including the similarity of their names.

One can also notice that, though the ages are still great, they decrease in length rather than increase. Note further in comparing the first chart with the one below from chapter eleven, that the Seth line ends with Noah giving birth to three sons, and the Shem line ends with Terah giving birth to three sons as well, the chief being Abraham. The years attributed to certain figures is interesting as well. Many scholars see the first eleven chapters of Genesis as essentially an introduction and preparation to Abraham. These chapters are unique in their way of conveying the pre-history of man before Abraham and focus not on historical chronology but on the theme of why man needs redemption and how God prepared to meet this need through Abraham. There is no question concerning the “historical” break and difference in style and content before and after the appearance of Abraham.

NAMES	AGE AT BIRTH OF SON	HOW MANY YEARS HE LIVED AFTER THE EVENT	TOTAL AGE
SHEM	100	400	500
ARPHAXAD	35	368	403
SHELAH	30	373	403
EBER	34	396	430
PELEG	30	179	209
REU	32	175	207
SERUG	30	170	200

NAHOR	29	90	119
TERAH	70	65	135
ABRAM	100	75	175

IV. These observations seem to be more than coincidence. There seems to be more here than first meets the eye. But have we gone as far as possible? I think not. In the genealogies of both Genesis 5 and 11 there are a series of “begats” (KJV). “Begats” have never made for exciting reading. Nevertheless, they play an important part in the narrative of scripture. We can notice clearly in comparing the genealogies of Matthew and Luke that there are differences as well as gaps in the succession of the names. It has been rightly concluded that each author was pointing out a different fact about the line from which our Lord came. In other words, the genealogies are used as a literary tool or device to explain and additional truth!

Perhaps we have a similar occurrence here in Genesis. Though foreign to our standard of writing, the Hebrew author under God’s inspiration was evidently trying to get more across than the mere fact that people had parents. It might also be noted that Jesus was called “The Son of David” quite often though David lived a thousand years before Christ was born. This is only an illustration of Hebrew thought and literary form as it relates to the solidarity of a family or national line. Today at Passover, the head of the family tells the story beginning with, “When we were in Egypt....” Young people today might speak of World War II saying, “we fought the enemy....” The way terms are used and written suggests that perhaps the Hebrew author may only have listed the significant persons in the genealogy and not every person in succession such as seen above in Jesus being called the “Son of David”.

This argument is only suggested as a means of trying to understand what the Scripture is telling us and why. As the accounts stand, great difficulty exists as well as confusion. No one approach is satisfying or definitive in itself. But we can learn that there is much we don’t know about this literature that perhaps ancient people did. Could these techniques of writing be perfectly understood and acceptable in some symbolic way to ancient folks and it be we who are deficient in our ability to grasp the point and interpret correctly? Perish the thought!

V. Finally, a few alternatives remain as possibilities. One is the “fill space and time theory”. Since the author of Genesis, this theory postulates, had no records of such early events, he used traditions he gathered from his own people and surrounding nations to formulate an account that would hang together for the people as making sense and to give them some sense of identity with God and man. So, what he did was, through the genealogies, link the reader with Abraham and Abraham with Adam and the creation of God. By this he gives the people a sense of destiny and purpose.

VI. What is noticeable and significant in my mind is that though we are obsessed with dates and times in our world, there is not one date or reference to a date or specific period relating to a date in the entire Bible other than the feast days Israel was commanded to observe. The writers simply did not care about this. Their writing was thematic and focused on the spiritual core of people and the plan of God to redeem the human race. Dates are unimportant and those who focus on them either in the past or future are missing the point of God’s message. Even Jesus noted this. Speaking of His return, He said, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.” (Matthew 24:36.) Yet multitudes of people have spent their lives attempting to determine this date and all have been wrong. They will always be wrong and are an embarrassment to the church as are those who propose and impose literal and ignorant

opinions on the Scripture. But they trudge on ignoring Jesus' words and God's message throughout the entire Bible.

VII. Another thought is to note that man, once good and Holy, deteriorated rapidly when sin entered. This could be shown by the decreasing age spans. So, this is why we have the covenant and worship as we do. Perhaps it is the intention of the Scripture to show how godliness reaps the benefits of a long life.

