

GENESIS
February 22, 2012

A. Prayer

B. Introduction

Often people turn to the first chapters of Genesis and begin to read but then jump ahead to the “unfamiliar stuff”. Those first 11 chapters have so many “stories” like Adam and Eve, then the genealogies...which no one likes to read... then Noah’s Ark ... and then the tower of Babel...all “familiar stories,” especially if you have grown up going to Sunday School. They seem so familiar with these “stories” that they make the decision... if they keep reading... to simply skip ahead to the next narrative section starting with chapter 12. Our problem today is that we are so “into” newer and better that we forget all too often to go back to the basics...those things that ARE familiar, sound, and true. It is the reason that the Reformers used to say that we need to have the gospel preached to us daily.

I have made the case for years that the first 11 chapters are crucial for us to understand the rest of Scripture and sometimes we must go back to the familiar to see things we never knew, missed or have even forgotten which will strengthen our faith in ways we can’t imagine. We need a “grander” vision of God then we usually carry with us and these chapters do that for us, for they set the stage for God’s activity in the rest of the book of Genesis and the entirety of Scripture.

In this study we will be going through the entirety of the book of Genesis for this book like no other can and will open our eyes to the God of history, in all His love, justice and creativity, putting the world together and dealing graciously with every facet of His creation. This book also opens our eyes to look at man, made in God’s own image, valuable, capable of making right and wrong moral choices...the amazing abilities given by God along with the tremendous evil perpetrated by men on one another. And finally, this book opens our eyes to look at ourselves enabling us to discover where we fit in relation to God, to our fellow man and to the world in general. Hopefully, in this study you will come to see the God of history caring about His world, His people and you and maybe just maybe you will come away and never be disinterested or discouraged by the “familiar stories” found in its pages again.

C. The outline of studies will progress this way with the most emphasis placed on the first 11 chapters.

1. Gen. 1:1-2- “In the Beginning...”
2. Gen. 1:3-2:3- “Creation Explained”
3. Gen. 1:26-31 and 2:4-25- “In the Image of God”
4. Gen. 3- “Paradise Lost”
5. Gen. 4- “Sin’s Consequences”
6. Gen. 5- 6:8- “Genealogies: Our Family History”
7. Gen. 6:9-8:14- “The Flood”
8. Gen. 8:15- 9:29- “Covenant with Noah”
9. Gen. 10-11- “Babel”
10. Gen. 12-14- “The Call of Abraham”
11. Gen. 15-20- “The Covenant of Grace”

12. Gen. 21-27- "Isaac- The Long Awaited Son"
13. Gen. 28-36- "How do you solve a problem like Jacob?"
14. Gen. 37-50- "Joseph in and over Egypt"

D. Read Gen. 1-2:3.

1. How shall we interpret the creation account? Fact or Fiction? Why?
2. Which came first the chicken or the egg? **You just can't start a study like this without asking this question...**☺ ☺ What proof do you have from this text that supports your conclusion?
3. Does the author suggest a date for creation?

E. Gen. 1:1-2 is extremely crucial for us to spend some time with.

1. What is basically being communicated with the words, *"In the beginning..."*? **It suggests there was no before...time wise! Hebrew= before the ages began...before time commenced. God did not have Moses write "very early on" or "In a galaxy far away in a time long ago" because time itself was part of creation. Since Moses began "in the beginning..." we have no account of what happened before. A people being curious always want to know what happened before. Jonathan Edwards responded one day to such an inquiry by saying, "God was making Hell for the curious!"**
2. What are some of things that the Bible says that God was doing "before time"..."before the foundations of the earth"...before the beginning? **John 1:1, 17:5,24; Eph. 1:4-8; Col. 1:17; I Peter 1:20**
3. God is the first subject of Genesis and by virtue of the placement here in this literature we know He will be the subject of the whole book. Everything else speaks to define His activity. How do we know this and why is that important? **The comma is placed here after the word "beginning" to emphasize the subject...God as the Creator! We also know because this comma is there that God was there at the beginning...so in a sense for our purposes...since we need things defined in time and space language... we can say He existed before time...the rest of Scripture tells us that He exists apart from time.**
4. The title for God here is Elohim. What do we know about this title of God? **It is used at least 35 times in Chapter 1-2:3. It is plural...describing for us, first of all His majesty...but it is the type of plural that means more than 2 so it could also be a hint at the Trinity... a plural within the Godhead. There are 3 plural references to Himself in verse 26... "us, our and our"... does this give us a clue to the Trinity as well? It's basic meaning is "strong One" but it is used of God in three persons...Father , Son and Holy Spirit. It also means Sovereign, Creator, Judge, Almighty One...over 2500 times it is used in the**

- OT. Define God. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice goodness and truth. The plural we see in Elohim and the plural references to Himself in verse 26 also communicates “fullness or completeness”. He is complete in Himself. He has no need of anything or anyone to be in relationship with.**
5. Why do you suppose that God doesn't tell us how He came to be in the pages of Scripture...or even seek to prove His existence?
 6. Next the text tells us, *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”* What is the most important truth in this statement other than letting us know who the subject is going to be of this whole book? **That God Created all there is! What did God create FROM according to the text? God existed within Himself; Father, Son and Holy Spirit...He had need of nothing or no one else for He is all in Himself. So there was “nothing” except God. The theological term is “ex nihilo” =out of/from nothing...but it means more...it also means that there was a prior cause. By His Word He created...His spoken Word is the cause of creation. When He commands, it happens. Why is the correct answers and the acceptance of those answers crucial to our faith today? They are the faith issue here. We will talk about the days of creation and we may not all come away with the same explanation concerning the length of the days...but we all must believe these two simple truths to be able to call ourselves “believers” : That God created all things and that He created all things from nothing but the power of His Word. This is the faith issue.**
 7. Stephen Hawking's great proposition (given in 2008), was that: *“We think we have solved the problem of the creation of the universe... the universe can spontaneously create itself out of nothing.”* Is there anything wrong with this statement? If so, what is it and how would you respond to such a statement? **The problem with the creation of the universe....???? A basic law: Every effect must have a sufficient cause.**
 8. Many have said, *“This is the most important verse in the Bible.”* Why?
 9. What makes this statement so radical that so many want to call this creation account a story or myth? **God sets Himself up as “over” His creation...for He is the one who creates. Even here there is a clear distinction being made between God and everything else. What does this statement communicate to all the “isms” of the world? Mormonism, Atheism, Naturalism, Pantheism, Deism, Polytheism, Monotheism, Dualism, Humanism Evolutionism all begin with what was created or the emphasize man. They all express the same unbelief. All “isms” worship the created over the creator. This was a clear message to the pagan religions of Moses' time...and for ours today. This statement is like another absolute ... “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life...”**

10. What is the difference between thinking of the world as “nature” and thinking of it as “creation”? **“Nature” is impersonal and takes the emphasis off the Creator...as if it has always existed on its own. “Creation” speaks of a relationship and it is very personal. A Creator created with a purpose!** See Ps. 24:1-2. Which of these terms generally governs your view of the world around you and why?
11. Why did God create? **To reflect His glory is the short answer.**
12. What things are communicated in verse 2? *“The earth was without form and void/empty, and the darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”*
- a. **At this point or stage of His creating, the heavens and the earth were empty. He had just called them forth There is nothing implied in the words that anything was wrong...or evil was in this darkness...rather what can be implied is that this would have been normal... for God was progressing through His creating. God was creating...and the next verses 1:3-2:3 are telling us what He went on to do. Verses 1 gives us the grand picture and then verse 2 and forward speak about Him progressing through the process. This is common within the Scriptures for the big concept to come first and then what follows explaining or outlining the details of what was just said. Paul in Eph. 5 gives us the big picture of what is expected of God’s people...how we must live, if you will and then he breaks that down with wife and husband, parent child employee and employer...Revelation 1-11 gives the big picture of all of Redemptive history and the last 11 chapters fill in the details.**
 - b. **Many have tried to say that this was the event of a great pre-flood catastrophe. That there had been a full creation in verse 1 but here we see the results of some unknown event that set everything back to its beginning, if you will, and verses 3 begins a second creation. This has been known historically as the Gap theory.**
 - c. **God is bringing form out of formlessness. He is filling up what was empty.**
 - d. **While creation was going on step by step the Spirit is hovering over it all watching over it...shepherding it...giving it life already in its infancy.**
 - e. **Christians should appreciate the significance of the order/structure of creation. When we were to read from Genesis 1: 3 all the way to Genesis 2: 3 we would have for us in short scope described the seven days of creation: the six days in which God creates and the Sabbath day on which He rests. This is God’s explanation of the first verse...His continued plan unfolded. Let’s look at the passage briefly to prepare us for next week:**

- (1) I want you to note that whereas Genesis 1:2 says that the earth was formless, days one, two and three are all devoted to giving the world form.
- (2) If you'll look from verse 3 to verse 10, you will see that each of those days speaks of God's shaping the world, ordering it into form out of formlessness.
- (3) Days four, five and six are all devoted to God's bringing fullness to the creation from emptiness/void. You notice that one, two and three are devoted to form; four, five and six are devoted to fullness. The first day of form and the first day of fullness are both devoted to what? The creation of light. So from formlessness and emptiness and darkness, God brings into the creation order and fullness and light. And so He impresses on the creation the stamp of His own character. His light. That is why the Scriptures can say, "*The heavens declare the glory of God*" (Ps. 19) because His order and His fullness and His light have been built into the creation as we see it. And so day to day utters forth praise to Him. That is why Jesus can say... "*I am the light of the world.*" And that is why the apostle Paul can say in Romans, chapter 1 that we see in the creation the reality of God. It testifies that He is the maker of heaven and earth and that we ought to worship Him.