There is much more that can be said in response to these thoughts. Perhaps, at least, we can remain open to the possibility that there is something about these passages that is wanting to convey more information than is apparent to the casual observer. The search for what God is actually trying to teach us is never wasted. God bless you in your work of discovery and growth.

## THE “SONS OF GOD” AND THE “NEPHILIM”

### GENESIS 6:1-4

“Who or what are the ‘sons of God?’” And the same questions are raised about the “Nephilim?” Every nuance of the passage in Genesis 6:1-4 ff. begs giving the best answer possible to this question.

A key factor here is not the challenge of who all these beings are, but that this short narrative explains why God decided to destroy mankind from off the earth with the exception of Noah and his family. So, the narrative is about God’s will to accomplish His plan of redemption and no human wickedness or evil will railroad it regardless of how corrupt and wicked they have or may become.

With that being said, there is a definite challenge to giving a clear and specific answer to this subject as opinions differ even among the best scholars. We will do our best.

#### First, the “Sons of God.” Here is the text:

Genesis 6:1-2,

1: “Now it came about, when mankind began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2: that the sons of God saw that the daughters of mankind were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.”

There are three main ideas about who these could be. The most prevalent, but not universal thought is that, I. These are some sort of divine or spiritual heavenly being or angel. The next view is that II. They are the unnamed descendants of the line of Seth intermarrying the ungodly line of Cain, and the third view is that III. They are some outside dominate human force who have invaded the people and intermarried the daughters descendant from Adam and Eve. We have mention of these daughters in Genesis 5:3 mentioned along with additional sons. So, views two and three conjecture that these are human males. Other views have been suggested, but these remain the principal ones.

I. There are some passages supporting the view that these “sons of God” are angelic, spiritual or heavenly creatures. Here they are,

A. Job 1:6, “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.”

This does suggest that these “sons of God” are some sort of spiritual beings. Chapter 2, verse 1 repeats this scene.

B. Job 2:1, “Again, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.”

C. Job 38:4-7, 4: “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding, 5: Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the measuring line over it? 6: “On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7: When the morning stars sang together And all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

Though not specified as angelic or spiritual beings, the implication seems to underline this. But we must understand that the Book of Job is of a literary nature that really should not be relied upon for theological determinations.<sup>131</sup>

In Job, there is no clear-cut statement as to who these beings are and just because they “present themselves before the Lord and Satan is with them” doesn’t necessarily mean they are in some heavenly realm at all. The phrase, “before the Lord” occurs dozens of times if not hundreds in the Bible to describe earthly happenings. Take, for example, Genesis 18:22, “Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the LORD.” Exodus 16:9, “Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your grumblings.'" Exodus 27:21, "In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel.” (Colored italics mine) The examples are endless. On the other hand, we have 38:7, speaking of the time of creation and, “When the morning stars sang together, And, all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

One can assume the nature of these “sons,” but it cannot be done with exactitude. Job is in full poetry here and the phrase, “sons of God” may not even connect in meaning to the phrase in Genesis. In this case, it could reflect some angelic host. Considering that the word “Adam” is plural (note: Genesis 5:2 for example) it could still speak of created people.

D. Some reference Daniel 3:24-25, 24: “Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up quickly; he said to his counselors, ‘Was it not three men *that* we threw bound into the middle of the fire?’ They replied to the king, ‘Absolutely, O king.’ 25: “He responded, ‘Look! I see four men untied *and* walking about in the middle of the fire unharmed, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of *the* gods!’”

This is a stretch as you can see. A Babylonian king would have no idea about the scripture

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<sup>131</sup> For a commentary on the Book of Job and why this is proposed, please see: [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org) “STUDIES”, Book studies/commentaries, Job.

references and the NASB supplies “*the*” and, “gods” is plural.

In the New Testament, II Peter 2:1-9 is viewed as referring to these beings though not specifically mentioned. In that passage we see Peter warning his readers about false prophets noting that they will be destroyed by God but His faithful saved and from verse 4 Peter wrote, (note the italics),

4: “*For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, held for judgment;*<sup>132</sup> 5: and did not spare the ancient world, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6: and *if* He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing *them* to ashes, having made *them* an example of what is coming for the ungodly; 7: and *if* He rescued righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the perverted conduct of unscrupulous people 8: (for by what he saw and heard *that* righteous man, while living among them, felt *his* righteous soul tormented day after day by *their* lawless deeds), 9: *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from a trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment...”