Next Time: Gen. 1:3-2:3

GENESIS February 29, 2012

- A. Prayer
- B. Review

1. Concerning the creation account in the Bible...Is it fact or fiction? How does our answer affect our worldview and the way we look at the rest of Scripture? **If this is not absolutely true then the rest of scripture is suspect!?**
2. Why did God create? **To reflect His own glory!**
3. What is the faith issue concerning creation for the true believer? **God created and He created everything that there is out of nothing by the power of His word.**

4. What is going on in verses 1-2? **God is speaking out creation...** Do we have 2 separate creations in mind? **No, the formless and void/empty is just the next step in creation...just before He begins to put form to formlessness and filling up what is empty.** Generally speaking, what is the easiest way to look at the days of creation? **Explaining what he is doing when it says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Step by step.**

C. Gen. 1:3-2:3

1. Why do you suppose it is that Christians in general have a hard time defending the creation account? **Don't know the Scriptures...don't think it matters to the overall aspect of their faith. They will say it is true but they don't know why because other “doctrines” are more important. IN light of “evidence” by modern science this explanation can sound too elementary to be included in any rational discussion. Then to be labeled as one of those “ID” folks or fanatics could be uncomfortable. Comment from the crowd: “Because of our pride...we don't want to talk about things that we are unsure of. We would rather focus on some of the aspects of creation...length of days, image of God, analyzing each day... things that we can talk through rather than on the majesty of God, His preeminence, His omnipotence and His total creation... which is His point.”**
2. I have supplied you with the PCA list of “acceptable” positions on the length of days, but we are not going to spend much time here. We can speculate but I want to spend more time on what we can know rather than what might be or might not be. I like the whole “Just the Facts” approach. “Day” = YOM in the Hebrew....most often used to promote a 24 hour or sun up to sundown expression of a day in the Hebrew. But, of course, there are uses that speak of God being timeless...to God a day is like a 1000 years and a 1000 years as one day. But once again to spend too much time on this takes away from what God is communicating: which is that all that is... is God's creation.
3. Much of this chapter suggests that the author wrote in a poetic form. Does this make what is said any less factual? Why or why not? **Some of the great epics were told in song and poetry...the form doesn't make the events any less true. Words are limited in all language but there are certain forms that can communicate through time: metaphors, similes, comparisons, poetry, parallelism, typologies. These are used to clarify. The Hebrews seem to have made a vested effort to avoid abstractions. ...Comment from the crowd: This is a helpful form since this was such an oral culture people would know if you didn't get the story, song or poem right. It has an auto-correct system built in. If the story was told and details were left out people would know and point that out.”**
4. In this chapter we see the number 7 playing a prominent role...some are obvious...some are not. This number is symbolically important through Scripture and to the structure of this chapter. *“Not only are there 7 days of*

creation, but there are 7 natural paragraph breaks in the Hebrew. In the first verse in the original Hebrew, there are 7 words and 14 in the 2nd sentence. The 7th paragraph contains 35 words. God/Elohim is used 35 times, heaven and earth are used 21 times. The phrase “it is good” is used 7 times in reference to some aspect of creation. On the 7th time, the creation is said to be “very good.” The words light and day are each used 7 times in the 1st paragraph. Light is referred to 7 times on the 4th day. Water is mentioned 7 times on the 2nd and 3rd days. This detailed structure didn’t happen by chance. It shows that the author intended to do things with this structure.” Francis Schaeffer

5. The 1st 3 days God is giving form to what was formless. What ALL is represented by these words, “And God said, Let there be...”?
 - a. **All creation is dependent upon God for its existence...**
 - b. **All creation belongs to God...**
 - c. **He created from nothing by the power of His Word...When we think of power we think of exertion ...force... How much work does it take for you to talk, really! Think about God...from our perspective the amount of force exerted compared to other things within Himself was minimal just like the fact that it takes minimal exertion for us to speak. “ex nihilo” also has in its meaning that God’s creative acts were completely effortless.**
 - d. **Comments: “It reveals there was a plan...he was speaking forth from His plan...He wasn’t making it up on the fly.”**
6. What do the words, “... and there was...” communicate to us? **They represent the accomplishment of that act that God called forth by His Word.**
7. This may seem insignificant, but what is significant about the fact that God gave names to the light and the darkness? **This is an exercise of sovereign right/ authority. To give something a name is to bring something into being and to own it...to give it identity.**
8. What does the term, “and God saw that it was good” communicate? Is creation still “good” since the fall or is it evil? **Just like us it suffers from corruption....death but that is because of the Fall...man’s fall not its. And it looks forward to the revealing of the sons of God...the consummation...to obtain the freedom of the glory of God’s children.**
9. Why do you suppose Moses used such repetition in this creation account...from “and God said...” to “God saw that it was good...” to “And there was morning and there was evening the ____ day.”? What is he teaching us by repeating these so often? (Because God told him so is not a good enough answer. ☺ ☺) **Repetition aids learning...we need to be reminded because we forget...it is the nature of poetry and song to repeat for emphasis and memory.**
10. In the next day, what specifically is being talked about? **The atmosphere of the earth.** Why at the end of the 2nd day do we NOT read, “it was good”?

Simple...don't hurt yourself...He wasn't done that carries over into the next day. What else does He do on the third day? The point of these first 3 days is that He is giving form to what was formless...vs.2. verse 3 to verse 10, you will see that each of those days speaks of God's shaping the world, ordering it into form out of formlessness.

11. Next 3 days we see God filling up what was empty...adding fullness to the form. What is happening in day 4? **Day 1 he gives us light...turning separating the darkness that existed before...on day 4 he brings expression of fullness to the light by placing it in physical objects.** Why are no names given for the Sun and the Moon...they are simply called the lights? **This is done on purpose. Who were Moses' audiences? Jews and the Egyptians who had names for the Sun and the Moon elevating them to god like status. God is making the point that these are simply a part of His creation. They and the seasons are controlled by Him they function at His command they cannot function.**
12. By day 5 we have all that is necessary to sustain life as we know it. So God does just that... creates life. Where does life begin according to this passage? **In the seas.** In verse 1 we see the word "created" and here we see it again when God begins to create life in verse 20. What do you think might be significant about that? **Think surrounding nations at the time of this writing and the rampant paganism and what God is communicating with these words appropriately placed. Oh, and by the way, I think God was also looking down the corridors of time knowing we would be having this Evolution discussion so He emphatically says "I created" rather than saying they evolved or I allowed them to evolve. He actually puts a period on the discussion for anyone who wants to consider themselves a Theistic evolutionist and a Christian at the same time. Those 2 don't go together. For in saying I created He is also saying I keep what I create so there is on-going work involved by Him. He didn't create things to evolve...He created them and He directs them so that they are able to glorify Him in the way He intended.**
13. Day 6 brings us creation of life on land. We will look specifically about man in God's image next week. What is meant by the phrase, *"According to their own kinds..."*? **There is no room for evolution from one species to another. (Macro-evolution) There is nothing wrong with "evolution" within a species (micro-evolution)...we have actually seen that happen and that does not negate God's creative force...all creation is created to adapt to the environment God creates for it.**
14. The chapter division is unfortunate for the creation account continues through day 7 which ends at 2:3. It is important for us to realize that the creation account does not end with man. It ends where it began... with God! Why

would that be significant? **The objective of creation is not man as many want us to believe but the solemn rest of the 7th day. Because of all that God has done He is only One worthy of praise and honor. What is happening on day 7? He didn't rest because He was tired...His rest is a symbol for His achievement. He stopped and rested because creation was through...it was finished! Sound familiar? What doesn't happen? There is no evening and morning of the 7th day. What might that communicate? It pictures the Sabbath rest that can only be found in God and it looks forward to the ultimate rest when redemption comes to its fullness. See Hebrews 4. But if we look at this grammatically, by being referred to as the 7th day...God through Moses is telling us/them that what is unique about this day is that it is NOT a work day. It is a day God set aside as a day of rest and worship for man from "normal" work (as the Hebrew says). How important is the Sabbath for us today...really? It has been commanded of us...on one hand that ought to be enough motivation...but... we don't give it that importance any more, do we? In fact, historically when the Church neglects the Sabbath As it is in the habit of doing today...the Church is weakened, disciplined by God and confused in general. The same is true for us as individuals and married couples. For the Christian one day in 7 is to be a celebration of what God has done as we come together as His people to celebrate together...since we were not created to be alone.**

15. Why do I need to have a clear position on creation as I look forward to the end of the world... the consummation? **One comment among many:**
"According to Col. 1:16-18...if we don't have a clear position on creation...that Christ was there at the beginning it would be hard to understand His preeminence...and the end times wouldn't make sense."

Next Time: Gen. 1:26-31 and 2:4-25

Days of Creation Positions

Calendar-Day- This position maintains that God created all things out of nothing in the space of six literal days. It accepts the 1st chapter of Genesis as historical, chronological and literal in character and for the most part views the creation week as six twenty-four hour days, followed by a twenty-four hour Sabbath. Since Adam and Eve were created as mature adults, so the rest of creation was the first of its kind fully mature. Most who hold this view believe that this is the easiest and most normal understanding of the creation account. They also hold that this has been the most common understanding in both Jewish and Christian history. Young earth position...10,000 to 15,000 years.