Here, we have “angels” who “sinned.” The time frame is the same time frame in the narrative we are examining as verse 5 here speaks about Noah. In this and the following examples, one must draw the assumption or conclusion that the “angels” being referred to are these “sons of God” because the “sons of God” are not specifically mentioned at all.

“Hell” is “tartaros” used only this one time in the New Testament and as Peter sets the parallelism, it is “pits of darkness” where they are held for judgment. Where did he get this idea? The early Jews of Jesus’ day were exposed to a number of thoughts by apocryphal books such as The Book of Enoch<sup>133</sup>, the Assumption of Moses,<sup>134</sup> The Wisdom of Solomon,<sup>135</sup> and a great deal of Greek mythology about “tartaros.”

In fact, Jude, verse 14-15 also quotes from this apocryphal and apocalyptic book of Enoch,

14: “*It was* also about these people *that* Enoch, *in the seventh generation* from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord has come with many thousands of His holy ones, 15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.’”

This quotation in Jude is from the book of Enoch, chapter 1, verse 9,

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<sup>132</sup> Underlined italics mine to emphasize the key part of the passage for our study.

<sup>133</sup> Around 300-200 B.C. See: Enoch 10:4-7; 19:1; 54:5-10.

<sup>134</sup> A first century composition.

<sup>135</sup> Chapter 17. This book is thought to be composed in the mid-first century B.C.

9. “And behold, he comes with myriads of the holy to pass judgment upon them, and will destroy the impious, and will call to account all flesh for everything the sinners and the impious have done and committed against him.”<sup>136</sup>

These images were taught to them by the rabbis and included in their thinking and impacted their understanding. There is no canonical biblical information outside of this passage and Jude 6-7 to look to. It reads,

6: “And angels who did not keep their own domain but abandoned their proper dwelling place, *these* He has kept in eternal restraints under darkness for the judgment of the great day, 7: just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these *angels* indulged in sexual perversion and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.”

This also reflects Enoch 10:1-6.

In verse 7, the word “angels” is not in the original but supplied but it does seem to be the antecedent of “angels” in verse 6.

So, this is the evidence supporting the idea that the “Sons of God” were heavenly beings or angels who had intercourse with the “daughters of men” and bore the “the mighty men of old, men of renown.” Who these are is not specified, and before the flood no candidates are suggested. However, after the flood, Genesis 10:8-9 reads,

8: “Now Cush fathered Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. 9: He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore, it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.” The word “mighty” is the same Hebrew word (*gibbor*) as in 6:4.<sup>137</sup>

This is speculation, of course, and not germane to the point of the narrative.

Standing in opposition to this view are Jesus’ words Himself. In answer to the question of the Sadducees in Matthew 22:23-28 regarding whose wife in the resurrection a woman (who had been married to seven men) would be, Jesus answered,

“You are mistaken, since you do not understand the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.” (29-30)<sup>138</sup>

The word “angel” means “messenger.” “Angels” look to be unlikely to have been the “Sons

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<sup>136</sup> The Book of Enoch dates to around 200 B.C. and is excluded from both the Jewish and Western canon due to its having much mythological content and was not written by any known Old Testament author. The name of the book is spurious, though the content was interesting to the early Jews and had an obvious impact.

<sup>137</sup> Also: I Chronicles 1:10. The idea of survivors after the flood is abhorrent to many, but there is biblical evidence of this as we will note. How do we handle it? That also will be dealt with in the commentary in chapters 7-9.

<sup>138</sup> The sect of the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. So, this was a “test” question to attempt to undermine Jesus’ teachings regarding the resurrection of the dead. See also: Mark 12:25.

of God.” Yet quotes from Enoch by Peter and Jude use the word “angel.” The Old Testament has its own word for “angel” which is “malak” and it is never used in reference to “The sons of God.” It is always used of a messenger, guard or guide. So, we are left to ponder. Could these “sons of God” be something or someone else? Outside of Enoch and quotes from him, there is no link to “angels.” Further, the references to them in both testaments are only used to teach the consequences of those who are sinful, wicked and unrighteous versus those who are righteous and virtuous in God’s sight, the point being that even these spiritual beings are not exempt from God’s judgment.

II.-III. The second and third view is that these are actually just men, either descendants of Seth or outside invaders coming into the picture.