Day-Age- This position is much more complicated. Three explanations that have been and are held within conservative and Reformed circles govern this position. (a.) The 6 days are understood in the same sense as *"in that day"* of Isaiah 11:10-11- that is, as periods of indefinite length and not necessarily a 24 hour duration. This view takes into consideration the much lesser uses of the Hebrew word for day. Another argument for this approach is that the 7th day is not concluded with the customary phrase, *"and there was evening, and there was morning"* as with the other days. (b.) The six days are taken as sequential, but also as overlapping and merging into one another. An example of this thinking would be, Jesus' day overlapped the Old Testament and the New Testament periods. (c.) It is difficult to understand the duration of the first 3 days because the sun and the moon weren't created until the fourth day. Young earth view but not as young as above...15,000-65,000 years.

Framework- Exegesis indicates that the scheme of the creation week itself is a poetic figure and that the several pictures of creation history are set within the six workday frames not chronologically but topically. In distinguishing simple description and poetic figure from what is definitely conceptual the only ultimate guide, here as always, is comparison with the rest of Scripture. In other words, the distinctive feature of the Framework position is its understanding of the week (not the days as such) as a metaphor. Moses used the metaphor of a week to narrate God's acts of creation. Thus God's supernatural creative words and events are real and historical, but the exact timing is left unspecified.

Analogical Days- The "days" are God's work days, which are analogous, and not necessarily identical, to our work days, structured for the purpose of setting a pattern for our own rhythm of rest and work. Each "day" represents a period during which God performed a major activity. The days are: *"successive periods of unspecified length. They may overlap in part, or may reflect logical rather than chronological criteria for grouping certain events on certain days."* (God set the pattern for our seven-day week. It would seem to me that if the days of Genesis are indefinite long periods of time, then this pattern is destroyed.-- Me)

These are the major views on the days. All of them still believe that the faith issue is that God created and that He created out of nothing all that there is. All positions teach that Genesis is God's verbal revelation and they all affirm the historicity of Adam.

- A. Prayer
- B. Review

1. Why did God create? **For His Own Glory!!!**

2. What is the faith issue involved with the creation account? **God created all there is...that God created all there is out of nothing, by the power of His Word.!**

- C. Gen 1:26-31; 2:4-25- "In the Image of God"

1. What does it mean to be human? Blaise Pascal answered this way: *"For after all, what is man in nature? A nothing in relation to infinity, all in relation to nothing, a central point between nothing and all...and infinitely far from understanding either. He is equally incapable of seeing the nothingness out of which he was drawn and the infinite in which he is engulfed."* Now that is deep. Does it answer the question? How would you answer the question?

2. Just in case you begin to wonder about sequence of things occurring on this 6th day that seem to be different from Chapter 1...don't be. The Hebrew authors were not as concerned with chronology in the way we are today. He has a purpose in mind and everything moves to that purpose. The 1st chapter is all about God and how He exists outside of His creation, calling it into being by the power of His Word. Then 2nd chapter gives us a picture of an even more personal God than the one we have seen so far...personal in His relationship with man. We see relationship as God converses with man. We see relationship and purpose given to man as God gives him a calling. We see God's covenantal name coming into play with LORD GOD in the text...Yahweh Elohim. While God is still front and center God wants us to now focus a bit on His highest and greatest achievement. None of the animals get their own chapter!

3. What would you say is the difference between the phrases "Let there be..." and "Let us make..."? What point is God making? **That man is unique and that his beginning is uniquely different than all of creation placing him at the apex of all creation. The change in wording from "let there be"...to... "let us make..." speaks of man's uniqueness from the very first words spoken by God. Just in case, how can we know from the text that man is God's highest achievement? Nothing else was made in His image!**

4. What do we see about God in verses 26-27?

- a. **God= Elohim...a plural form of God which means more than 2...so His own names implies, at least, 3 persons which meshes with the doctrine of the Trinity.**
- b. **3plural references to Himself... "us, our and our"... this plural always communicates "fullness or completeness". He is complete in Himself. There is no loneliness in view that somehow requires God to create so He can have fellowship. He has that in Himself...Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

5. So what does it mean to be *“made in the image of God”*? **We immediately think of the physical aspects of “image” but God is not physical. What is God? He is Spirit. And it is not just the spiritual side of man that the body has nothing to do with the image. Easiest way to define this phrase:**
 - a. **Man is different from the rest of God’s creation. We have a capacity to love and to give love. The marriage relationship displayed here reveals the exclusive and permanent commitment of love that only man can generate.**
 - b. **Man is unique in his ability to communicate through dialogue. Man can discuss abstract ideas and concepts. He can interact with the mind of another.**
 - c. **Only man can fashion complicated tools and structures in the world a sign of the creativity given to man by God.**
 - d. **Man alone has the ability to make moral value judgments. Only man has a will of his own capable of distinguishing between good and evil. These supersede the instinct of animals.**
 - e. **Man alone has dominion over all creation...our actions are to reflect the image of God in His rule...we are to manage/rule as He would rule as we are made in His image.**

6. How does the Scripture explain the sexes in these 2 verses? **He created us male and female. This distinction between the sexes was God’s design. Sexual distinction was not an afterthought on God’s part. We were made in God’s own image. So man and woman are equal before God but as we will see different in function so that together we can glorify God fully..** How does Chap. 2:7 and 2:21-23 help explain the actual “creation of man and woman? **Being made from the ground and having to be given breath tells us of our complete dependence upon the One who gives life. It explains our place as well...we may be the highest form of creation but we are still the created.**

7. What is the first thing God does for man (man and woman) according to Gen. 1:28? **Blesses them to do His will. How cool is the fact that the very first words out of God’s mouth toward man are words of blessing. Had man earned this blessing? Did he deserve this blessing? Was he entitled to this blessing? NO!! But the very first experience that man had was God giving him things that he did not earn, deserve or was entitled to. Blessings from God are like that even today. Was this God’s grace to man? (A it of a play on words?) NO!!! Grace implies we have already fallen, rebelled against God. Grace is God’s favor despite that rebellion. God blessed them ...the first thing He did for them... He also is providing the beginning structure for the covenant-blessings and obligations.**

8. What are some of the responsibilities that God gives to man (man and woman) in Gen 1:28-31? **The first mandate is procreation- and this relates exclusively with marriage in chapter 2. This command is found out the end of chapter 1 and marriage comes at the end of chapter 2. Having children then is essential for man to fulfill his mandate to rule. We are not free to choose NOT to have children as Christians! How does that statement make you feel? The other creation ordinance here in these verses is WORK.**
9. What is going on from 2:4-25? **This is simply putting flesh on the creation of man and woman. Giving further explanation as to what occurred on that 6th day if you will...giving us more details. Also, this shows us how God's covenant with man is filled with privileges. Just a side note here, in case you are wondering about vss. 4-6...these verses are reminiscent of the time spoken of in Gen.1:1-2 when the earth was void and formless. Then in vs.7 we see God going back to man. God forms man from the ground and then He breathes His very breath into man giving him life. Evolutionist say we came from apes or maybe dolphins...but our own accounts says we came from even more humble beginnings...THE DIRT! God breathed life into us... first privilege. Then God gives us a garden, provides food , water, trees...giving man an ability to appreciate what is pleasing to the eye...beauty is conveyed and man has the ability like to to appreciate it, work, rivers precious stones...beauty beyond image...lushness in the garden and then... God gives him a woman! Where were the people when they first heard Moses tell this account? In the desert. What did the desert represent in contrast to the garden? Sin! Turn to John 20:21. What is Jesus doing here? So God the Father creates life in man by breathing into him and Jesus re-creates life in fallen man by breathing on him...the Spirit at work at both times.**
10. According to the Genesis 2:8,15 what would you say is the man's(Adam and all males after him) basic purpose before God? How is he to glorify God? **To do His will... in this case to work and keep the garden. Doing God's will brings Him glory. Who came first and why? To establish the function of headship... not inferiority superiority as man over the rest of creation but a separation of powers that will be crucial going forward.**
11. In the garden man is given a role/calling and he is given restrictions which would presumably be told to his wife when she comes on the scene. Why does God give restrictions, there has been no sin, yet? **Privileges and obligations define a relationship...establishing structure...also points to the structure of the covenant.**
12. According to Genesis 2:18, what would you say is the woman's basic purpose before God? **Helper fit for him...suitable for him. To complete her man. To compliment him...what he lacks she supplies. The word "helper" is a good word...it actually highlights his**

inadequacies without her... not inferiority as some have tried to say...especially since its primary use in the OT Scriptures is as an attribute of God.

- 13.** As we look at how the two mutually complete one another, why do you suppose that it wasn't good for Adam to be alone? **He was created incomplete...God's plan was for woman to complete him so together they could do what God had created them to do... something they could not do individually as effectively as God designed.** Why weren't the animals good enough to deal with Adam's aloneness? **They did not bear the same image so they were not like him...they were not created to complete Adam but for Adam to care for and oversee. Adam is aware of the differences and knows none of them are like him...while each of them have one that corresponds to it.** What did God do to address Adam's need for a mate? Matthew Henry said it so well, *"Eve was not made out of his head to rule him, nor from his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be loved by him."* **God brought the woman to him...God provided, just like He has from the beginning.** Is there a principle there for us today? **We don't need to knock ourselves out looking for a mate... not that we shouldn't be looking...BUT ...know God will provide...in the mean time when we are single we are to be resolved to pursue God in all that we do...not a career...not position First...but God first...as a single person you are that way right now according to Paul to give you better and more opportunities to serve God. The statement in verse 23 draws attention to how important Adam saw his wife to be...his completer...one made especially for him...and as such he must care for her as a gift from God as well which would bring God glory. Von Rodd says: *"God Himself, like a Father of a bride, leads the woman to man."***
- 14.** What does Gen. 2: 24-25 tell us of the type of relationship the man and his wife had before the Fall? **Wonderful, complete, not lacking in trust, no fear or shame...recognition of each other's dependence on the other to be able to fulfill God's design...one that could only be fulfilled in this type of relationship... marriage. Also, a full recognition of being made in God's image...but not being God. Humbly recognizing they were part of His creation though unique and above all the rest of creation.**
- 15.** Why isn't homosexuality and same-sex unions not part of God's plan according to these chapters?
- 16.** Matthew Henry again, *"It is the glory of man to be a man, and it is the glory of a woman to be a woman in the ways God intended. Who, then, is superior? A man is absolutely superior to a woman...at being a man, and a woman is absolutely superior to a man ...at being a woman."* There is absolutely no inequality between man and woman before the face of God...but they do have different functions so that together as one they can fully glorify God and enjoy Him.

Next Time: Genesis 3- Paradise Lost

GENESIS
March 14, 2012

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Why did God create? **For His Own Glory!!!**
2. What is the faith issue that we need to communicate concerning the creation account? **God created all there is...that God created all there is out of nothing, by the power of His Word.!**
3. Why is man different from the rest of God's creation? **Made in God's image.** What privileges come with this position that the rest of creation doesn't have? **Dominion over creation, cognitive reasoning and speech, ...**

C. Chapter 3

1. Let's look first at verse 1-6. Who does this serpent represent according Church tradition? **Satan!** How does he get here and what is his purpose? See Luke 10:18-19; Rev. 9:1; 12 (Ezek. 28:12-19; Isaiah 14:12-14 by illusion perhaps for these passages seem to speak specifically of real people especially in the case of the Ezekiel passage. All of this represents in a large way the cosmic rebellion and how God works with it and eventually against it.) **In these passages we get a glimpse of the cosmic rebellion that gives clue as to the "How" of the Fall, as being part of God's plan all along...for this rebellion does not surprise God either. Yes, he has been given a purpose...an interesting thought...but don't forget...just like with Job Satan is "UNABLE" to do anything except that which God ordains for him to do. Satan was cast out of heaven to the earth. This once exalted angel now slithers onto the stage of human history and continues his solicitation of others to sin as he did 1/3rd of the angels of heaven.**
2. What was the serpent seeking to achieve by asking such an "innocent" sounding question like, *"Did God actually say..."* **let me set the scene a bit. It would appear that Adam and Eve are making their daily rounds in the garden and they have stopped or were stopped at the tree of knowledge of good and evil and there was the serpent...Satan in an earthly form. Now, he could have said... "Come let us rebel against your God, creator and friend"...but he doesn't do that because His nature is to always deceive. He is basically asking... "Why would anything that God created good and pleasing be bad and forbidden?" So he was seeking to deceive and turn them away for God and his Word and once that is accomplished it is all downhill from there. See how important God's Word in our lives ...without it we slip and fall.**

Would Eve had had any reason to distrust a snake up to that point? **The greater questions is perhaps...would she have had any reason to “trust” the snake in the first place?** What should have been the first red-flag? **The only other creature that talked was Adam.** How are we tempted today by similar methods? **Sex was created by God; therefore it is good...so why wait until marriage to experience it? Alcohol is made of good things God created so how can it ever be evil to drink as much as you want! He created love so why can't I choose to love who I want no matter what their gender is?** What should be the real questions concerning each of these scenarios?

3. What was Eve's immediate response and what does it show us about where she is at that moment assurance wise? **Her immediate response was to defend God...that shows her own lack of assurance of what God meant to say...at that point Satan had her and she was deceived. In her zeal to defend she adds to His Word showing that even she was doubting...so much that she had to add to it to make her case. The serpent recognizes her doubt and goes for the jugular by saying, “You will not surely die!” and because of the doubt already present and the fact that she knew her and Adam were unique she concluded the serpent must be right. The delusion was complete.**
4. What are some other things we learn of Satan's character here in these few verses?
 - a. **Rejects God's authority over these 2...consequently over all mankind.**
 - b. **Rejects their God-given authority**
 - c. **Uses good for evil...fruit in general was good, this fruit was good as well as pleasing to the eye...just forbidden.**
 - d. **Opens his mouth causing confusion to the mind that is open to this.**
 - e. **Can we blame Satan for this mess? Can we say he is the author of sin and evil? No! How then does sin enter upon the world stage? Through the Fall of man...the conscience choice of the first man...the one who had been vested with all authority under heaven...to disobey God choosing to love self than God. There is no mention of the fall of Satan here to confuse the point that God is making. Little is aid about how much time has elapsed between 2:25 and 3:1...there is nothing here to distract us from the fact that man is to blame. See Rom. 5:12-14, 18-21; I Cor. 15:21-22.**
5. What is Satan offering at this point that Adam and Eve don't already have? **Think Christ in the desert: what was he offering Christ that he didn't already have? The fact that they fell for it tells us to what depth they have fallen in such a quick period of time. Christ, of course, didn't fall for Satan's deceptions.**

6. Where was Adam at this point? **Next to Eve during the whole conversation.** What wasn't he doing? What should he have done? How do we emulate him today, especially us guys?
7. What things do we learn about our first parents here in these first 6 verses?
 - a. **That they could fall...they had been in a state of blessing...everything on one hand was provided for them by God...on the other they were living and working within the purpose they were created for so everything was harmonious... but they were created with the ability to fall.**
 - b. **Adam was a coward...waiting to see what would happen to his wife when she ate... He had no reason to think that there would be some reprisal from her by trying to stop her...remember they had a harmonious relationship up to this point.**
 - c. **Because they could sin ...they did! It had been ordained/decreed that they would fall from before the foundations of the world.**
 - d. **Eve was deceived according to Scripture...this can only be attributed to the fact that Adam had not sufficiently prepared her...kept her...protected her...provided for her...RIGHT? If that is true...and I say it is just because I am always hardest on the guy...then how do we explain Adam's response? Adam knew what he should do but chose to do nothing. Adam chose to sin...he wasn't deceived. Eve is responsible for her sinful behavior...not Adam...But Adam is accountable for her behavior.**
 - e. **They listened to someone other than God. When we do that...we reject God...when someone questions the plain truth and we don't reject it out of hand then we fail at the basic level of loving God.**
8. Now let's look at verse 7-13. Generally speaking what was the result of the Fall on the marriage...Adam and Eve's relationship?
 - a. **Stopped listening to God's plan...**
 - b. **Believed an outsider rather than God or one another**
 - c. **Adam knew what he was doing ...he chose his wife over God by eating the fruit...**
 - d. **Shame...they had no shame before... Shame in each other's presence and shame in God's presence. Guilt which comes when we know we have broken the law.**
 - e. **Hid from one another out of shame and out of disunity brought on by disobeying God's Word...**
 - f. **Fear of God's presence...Luther once said of these passages, "Oh, what a grievous downfall, to plunge from the utmost sense of security, from confidence and delight in God into such awful terror that man shrinks from the sight of God more than from the sight and presence of the devil."**
 - g. **Blaming God and the other publicly...**

h. John Milton in *Paradise Lost* says, “Thus they in mutual accusations spend their fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning. And of their vain context appeased no end.”

9. What is God’s response to the sin in verse 14-24? **He comes to them... He knew they had sinned but He came...He had been with them before the Fall and as a sign of grace He comes to them because they couldn’t come to Him... which tells us that man will never be able on his own to come to the Father...The Immanuel principle is birthed here... which also shows that Adam and Eve were chosen before the foundations of the earth... but there would be consequences even after they were forgiven.** What are the consequences of their action? Serpent? Wife? Adam? (vs. 14-19, 22-24) Do you think that the results of the fall might be getting worse as time goes on? **Have behavioral sciences bridged the gulf between the races? Has looking inside ourselves removed the old fears we have always had? Have we conquered the rebellious spirit of youth?**
10. Where in this chapter do we see God promising redemption and then granting it? **Vs. 15, 20-21.** What was the cost of their redemption here in the garden? **The animals that Adam had named were sacrificed because of his sin... as a substitute... in the same way Christ would be as well. There is always a cost for deliverance...a sacrifice to be paid because God’s law demands justice. Someone or in this case something had to die because that was/is the penalty for sin. Fellowship with God after the Fall is based on His grace and the shed blood of a sacrifice. As a side note: look at God’s grace yet further...How long do you suppose those leaves would have lasted now that things were dying? (which would have put Adam and Eve back to feeling shame because of their nakedness)...God provides them with a means not to feel that shame that often...So He takes care of an immediate need as well as supplying them with their ultimate need for salvation. See also I Cor. 10:12-13. Our God never loses sight of the needs of His people.**
11. What impact does the phrase, “being made in the image of God” have on the definition for marriage?
- a. It answers the question Who am we? For we are different than the rest of God’s creation.**
 - b. It says we, like God, we have a capacity to love, especially in giving oneself willingly...not instinctually as the animals. The exclusive and permanent natures of the marriage relationship reflect the exclusive and permanent nature of the Godhead towards one another. God created out of love... “His good pleasure”...In love man reproduces...creates new life.**

12. Why is it so important that God's definition and commands concerning marriage be maintained as originally given?
- a. This is fundamental...man is not "complete" without the woman God has for him.**
 - b. Marriage/family is the vehicle of God's choice to carry our God's will best.**
 - c. It preserves whole societies by nature of the family structure that God has ordained.**
 - d. It is a physical picture of the eventual marriage of Christ and the Church.**
 - e. As a creation ordinance it is to be maintained at all cost or we deny God and His plan thus inviting the consequences of our sin.**
13. Man and woman were created in the image of God and our essence then is dependent about that image. We are defined truly by our godliness...the way we reflect God to His glory and our enjoyment. But because of our fallen nature we seek to define ourselves by our celebrity, our athletic ability, our intellect, our beauty, our powers of persuasion. In doing this we always fall short and feel inadequate...the consequence of the curse of the Fall...no satisfaction except in God/in Christ as we reflect Him as we do as we were intended to do.