Going back to the Genesis text in question, lets note that the “daughters of men” are introduced in verse one and in verse two we see then in conjunction with “the sons of God” - (bene Elohim).

The significance of this is that there are references to two groups of men. On the one hand we have “men” (Adam) who bore beautiful daughters, and on the other “sons of God” who took wives from among these women. These are “sons of Elohim.”

I find this significant in that as “Yahweh” (Lord) is the covenant name of God and shows relationship with those in that context (Adam). “Elohim”, God’s title or nature is not His relational “name.” So, these “sons of God” (Elohim) may not be a part of His covenant people as are the folks mentioned in chapter 5 particularly Noah and his descendants of course.

As to the descendants of Seth, we have this lineage in Genesis 5:4-7 along with the comment that he has other sons and daughters beside his son Enosh. But there is no indication of any relationship of these other sons and daughters to the “sons of God.” The entire point of this narrative is to bring us to Abraham and his descendants.<sup>139</sup>

Thus, the “sons of God” could be outsiders, men from outside the redemptive lineage of those we have to date in the texts prior to this chapter.

Though ccommentators are unsure about the nature of these “sons of God. “They are. In my opinion, “men” and I would postulate descendants of those going before such as is mentioned in chapter four and five as “other sons and daughters” or, even as is mentioned in 10:8-12 about “Nimrod”, that he was “mighty” (the Hebrew “gibbor” the identical term used to describe Goliath).

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<sup>139</sup> It is vital to understand that the point of the entire book of Genesis is to affirm the truth of God’s redemptive plan for mankind. His provision for the creation of mankind from Genesis, chapter one, is a vital theme which sets the stage for the mercy and grace of God in the midst of a rebellious and disobedient humanity. For much more on this, see: [www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org), “STUDIES” “topical studies” – “Secrets in the Genesis Account Few know About – Chapters 1-11 study.”

But once again, the point of these stories is to establish the reason for God to abolish mankind from his creation.

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### **Second, the “Nephilim.”**

“Nephilim.” This term is used in two places in the Bible as reproduced below. There are no other translations of the Hebrew word “Nephilim” in the Bible. This Hebrew word is only used in the two following references. Using the NASB as a base reference English translation,<sup>140</sup>

Genesis 6:4 reads,

4: “The ‘Nephilim’ were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.”

Numbers 13:30-33 reads:

30: “Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, ‘We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it.’ 31: But the men who had gone up with him said, ‘We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.’ 32: So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, ‘The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size. 33: ‘There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.’”<sup>141</sup>

I will note here that the “Nephilim” are noted as existing before the “sons of God” took wives had offspring and after that as well. Further, it appears that they also are noted as being here before the flood and centuries later in the sons of Anak in Canaan during the time of Moses and Joshua.

Though some literalist conservatives would rise up in objection, we will see the scriptures stating this later on in this study. As far as the flood goes and any survivors who were not on the Ark, this of course could become a sticky issue and arguing over it would produce nothing of value. It is actually irrelevant in terms of the point of the book or this legend. There is no mention as to how this came to be, so speculation may be interesting, but

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<sup>140</sup> We must note that the NASB, like all translations, has problems.

<sup>141</sup> This comment is obviously “back-written” into the text from a future time, most likely during the times of David, Solomon and subsequent kings. It is likely that a lot of the book so far is compiled from many written sources, as well as from oral tradition.

confidence is unavailable. Genesis 6:4 could easily read, “The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and sometime after the flood they were also found to exist.” Can this be possible? We’ll see.

There are only a few clues as to what and who these folks are and what they were not. We will look at the etymology of the word and what it connotes. We will look at its relationship to the sons of Anak. We will also look at another Hebrew word “raphah” which is translated “giant” and see what else we can discover.

Verse 4 of Genesis, chapter 6 is both awkward and can be confusing due to the way it is phrased. Right off, let’s state that these “Nephilim” were **not** the offspring of, “...the sons of God and the daughters of men.”

Notice next that in translating the word “Nephilim” most translations do not use the word “giant” with the exception of the KJV and a few very old 16<sup>th</sup> century versions as well as a few other odd versions. Any translation worth its salt will leave it “Nephilim.” Here’s why. The exact identity of these people is somewhat sketchy, including their size.