Next Time: Chapter 4- Sins Consequences

Westminster Shorter Catechism Q and A:

Q12: What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the estate wherein he was created? A: When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

Q13: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created? A: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

Q14: What is sin? A: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Q15: What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created? A: The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

Q16: Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression? A: The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

Q17: Into what estate did the fall bring mankind? A: The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Q18: Where in consists the sinfulness of that estate into which man fell? A: The sinfulness of that estate into which man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

Q19: What is the misery of that estate into which man fell? A: All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.

Q20. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery? A. God having, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.

Q21: Who is the Redeemer of God's elect? A: The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, forever.

GENESIS March 21, 2012

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Why did God create? **For His Own Glory!!!**
2. What is the faith issue that we need to communicate concerning the creation account? **God created all there is...that God created all there is out of nothing, by the power of His Word.!**
3. Why is man different from the rest of God's creation? **Made in God's image.**
4. What things stood out to you concerning chapter 3?

C. Chapter 4

1. The biblical spotlight moves from the first couple and focuses on their children and their descendants. We see the consequences of the Fall as people live, produce children, and die. Life itself becomes a struggle, and man, in trying to survive, rejects God, the source of all life. But God's grace is still seen through it all.
2. In Genesis 3, who is the One sinned against? **God!** In Genesis 4 who is sinned against? **God and Man.** Why do I point out the obvious? **Setting the stage is understanding but also understanding the players and their activity gives greater definition to what has happened and what continues to happen. Especially considering the fact that we aren't that much different from them.**
3. How does the struggle of vs. 1-16 reflect the struggle that was prophesied in Genesis 3:15? **The separation between God and man and man and**

wife, and man and the rest of creation...leads inevitably onward to the next generations. Man against man, brother against brother, nation against nation, non-believer against believer. This act of division is implicit in 3:15..the promise of a Savior includes the reality of 2 humanities... the chosen ...the seed of the woman, Eve, and the passed over...the seed of the serpent.

4. Take a close look at 4:1. What does Eve say at the birth of Cain? Why does she say that, that way? **Was she expecting that this one born to her would be the one spoken of in the prophesy in 3:15? The word "gotten" in Hebrew sounds very much like Cain which means "begotten"...almost a possessive form coming from his mother...her first born, the one she would have the highest hopes for??? But then there is this... "with the help of the Lord..." Some pride showing up in this statement again? Obviously there is some recognition about the woman's role in all of this...previously man came from God and now man comes from woman. How might I Cor. 11: 11-12 help in our broader understanding of this text?**
5. Who comes along in verse 2? **Abel which means in the Hebrew "frail" ...not necessarily making a statement about his physical condition...it simply could have reflected a different attitude among the parents...or being the 2nd of the twins he may have appeared smaller more delicate at first. What were the boy's occupations? We see here a principle for the family in general that I think is lost today. There is a natural division of duties...each one given something to do ...a role...in support of the family. How do their roles "fit" with what we learn about the role of man in creation? Just a thought, based on the earlier chapters, is one of these occupations more honorable than the other? Both professions are honorable and needed and both reflect the mandate God gave to man to keep His "garden".**
6. Now let's look at verse 3-7 closely. Verse 3 begins; interestingly enough, with these words in the Hebrew, "*On the appointed day...*" or "*at the end of days*". Most translations have something like "*In the course of time...*" which could speak to as the day came upon them. But let's just say a moment that the correct translation was "*On the appointed day...*", what day would come to mind? **The Sabbath or what would become one of the harvest days...a worship day ... a prescribe day to bring the sacrifice where they were required to bring an offering to the LORD. It could have been the boys first time to bring such an offering but obviously bringing offerings to the LORD was a new concept. . If it is NOT about the professions what is the conflict about? Their offering to the LORD. How would they know what to bring? Is there a clue in these chapters as to what God expects from them? When God sacrificed the animals it would have been seen as a form of worship as well as God's provision for them for clothing ...to**

cover their “nakedness” which means more than their physical body but their nakedness of their sin. God covered them with His grace. They, Adam and Eve, would have seen in that a prescribed method of worship. And we know this is true by the rest of the sacrificial system right up to Christ’s own death on the cross. Interesting that the Word of God gives us no indication as it does with Able that this was even the “first fruit” of Cain’s labor. It makes no distinction at all like it does with Abel’s offering.

7. What was Cain’s reaction as Eve’s “favored” son to his giving of the offering just in this section? **He was not happy...after all he brought an offering from his work...what more should God want. So not only did he bring a defective offering but also a defective attitude! God wanted what He expected. The church today is filled with people who are trying subtly or “innocently” to be Cain. “We have to think outside the box.” The problem with that is us telling God what we like and what we will do and not listening to what He says to do. What was God’s reaction? He came to Cain! God’s grace abounds in so many ways even towards those who are not His and don’t take Him seriously. He doesn’t compare Cain and Able’s offering. He raises the more important question of “WHY” which tells us first, that Cain knew what he was supposed to do, 2nd it tells us that he did what he wanted to do regardless of what God expected. God gives Cain a 2nd chance if you will, knowing what the outcome would be but showing His grace none the less. He came to worship thinking that he would do as he pleased and he left with hatred...murder on his mind.**
8. What happens next in verses 8-9? **Murder and lying about it. There is a reason these 2 sins are put so close together this early in the narrative...they carry equal weight before God.** How far have we fallen? How has the sin of Cain flowed down through the ages? See also I John 3:11-15 for more explanation of what is going on here.
9. God reacts swiftly in verses 10-15, (another example for parents by the way when our children are caught red hand in a lie) and He judges Cain. Cain is cursed. What does this mean going forward? Is God’s judgment temporary...that is, does Cain’s sentence have a time limited? **God is condemning him with no hope for parole...to wander... to be an outcast...Cain faces certain death. But to be alone without any hope...without any vestige of God is the worst thing the earth can hold...the ground ...what Cain seems most proud of will also be against him.** But what does God do in these verses to make sure he isn’t killed? Why? What message is God sending especially in the face of the fact that it won’t be that long before He institutes what we have come to know as capital punishment for murder?

10. Just for extra points. ☺ How are the falls of Adam and Eve almost identical to the fall of Cain? **The image of God was treated as having no worth in both...Adam and Eve in listening to the serpent and seeking their own self with lies ..and with Cain he destroyed the image in murder...taking it to its logical next step.**
11. Just a side note about Abel, one we do not know much about from this text. Read Hebrews 11:4. What does this tell us about Abel that really is all we need to know about him? **This story resonates through many different cultures and religions...believers and non-believers alike understand the illustration if Cain and Able's name is used to illustrate a conflict. His character of godliness stands above...the first Christian martyr if you will.**
12. Now let's look at how Cain's life plays out in verse 16-24. What is Cain up to now according to verse 17? **Building cities.** What might this suggest concerning his heart? **I don't think this is too much of a stretch...he wanted to do great things...to show God...to be God. It reveals positively man's drive toward the "perfection" he lost...that desire to be "like" God in the truest sense. On the negative side as we will see it was a desire to thumb his nose at God.** How does the downward spiral continue in Cain's line? **Lamech's takes 2 wives...already stepping away from God's order...no real reason to keep it...if you are making it up as you go. His open and continuous arrogance before the LORD. Boasting in the killings.** What is the positive side of Cain's lineage? **They are pioneers of progress ...city makers...metalworkers...actually of working jewels into the metal is more to the point, shepherds, musicians...does that mean then that progress and cities are evil? We see technical achievement and brilliance coupled with moral decadence...not much different from today as man walks further and further from the presence of God.**
13. Look at verses 25-26. This part of the narrative ends on a joyful note. Eve's words are different this time in the announcement of this child. Why do you suppose that is? **Eve doesn't glory in her creative ability this time but puts the focused where it belongs completely... "God appointed for me another offspring/seed..." Seth means "appointed" so even in the name they are recognizing what they may not have recognized the last time. We will look more at Seth's line next time.**

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Why did God create? **For His Own Glory!**
2. How does the struggle of chapter 4 reflect the prophecy of Gen. 3:15? **This prophecy clearly speaks of the 2 types of people...believers= children of Eve and non-believers= children of Satan. And it also reflects the man against man and man against God struggle that is evident here and throughout time.**
3. What change of attitude do we see in Eve from chapter 4:1 to 4:25?

C. Chapter 5-6:8

1. Look back with me a minute to 4:26. *"At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD."* An alternate reading of the Hebrew could be, *"Then men began to call themselves by the name of the LORD."* What does this reading add to the one in the ESV? **Here marks the beginning of a line of Godly men...who someday would be called Christians.**
2. How can genealogies be at all profitable for the spiritual growth of the Christian today? **II TIM. 3:16 says, "ALL scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. We see our godly forbearers. It communicates we have a heritage...also that they were human not "superhuman or superbelievers"!**
3. What other passage or passages do 5:1-2 remind you of? **Chapter 1:26-28** What is God communicating with these verses? **The genealogy of Seth stands in stark contrast to the genealogy of Cain. There is a line of the faithful and it is here that God is restoring it. Cain and his descendant are going to be increasingly irrelevant to the history of salvation. They will be around but as a contrast to the light. Also, Matt. 1:1...The Book of ... is only used here and in Matthew 1. The first BOOK traces the line of the 1st Adam...the 2nd BOOK traces the line of the 2nd Adam= Jesus Christ. These 2 books are linked as the line of God's chosen children.**
4. To better illustrate these 2 lines we have the genealogies of Cain and Seth stacked up side by side. As we look at these we see in both lines the names of Enoch and Lamech. In the line of Seth, Enoch walked with God and was taken up by God into His presence. In the line of Cain, Enoch built a city to elevate himself. In the line of Seth, Lamech was the father of Noah. In the line of Cain, Lamech was a proud polygamist and murder. Both Lamechs spoke in these genealogies... one full of curses the other seeking a Savior. The 2 humanities grow side by side, each progressing, yet each with a sharp difference...for the sons Seth began to call themselves by the name of the Lord...while the sons of Lamech cursed the LORD and His laws.

5. What is being communicated with the interesting statement found in verses 3?
As the image of Adam...in his own likeness, after his image...Moses is making the case that these children are far from perfected...they may be chosen but they are conceived and are born in the sinful image of their father... Adam. They have a depraved nature. Life begets life...man was made after his own kind.
6. Now let's consider 4-32. What is significant about the much repeated phrase, "and he died" ? **See Gen. 2:17...each of the patriarchs with the exception of Enoch died... just like all of us. Death is inevitable...can't run from it and it is not to be feared. For it is a fact. It doesn't really matter how or why they lived long lives in the end they too dies! It also refutes Satan's claim that they surely would NOT die. Rather it confirms God promise that they would die!**
7. Now one man in this genealogy did not die. Who was he, what happened to him and why did he not die? **Enoch was taken up to be with God...because He walked with God ...God was pleased with him and decided to take him up without experiencing death. See Hebrews 11:5 and Jude 14-15 for more on Enoch. Who else in Scripture did not die? Elijah**
8. Now we come to perhaps the strangest section of the whole Pentateuch, perhaps the whole Bible...6:1-4. Who are the main players here? **Sons of God...daughters of man...Nephilim.** What have you been taught about this passage? **Of my own thoughts...my mind automatically goes back to Gen. 3:15 and the on-going struggle between the 2 lines and then how Satan and his minions would constantly be seeking to corrupt the women of man...it is his task. But having offered my own small interpretation I consider the best handling of this comes from Francis Schaeffer's work on Genesis: Genesis 6:1-2 raises a question which men have discussed for many years: "When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose." The difficulty is with the phrase the sons of God because this phrase can mean either of two things: (1) the godly line, those who were calling themselves by the name of the Lord (as in Genesis 4:26) or (2) fallen angels (as in Job 1:6; II Peter 2:4-5). What has stirred men's curiosity is that the book of Jude seems to refer to this. Verses 6-7 read, "And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, He has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day...just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire." This passage seems to say that there are angels who left their own proper**

place and are specifically under judgment because they acted like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. That is, as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah sought "other flesh" in homosexuality, these angels sought flesh that was "other flesh"; they involved themselves with human women in away other than their design. There is further interest along this line if one understands this as a co-mingling of the angelic and the human, for then it is possible that it was the original historic source of an element common in mythology. More and more we are finding that mythology in general though greatly contorted very often has some historic base. And the interesting thing is that one myth that one finds over and over again in many parts of the world is that somewhere a long time ago supernatural beings had sexual intercourse with natural women and produced a special breed of people. Such a notion is further strengthened by 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."* The other reading-that verse 2 denotes that there were those in the godly line who intermarried with others in the ungodly line to the destruction of the godly line-fits into the whole of Scripture, for there is a constant prohibition throughout the Old and New Testaments against the people of God marrying those who are not of the people of God. The Old Testament says repeatedly: If you marry those who are not God's people, and if you give your sons and daughters to them, the godly line will be destroyed. The New Testament contains the same command: *"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion has light with darkness?"* (2 Cor.6:14). The principle is clear: God's people are to marry God's people. It is, therefore, possible to interpret Genesis 6:2 as indicating the intermarriage between the godly and the ungodly line.

9. Read 6: 5-7. If 1-4 are the strangest of all Scriptures these are perhaps the saddest of all Scriptures. Put this in your own words. Given the number of adjectives in these verses what idea does Moses want to have concerning the state of things at this point in history? **All man are being talked about here...the sons and daughters of Eve and the sons and daughters of Satan all men have become in their totality... evil...every intent speaks of every intent...even our "best" intentions have sin attached to them so that nothing we have do or say is pure enough in and of themselves. "Continually" is the word that puts the last nail in the coffin. What a contrast to Gen. 1:31...everything was very good! Now everything was only evil continually. Sin is not full grown!**
10. What is Moses seeking to communicate when he says in verses 6 and 7 that *"the Lord was sorry that He made man...it grieved Him in His heart...for I am sorry that I have made them."*? **Think about Jesus weeping over Jerusalem when He looked upon the great city that was filled**

with sin...His city. Was God caught off guard by the depth of man's sin....is that is what is going on? **No, He was grieved, indignant,... for this is the extent to which man's depravity will go without the restraints of God's grace. "The human heart is restless to pursue evil."...one commentator said.** What is God's solution to the problem of sin at this juncture? **To blot it out!**

11. Then comes verse 8. Without reading any farther what is the purpose for Noah? **God's gracious will to provide redemption for His people. God in His grace had already chosen Noah before the judgment... the man who would carry on His work of salvation... for Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD...another contrast just in these verses...man is evil continually and then Noah found favor in God's eyes.**

NEXT TIME: Gen. 6:9-8:19- The Flood

GENESIS
April 4, 2012

- A. Prayer
- B. Review

1. Why did God create? **For His Own Glory!**
2. What is the faith issue that we need to communicate concerning the creation account? **God created all there is...that God created all there is out of nothing, by the power of His Word.!**
3. How do chapters 5-6:8 reflect the prophecy of Gen. 3:15? **We see the seed of the woman beginning, coming into place...and then we see the sinfulness of man having been influenced by Satan and his seed...but then we see redemption being provided as God choses Noah.**

C. Genesis 6:9- 8:19- The Flood

1. What does the first verse tell us about Noah's character?

a. **Righteous- means:**

(1) He was one who had been made righteous by an act outside of himself- God's grace!

(2) that he held to the standard of a covenant...those who follow the Lord are called righteous

(3) See Hebrews 11:7. II Peter 2:5

b. **Blameless- he was utterly devoted to God and His commandments...wait what commandments? A whole man in a broken world.**

c. **Walk with God- intimate fellowship with God...it was said the Adam walked with God...Enoch walked with God and now Noah. Can this be done today? HOW?**

d. **Do these words mean he was sinless? Why or why not? (For extra credit who else in the Bible is defined like this. [Hint: there may be more than one.]) ☺ ☺**

2. **How would have Noah come to a saving knowledge of faith? He would have grown up always knowing the love of God and how important to be devoted to the Lord because God had gifted him with faith. His family taught him ...so not ALL men were beyond saving...but the vast majority. Is it different from us today? Why or why not?**

3. **How does God test Noah's faith?**

a. **I don't think God's decree for the destruction of sinful man would have phased him much. Being righteous he would recognize God's judgment and the "rightness" of this plan. As blameless he wouldn't have questioned God. As one who walked with God he would completely trust God's word on this matter...**

b. **BUT... Build an ark? He was in the desert...approximately 500 miles from the nearest big body of water... build a boat...REALLY!! It hardly ever rained... certainly not enough to float your boat! God gives Noah the dimensions and specifications before God tells Noah why he is building this BIG boat.**

c. **What would his friends say? If he had any friends. Hebrews tells us that the people saw him as the reason for the judgment that was coming on all men.**

d. **Waiting and gathering the animals...do we suppose that this was a simple task? It is possible that God made this so...like a pre-fall relationship...but certainly this would have stretched his faith from a Fallen perspective.**

e. **Then carrying the burden of what he knew that others did not...that all the rest of the human race would be wiped out.**