Next, let’s look at the meaning and origin of the word used to describe the “Nephilim.” The word comes from the root “nah-phal”. This root has nuances that include: “To fall”; “falling”; “fallen”; “causing someone to fall” (depending on the stem), “throw down”; “cast down”; “lie down or prostrate” (as in prayer even) “ruin”; “overthrow”; “cause to lie down”, which transitions into “slay”; “kill”; “bring to destruction”; and so on. In the “im” ending of the word, we have a plural. Thus, the root idea in applying this to people is that they are formidable warriors. “Martin Luther gives the correct meaning, ‘tyrants:’ they were called *Nephilim* because they fell upon the people and oppressed them.”<sup>142</sup>

In the Numbers 13:33 reference the eight spies reported, “There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

We have phrases like “too strong”, “devouring inhabitants”, “*great* size”. The word “*great*” is italicized in the NASB indicating it was supplied but not in the original. They cause people to be downtrodden, enslaved, dead, etc. Some think the word means that they were “fallen” people, extreme sinners etc., but this is a weak position.

They were just “men.” The Hebrew word “Nephilim” does describe “stature” or formidability”, but the word itself does not indicate “size.” But since the spies who entered the promised land (Numbers 13 – and called themselves “grasshoppers” by comparison), we can glean that these “Nephilim” (or sons of Anak) were indeed taller and bigger than average. Other passages bear that out. The average size for Israelites, or any mid-eastern or Egyptian

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<sup>142</sup> Quoted in Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, e-Sword online.

man in those days was about five foot four to five foot six. This is a reasonably known fact.<sup>143</sup> A six-footer would be quite big and both Saul and David approached that size.<sup>144</sup>

Anyway, it is quite possible, even probable that the ten spies who gave the negative report exaggerated the circumstances in Canaan to avoid being involved in conflict because they were simply cowards who did not trust in God. They said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.” So they gave out to the sons of Israel a negative report of the land which they had spied out, saying, ‘The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of *great* stature.’” Again, the word “*great*” is supplied by the translators in Numbers 13:31-32. Joshua and Caleb had no such apprehensions.

We also have these peoples in Numbers, called “The sons of Anak”. Let’s get a closer look at these people and then go back to Genesis. Anak is a Canaanite word meaning “neck” or “neck chain”. These were people “of the neck”. They were also called “Emim” (“a terror”) and Rephaim” (from the same root [raphah] - “giant”) but more often, “great and tall.”

Apparently, these people “of the neck” were known for binding a chain around the necks of a prisoners and dragging them into slavery. The neck chain is a mark of slavery. Perhaps the idea of “devouring the people” comes from this. The plural is “Anakim” and also found in Deuteronomy 1:28; 2:10, 11; 21; 9:2; and Joshua 11:21-22; 14:12-15. Anak is further referenced in: Numbers 13:22, 28, 33; Joshua 15:13-14; 21:11; and Judges 1:20. You might add any references to Rephaim and Emim as well.<sup>145</sup> All of the names for these tall people seem to be related to the “sons of Anak” who are connected to the Nephilim. Both are mentioned in Genesis 14:5 where the story of Abraham’s defeat of Chedorlaomer took place when this king kidnapped Lot.

Their habitat was primarily the Gaza strip (or territory) extending from the Mediterranean Sea east to Hebron. The Philistines (from whom we get the word “Palestine”) seemed to have come from Greece or one of the Greek islands and dwelt in Palestine by the time of Abraham (c. 2000 B.C.). The Anakim may also be related to these people as they also were in the land by then. They are mentioned as enemies of Egypt in the general Abrahamic era.

(Note: Numbers 13:22) Othniel, the son of Caleb (and the first judge) drove these people out of the land. They retreated to Gaza, Gath and Ashdod. Goliath was from Gath (a “Gittite”).

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<sup>143</sup> From the descriptions in I Samuel of Saul and David and the recovery of buried people from that time.

<sup>144</sup> Goliath was even larger. And, contrary to popular belief, David was a big man when he slew Goliath, probably between 26 and 30 plus years of age, bearded, arrogant and a very skilled killer already. This is quite easily demonstrated from a careful examination of the book of I Samuel, chapter 17 and onward. He also liked the idea of a monetary reward, a woman, and tax-free family land holdings. Speaking of Goliath as a descendant of these “Nephilim,” he was likely close to seven feet tall give or take. Personally, I think a tall six to mid-seven-footer. A “cubit”, though often thought of as 18”, is smaller when one takes into consideration the actual size of the people then and there. We are not talking 20th century Americans here. A cubit is more like 13-15 inches at best in ancient perspective. So, Goliath, at six cubits and a span would be roughly seven feet tall. Could he have approached eight feet? At the very outside, but I doubt it. Nine? Please. For a detailed study on this, please see my website:

[www.bibleclassroom.org](http://www.bibleclassroom.org), controversial topic XI.

<sup>145</sup> Reading these references will begin to give you a better idea about these people. Please do so at your convenience.

His whole family was big. But it seems that everyone who battled them won. The Bible describes them as “great, numerous, and tall” repeatedly.

Returning to Genesis 6, there exists a reference to the “Nephilim” prior to the flood, and then it says, “and afterwards”, referring to the time before and after “the sons of God took the daughters of men as wives, but possibly before and after the flood as we see them referred to in the time of Moses and Joshua as extant in Canaan. There are references to the “Anakim” during the time of Abraham onward, and even several hundreds of years during and after Israel conquered Palestine as we saw.<sup>146</sup> The point is that the author of Genesis 6 referred to the “Nephilim” as being “on the earth in those days” suggesting that he knew of their existence in more recent history and placed an editorial comment in the text.

So, aligning the “Nephilim” with “Anak” is a probable conclusion especially given Numbers 13:33. Interestingly, there is a tie in the names given to these two peoples. The Anakim were also called “Rephaim” as we saw above. The root of this word is the same as for “giant” and the word “Nephilim” is used to describe the “Anakim” in Numbers 13. The actual word for “giant” or “giants” is the word “raphah”. It is translated “giant” only in II Samuel 21:16,18,20,22; and “giants” only in I Chronicles 20:4,6,8. These references are worth reading! Note the relationship to the past and to Goliath. Both accounts relate the same events, but the references are interesting as they differ, one referencing “the giant” - Goliath and the other the “giants”.

Now, back to the Genesis reference. Genesis 6:4, “The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.” I reproduced the Hebrew of Genesis 6:4 below for a reference.

הנפילים היו בארץ בימים ההם וגם אחרי־כן אשר יבאו בני האלהים אל־בנות האדם וילדו להם המה  
הגברים אשר מעולם אנשי השם:

The sentence is indeed awkward. What it does not say is that these “Nephilim” had anything to do with the “sons of God” or the “daughters of men” or the offspring of these two groups. Why mention them? To lay the foundation for the conflict between peoples, namely the “Nephilim” and the children of the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men” who became the “mighty men of old, men of renown” and the subsequent total depravity of mankind prompting God to eradicate the wicked from His creation – except for Noah and his family.

There seems to be some need to explain the origin of these “Nephilim.” But there is none. They are noted as just being in existence at that time and “afterwards.”

In a related thought, research draws the conclusion that the Torah and subsequent books were actually formalized and compiled into written documents (complete scrolls) during the time

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<sup>146</sup> Note: Deuteronomy 1:23-31; 2:9-11; 2:14-22; 9:1-3; Joshua 11:21-23; 14:6-15; Judges 1:20.

of the kings of Judah after David, i.e., during the first temple era. Within these documents is ample evidence of this (not necessarily the time frame - which take more work to establish - but later editorializing) easily spotted if one simply begins to look up phrases in Genesis and other books such as “to this day” and the like. Quick examples – Genesis 19:37-38; 22:14 etc. These are dozens of these types of phrases in the O.T.

In fact, the note in Genesis 4:22, “As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, *the forger of all implements of bronze and iron*; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah” places the writing after 1,200 B.C.E. the beginning of the iron age, and so concurrent with the time frame mentioned.

Just spotting this alone can help in pinning down dates of Biblical events such as the Exodus, conquest of Canaan and so on. So, these editorial “intrusions” were to help the current reader understand the “what’s” of the past. So, if one accepts the “Temple” era as the “compiling scenario,” our text (6:4) makes a whole lot of sense.