f. **And it took approx. 100 years to complete.**

- g. **Then after everything was completed and they were in the Ark God made him wait 7 more days before the rain started. The whole venture was an act of faith. This doesn't mean that he didn't struggle with unresolved conflict concerning what God had not told him...just like us today...the act of faith is... he kept working. (Gen. 6:22; 7:5)** What can we learn from Noah's faith ...or is it beyond us to have THIS type of faith?
4. The word ark is used here and only one other place in the OT...Ex. 2:3-5 ...Moses' basket. What might be the significance of these uses? **God saves humanity with an ark in Genesis...in Exodus, Israel is saved by an ark.**
 5. Look at 6:18. The Hebrew could read, *"I will re-establish my covenant with you..."* What do you suppose Noah would understand by this phrase? If the reading I have provided for you is the right one...which covenant is God talking about? **The covenant of grace ... while attributed to Abraham was here in seed form just as it was with Adam and Eve after the fall when God sacrificed for their sins and gave them clothes. Here Noah and his family are saved by God's grace and mercy from the Flood.**
 6. What is being communicated by the fact that Noah's sons were "saved" in the ark because of Noah's faith according to chapter 7:1? **This is covenantal language and an example how God works through families...**
 7. What was the reason for God commanding Noah to bring 7pairs of clean animals and birds instead of just 2 pairs each? **God provided them with a way to sacrifice to Him... a way to be obedient in worship as well and not affect the animals ability to reproduce.**
 8. What was the extent of the flood? Worldwide? Localized? How would you support your answer with this text? Why is it an important question to be able to answer?
 9. What ways does God protect Noah and his family?
 - a. **He chooses to save them keeps them from drowning like the rest of mankind...**
 - b. **He brings them in...**
 - c. **He closes the door before the flood waters rise too far...**
 - d. **He doesn't require Noah to shut the door himself on the people of his community...**
 - e. **He doesn't enable them to see His destruction...he couldn't see the death or even the extent of the Flood...God kept him from such a burden.**
 10. Look at Matthew 24:37-39. It seems that God did not have Noah say anything to these people about the coming doom while he was constructing the ark. Why is God within His "rights" not to have Noah say anything more about His plan?

Remember the II Peter 2 passage told us that Noah had been a herald for God's word among the people prior to God's call to build the ark. So it is not as if they had not heard... There were none who were innocent just like today.

11. What is meant by the phrase, "*And God remembered Noah...*" in verse 1 of chapter 8? **Hebrew expression that indicates an action based on a previous commitment.** What does the word "wind" here represent? **The word here for "wind" is the same word used of the Spirit in Gen. 1 and 2. Since God is doing similar things the Spirit is called upon to do His thing.**
12. As we bring this section to a close what do we see of Noah's faith? **Noah obeyed . He did what God had said...he did not waver in any way.**
13. What lessons can be drawn from the Flood?
 - a. **The Flood is an act of God's justice. Man reaps what he sows. God decrees the Flood as an act of justice just as He has decreed the end of this age will be an act of judgment as He judges the whole world at Christ's 2nd Coming. God cannot NOT condemn sin!**
 - b. **Noah as a man is told to warn other men of God's coming judgment and his righteousness after all he was called a "*herald of righteousness*"...not mislead them into thinking that everything is getting better. We too are to warn the sinner of the wrath to come as well as proclaim God's gospel to all that God may be pleased to save His own.**
 - c. **God protected and preserved Noah and his family the way He protects and preserves His family today.**
 - d. **God saved Him FOR good works, not because of any good works done by him; just as He saves us FOR good works not because of our works! Good works are those works that glorify the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit!**
 - e. **Because of his faith Noah did not sit still and wait on the LORD to do something ...he took what God told him and followed through with God's revealed will. We, too, today, have much to be working at because God has revealed to us multiple things to be doing that bring Him glory. There is a time and a place to be still and wait upon the Lord but when the Lord's will is clearly revealed in His Word we are to be about doing His will not waiting on Him to do it for us.**
 - f. **We see through Noah the importance of staying focused on God rather than the world around us even when things get slow and mundane...which is much of the time.**

- g. **Just as God used Noah in His plan of deliverance He uses us/His people to carry out the plan to grow His Church/Kingdom. Noah was not taken out of the world as Enoch but remained in the world but NOT of the world...just like us today.**

Next Time: 8:20-9:29-Covenant with Noah

GENESIS
April 11, 2012

- A. Prayer
B. Review

1. What was the purpose of the flood? **God decreed it as an act of justice against the sinfulness of all men.**
2. Given how badly the fall of man corrupted, what characteristics of faith do we see being exhibited from Noah?
3. How would have Noah come to a saving knowledge of faith? Is it different from the way we come today? If so, how? If not, why not?

- C. The study will look at Genesis 8:20-9:29- The Covenant with Noah

1. If you had just spent 370 days plus or minus confined to a boat, enduring seasickness (remember probably the first time ever being on a boat, especially one of this size...no one had been on one this size.) and smelly animals, only to step off the boat into a post=flood land where things were just coming into bloom, what would your first act have been? List some of the things that might come to mind. What is normally the 1st priority of men? **See vs. 21b and Haggai 1:7-11..to think of themselves and their needs first.**
2. Read 8:20-22. What was the first thing Noah did after exiting the Ark in verse 20? **Built an alter and offered burnt offerings on it of "some" of the clean animals.** So what does this act communicate was Noah's 1st priority? **Worship.**
3. What are some of the reasons that worship seems to get pushed down on the priority list of our lives?
 - a. **Because God loves us ...so that means He will understand our lapses from time to time.**
 - b. **Life is so busy that Sunday is the only day I have for family time and God wouldn't want me to mess that up.**

- c. **Private worship simply takes too much of my time throughout the week. I plan to do it but something else always comes up...I will get to it.**
4. What was God's response to Noah's act of worship? ***"And when Yahweh smelled the pleasing aroma, Yahweh said in His heart, I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth ..."*** This was a non-breakable resolution by God. How is verse 8:21-22 a fulfillment of chapter 6:18? **Noahic Administration of the Covenant of Grace. Not another covenant the same one but He now adds more stuff fleshing out the covenant.**
 5. Is God vowing to never execute judgment again? Or perhaps is He setting aside the curse of the ground from Genesis 3? What is he talking about specifically here? **As part of this covenant, thus far, we see God promising not to destroy the world with water again. And also we see Him continuing to participate in His world by establishing seasons ...controlling time. Promising that the sun would rise every day.** What is the sign of this covenant administration from 9:12-17? **Rainbow.** Why this one? **It is a sign of comfort and assurance...** Why do you suppose that God gives us physical signs of His grace and covenant promises like rainbows, circumcision, Passover, Jesus, Baptism, and the Lord Supper? **The rainbow tells us the storm is over...the sun is up...things feel better. The others remind us as well of God's secured promises of His covenant of grace. God says He will "remember" because of the rainbow will remind Him ...an action based on a previous commitment. God doesn't forget. At the right time He does what He does.**
 6. Now let's read 9:1-3. How do Gen. 9:1-3 compare with Gen. 1:28-30? **He steps into a somewhat virgin world, recently cleansed by God's judgment. Noah gets to start things over. Man's dominion over the animals is reinstated.** How are they different? **Sin is present...Noah is part of the fallen world. He doesn't have to name the animals! ☺ Man's dominion over animals is not based on relationship but on fear. Noah was delivered but it did not solve the problem of sin.**
 7. Now let's read 9:4-6. Since the flood has man's nature changed? How do we know? **Vs. 21b; 9:4-6...man has at his very core the ability to murder just like before. A family of sinners went into the ark and a family of sinners came out of the ark to repopulate the earth. Human depravity remained unchanged as it does today. Man's inner nature is not evolving upward...getting better...as many wrongly assume....man's inner disposition is just as wicked ... maybe more so...not less...than it was in the beginning. We still are as the Lord said of us in Gen. 6, "The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."** And then in Gen. 8 after the Flood waters

receded we read, “..for the intentions of man’s heart is evil from his youth.” Very similar language to make the point concerning the depravity of man.

8. Why does God wait until now to institute capital punishment as an everlasting law for all people in verse 4-6? **It wasn’t necessary before because He knew he would be ending all life as we know it and starting over.** What is the purpose of it now? **It is a provision of obedience in this covenant administration. Since He has committed to not take life the way he did He institutes a lasting law where murder is unacceptable...showing the sanctity of life as ultimate. The focus then is on the sacredness of human life. Why else would an animal have to pay with its life for taking the life of a man or a woman over another type of animal? God is pointing out again the uniqueness of man and that human life is sacred.**
9. What is God communicating to us by placing verse 7 in this place right after he institutes capital punishment... focusing on the sacredness of life?
10. How complete is this covenant according to verses 8-10? **The extent of this covenant covers all creation by God’s grace.** Who instituted this covenant? **God...no where do we see men seeking to make an agreement with God that would secure their relationship to one another...only God!** What is our part? **Obedience through faith in Him.**
11. Turn now to Gen. 9:20-29. (We looked briefly at 11-17 when we talked about the covenant sign in question 5.) An interesting event occurs which ends badly for one of Noah’s sons. Knowing that God decreed back in Gen. 3:15 that there would be 2 lines of people in the world which son do we see here following in the line of Cain? **Ham and his descendants.**
12. What is going on here? What does Ham do wrong? **There is much speculation since the Bible doesn’t specifically tell us.**
 - a. **One story is that he “looked” when he should have sought to respect his father first.**
 - b. **Another story is that he was making fun of his father’s nakedness...murdering his character if you will before the other brothers. Honoring your parents would be a specific command in a few years.**
 - c. **And yet another says that based on the correct translation of verse 24 that it was the grandson Canaan who actually saw his grandfather, told his dad and the two of them made fun of Noah. Many Jewish scholars along with Origen held to this possibility as to why Canaan is cursed and not Ham specifically.**
 - d. **Others point to the way the Canaanites are among the most sexually perverse of the peoples on the earth**

celebrating temple prostitution and homosexuality in their worship and daily practices....and as such some see in these words in the Hebrew a more perverse relationship either in thought or deed ...which do in fact lend themselves to something more perverse than a simple mockery.