However, let’s make a further observation. Genesis 6:1-4 could be totally left out of the narrative and there would be no interruption in the narrative. The chapter could simply pick up in verse 5 and go on and we would be none the wiser. The reason for this inclusion seems to be for laying the foundation for the necessity of the flood by pointing out that the wickedness of men was aided by the descriptions in verses 1-2 and 4-5. Looking at the entire immediate context we read,

Genesis 6:1-8,

1: “Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2: that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. 3: Then the LORD said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless, his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.’ 4: The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. 5: (Then) the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6: The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7: The LORD said, ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.’ 8: But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.”

Does the inclusion of this explanation (verses 1-2; 4-5) add any reason for the decision for the flood? It could be argued both ways effectively. The key comment is found in verses 5 and 6. The word “then” is not a good translation (in fact it is not even close) as it suggests that this verse is based on the previous passages. The Hebrew is, “The Lord (Yahweh) “saw”

the wickedness...” “Wickedness” had been developing and increasing and threatened to derail God’s plan of redemption for all mankind. This was something He did not permit until His plan was fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah.

It seems fair to state that man’s (Adam’s – man’s) wickedness caused the Lord great sorrow and He realized that a redemptive work could not be completed through the existing population - man, whose life is sustained by God’s breath - (“ruah” or spirit – Genesis 2:7) - but of the flesh, nevertheless, must be destroyed. The 120 years is not the span of a man’s life, but the amount of time God will give man until the destruction of the flood, presumably to repent.<sup>147</sup>

In conclusion, the point of the book of Genesis so far is to present the true God, the creator, who made man in His own image giving man dominion over the creation God prepared for us. Knowing in advance what would occur, God had prepared a plan of redemption to any and all who would call upon His name in faith and trust.

A major theme is that God has prepared the way for people in advance of their arrival. This theme is repeated from Genesis, chapter 1 to Revelation, chapter 22. His grace and mercy, as well as reaching out to and calling to mankind is evident all through the scriptures. But few call out to Him. From the beginning of Genesis chapter 1 to the end of chapter 4 not one person called out to the Lord. Yet he showed His mercy, gave instructions of life and humanity disregarded His voice and word.

This story is still the same this very day, and His judgment will fall one day just as Jesus said,

“But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Matthew 24:36-39

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<sup>147</sup> Frankly, this passage, the longer I study and read it, looks to be the blending of at least two documents or traditions. There is no question that this happened in the Book of Genesis, in fact in much of the Pentateuch, as Genesis 1:1-2:3 to 2:4 ff. demonstrates clearly in the Hebrew. You might not like this idea, but there it is anyway.

## TABLE OF THE DESCENDANTS OF HAM, SHEM AND JAPHETH

Four pages with map

NAME	POSSIBLE NATIONAL IDENTITY
Ham's family tree	
14. Cush -	Ethiopia (south of Egypt)
15. Mizraim -	Egypt
16. Put -	Libya
17. Canaan -	Canaan
18. Seba -	Upper Egypt or possibly Arabia
19. Havilah -	Southern Arabia?
20. Sabtah -	South Eastern Arabia
21. Raamah -	Eastern Arabia, Yemen
22. Sabteca -	Northern Yemen
23. Sheba -	Southwest Arabia
24. Dedan -	East Arabia near Persian Gulf

The remaining descendants of Ham are found in Western Arabia, today's Jordan, Syria and, as we will see, into modern Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan.

NAME	POSSIBLE NATIONAL IDENTITY
Shem's family tree	
25. Elam -	Iran
26. Ashur -	Assyria
27. Arpachshad -	Iraq – Babylonian territory
28. Lud -	Difficult to pin down. Possibly Lydians or more likely the Lubdu of the upper Tigris.
29. Aram -	Aramaeans, Eastern Mesopotamia

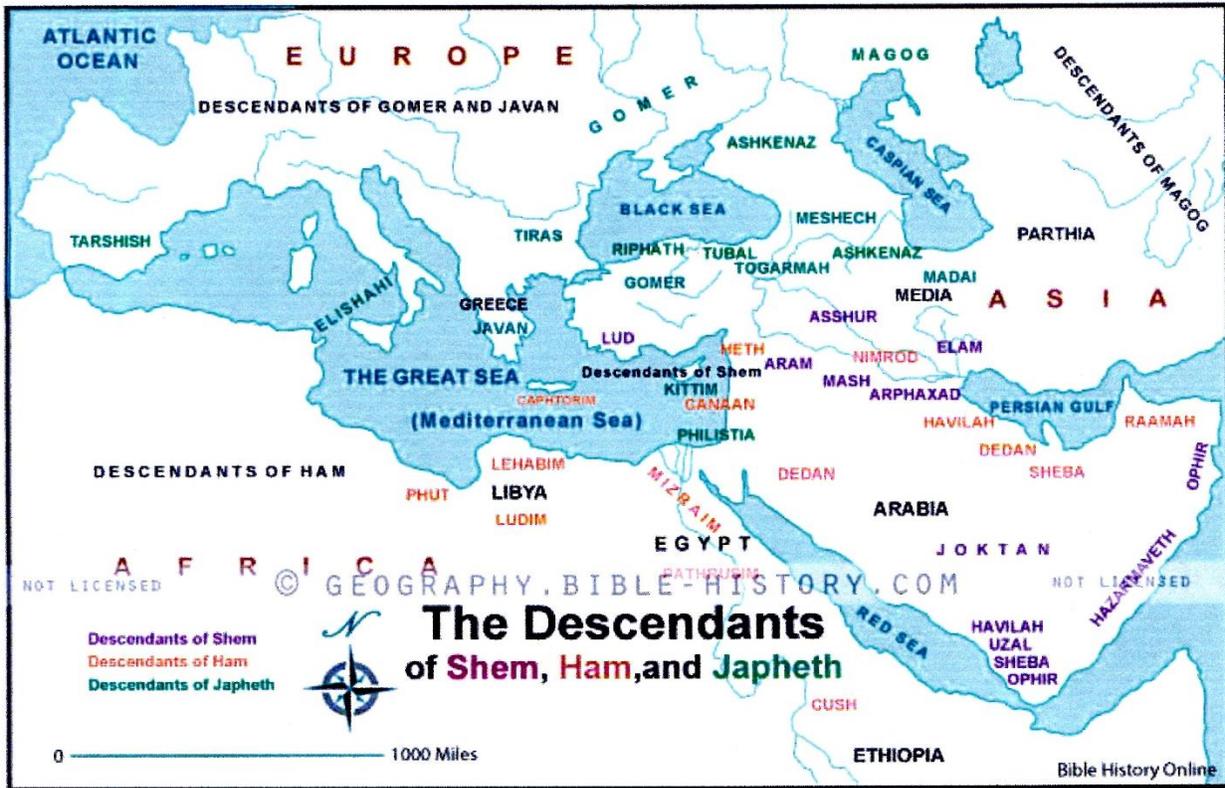
Abraham is the direct descendant of Arpachshad. The tree goes as follows from Genesis 11:12-26 Arpachshad , Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, Abram.

## NAME

## POSSIBLE NATIONAL IDENTITY

## Japhet's family tree

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Gomer – (Also: Ezek. 38:6)  | The Cimmerians  |
| 2. Magog – (Also: Ezek. 38:2- 39:15-<br>the king of this territory is "Gog") | In Anatolia, The Scythians or<br>less likely the Lydians          |
| 3. Madai – (Is. 13:17, 21:2; Dan. 5:28,<br>6:15-16; Ezra 6:2)                | The Medes   |
| 4. Y(J)avan –(Ezek. 27:13; Is. 6:19)   | Ionian Greeks and then all<br>Greeks                              |
| 5-6. Tubal and Meshek – Ezek. 27:13,<br>32:26, 38:2-3, 39:1)                 | Central and Eastern Anatolia                                      |
| 7. Tyras - (I Chron. 1:5)  | Italy but migrated to Asia<br>Minor                               |
| 8. Ashkenaz – (I Chron. 1:6; Jer. 51:27)                                     | Merged with The Scythians   |
| 9. Riphath - (I Chron. 1:6)<br>Asia Minor near the Black Sea                 | Possibly Bithynian, northern                                      |
| 10. Togarmah - (Ezek.27:13-14, 38:3-6)                                       | See map   |
| 11. Elisha – (Ezek. 27:7) Also "Kittim"                                      | Crete, Cyprus   |
| 12. Tarshish - (frequent mention)  | Difficult to pin down.<br>Carthage? Spain? Sardinia?              |
| 13. Dodanim -  | Difficult to pin down.<br>Phoenicia? Likely a sea coast<br>people |





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