13. Shem obviously is the line of Eve...the true believers or maybe a better way to look at them is as the chosen ones. If that is the case, where does Japheth fit into this picture? **As we will see, Japheth's people end up settling the land in Greece, Rome and Europe in general...the Gentiles!**
14. Noah curses and blesses in verse 25-27. What is the extent of his curse? Is it still in effect today? What about the blessings? **Interestingly enough Joshua is from the line of Shem so when he enters the Promised land they end up making some of the Canaanites their servants.**
15. For extra credit: Why is nothing negative said by God concerning Noah's drunkenness? **Wasn't necessary...look at all the fallout from Noah's over indulgence.**

Next Time: Genesis 10-11- The Tower of Babel

GENESIS
April 18, 2012

- A. Prayer
- B. Review

1. Why did God create? **For His Own Glory!**
2. What was the purpose of the flood? **God decreed it as an act of justice against the sinfulness of all men.**

C. Genesis 10-11- The Tower of Babel

1. A few FUN facts:
 - a. Gen. 10:21 seems to indicate that Shem was the first born...the ESV gets this one right here... "the elder brother of Japheth" indicating first born rather than simply older....Gen. 9:24 seems to indicate that Ham was the youngest son making Japheth the "middle son".
 - b. The "boys" spread out to all 4 corners of the earth. See map.
 - c. This chapter is not technically a genealogy...technically it is a table of nations.
 - d. Historically Nimrod's name had come into association with the pagan god Ninurta...the god of hunting and war of the Sumerian Empire from Shinar, the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the Persians ...all enemies of Israel.
 - e. Nimrod means "we shall rebel" or "tyrant"...by the 20th century it seems to come to mean someone being thought of as an air-head. Bugs Bunny seems to be attributed with using the term at the beginning of the 20th Century calling Elmer Fudd "nimrod" making a slur to his dimwitted approach to hunting. (Wikipedia)

2. Why do you suppose God gives us chapter 10?
 - a. **In Gen.9:1 the people are commanded to spread out chapter 10 while chronologically coming after 11:9 shows us the importance that God places on His people doing what He commands...if they won't do it on their own He will make sure it happens.**
 - b. **Chapter 10 is the big picture of what God has commanded. A literary device in Hebrew literature is to give the big picture then to focus on an aspect of that picture. Think Gen 1 and then Gen 2.**
 - c. **Provides authoritative evidence that the post-flood world descended from one pair of human beings...Noah and his wife.**
 - d. **Provides us with the historical accounting of the origins of the nations of the world and how they initially spread out.**
 - e. **Provides us with an understanding of the relationships between the people of Israel and others.**
 - f. **Provides us with the knowledge of our ancestry...who we are and where we come from. Since all people of the world come from one place this should cause us to think deeper and realize we ARE REALLY ALL made in God's image so there should be no thought of one being better than another...we come from the same source...God...we all have our beginnings from the same place and the same parents...Noah and his wife.**
 - g. **Provides us with the primitive branches of the 2 seeds of mankind that will eventually culminate in the objective of every biblical genealogy including the person of Jesus Christ.**
 3. After reading through these genealogies what do we learn about the "boys" and their families?
 4. What is significant about the story of Nimrod? **See map.**
 - a. **He begins his "kingdom" by building the cities that would be the power houses standing opposed to God's children.**
 - b. **It seems that He sets up the next chapter by being the builder of the Tower and the king of Babel.**
 - c. **Mighty hunter ...not of animals but most often refers to a more diabolical term hunter of men..."bounty hunter"- (The Bible Commentary-1872)**
- D. Now let's look at Genesis 11
1. Looking at verse 1, why would Moses tell the people wandering in the desert this particular fact about there being a time when everyone spoke one language?
 - a. **They may not have heard that story before...not too likely since oral storytelling, recounting the events of old, were at the foundation of this culture...but it is possible that some had not heard.**

- b. Reminds them of man's sinfulness and the consequences of that sin...after all why were they wander in the desert after all? As a judgment from God because of their disobedience.
 - c. Verse 1 sets the table for us to understand the judgment that God later brings. Moses is speaking to a people that are already knew exactly what it was to converse with people in other languages. They had been dwelling in a society which spoke a very different language from them. So they were accustomed to a world in which many languages were spoken. And so Moses tells them, *"Let me tell you that the world before Abraham did not have many languages like the world that you've grown up in. The world before Abraham had one language. In fact, men used a very similar vocabulary and dialect. We could all communicate with one another."* He was saying to them that the things that were very common to them, conversing with people who spoke an entirely different language, whether it be Egyptian, or whether it be some other form of near eastern language is not the way it always was. And that's important for them to know, with regard to what God is going to do at Babel in response to the sins of these people.
 - d. Here we see man (Hamites...Nimrod's people) rebelling against God's creation mandate, and we learn this lesson among many... that self-glorification is always self-defeating. When man sets out to make a name for himself apart from God and apart from the grace of God, it is always an exercise in futility because self-glorification is always self-defeating.
2. In vs.2 we read, *"As the people migrated /journeyed from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there."* What is odd about the movement of these people? **This word construction "migrated from the east"(They were east in one sense of where this whole trek began for Noah.) ...could also mean they "migrated east" and if this translation is used then it must mean "eastward" since where they end up is south east of where they began. (The region where Ark came to rest and they began to first multiply was north west of where they settled.) The word "east" is an interesting one in and of itself in Scripture...it seems to indicate in scripture that a group of people are moving contrary to God's will. (The Bible Commentary...1872) Next we see that they "settled" in Shinar. In 9:1 God clearly commanded Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Rather than filling the earth they selected the best land and they staked their claim in the land of Shinar with no desire to go any further. They banded together to defy God. Not that some wouldn't have settled but what we have is people not wanting to obey God's word.**

3. Interesting side note: Why do you think they built using tar/bitumen in verses 3? **Were they afraid of another worldwide flood...since the tar had worked so well for the Ark? (The Bible Commentary)** What does this reveal about the people at this time?
 - a. **They had “forgotten” God’s provision and His promise...they only thought of self-preservation.**
 - b. **They were seeking to empower themselves... “nothing like the flood would ever stop us again”...**
 - c. **They were NOT good engineers putting mortared bricks together with tar...and the people wandering in the desert would have known that.**
 - d. **Moses is saying one of two things :**
 - (1) **In their fear of knowing they were going against God’s law they were going to use what they knew to keep things water tight; or**
 - (2) **They were not as smart as they claimed themselves to be ..once again showing how pride and arrogance can sway our judgment.**
4. Look at verse 4 a moment. What are the 3 goals they had for building this city and tower?
 - a. **To reach heaven,**
 - b. **to make a name for themselves,**
 - c. **to avoid being scattered across the face of the earth.**
 - d. How do we chase after similar goals today? Why does every generation it seems want to build towers? (Tower of Babel, Tower of Pisa, Trump Tower, Eiffel Tower, Sears Tower, the Freedom Towers) **The command had been to subdue the earth...man took that command and perverted it to mean we will become our own masters as well. Man is still boastful of his power...his creativity...his prosperity. Man still believes he can DO anything. We are bent on making a name for ourselves and our achievements...we seek above all things to leave a legacy that is bigger than others.**
 - e. What do we, like these people, communicate when we seek after the same 3 goals? **That we are better than God.**
5. What ironies can be seen between vs. 4 and verses 5-9?
 - a. **These people that came and settled in Shinar came with the mentality they were the “whole world” in one place and God then by the end would actually be scattering them over the whole world...His will...will be done!**
 - b. **The people had determined to oppose God to His face and God faces them and take care of the problem. See the note to verse 4 in the Reformation Study Bible: “Human beings-this time in a titanic attempt at corporate self-assertion...again sacrilegiously challenge God.” (Don’t miss the use of the word “titanic” here in this assertion.)**

- c. **In the eyes of the people they were building such a structure to reach to the sky...in their view it was immense... but God doesn't seem to be able to see it from heaven so He "comes down to look at this work...that is only tiny to God.**
 - d. **They did not want to be scattered but God would disperse them without one language...**
 - e. **babel= "confusion" in Hebrew and the "gate of gods" in Babylonian...the sought "one voice" they ended up with many languages.**
 - f. **The more they sought control...the more God shows them actually who is in control.**
 - g. **They were seeking a "name" for themselves and their progeny...only God gives the name that counts to those who seek to glorify him.**
6. What does the Godhead's (**"Let us go down..."**) response indicate about God's character?
- a. **Shows true unity within the Godhead in all their actions. United front in judgment and in grace.**
 - b. **They didn't receive what they deserved...God's long suffering being displayed already.**
 - c. **His standards, however, will be carried out and upheld.**
 - d. **Justice defines His holiness as well.**
 - e. **He desires unity among His people but on His terms not on the terms of men... in a social state.**
7. God confused their language. Why is this a particularly good judgment for their sin? **Limits dispersion of ideas...unity of peoples...makes them dependent.** What is God ultimately seeking to communicate with this judgment? **I'm in charge and when I speak everything changes! There will be judgments when man continues to sin.**
8. What are some things that we learn from this event?
- a. **God has a sense of humor...this needs to be said... whether it is here or elsewhere...God could have done Away with them again and yet in His judgment He uses the peoples arrogance against the. I don't know who said it first (it is said that it is an old Yiddish proverb)but the statement is true, "When man plans, God laughs."**
 - b. **His plans will not fail...man can do nothing to thwart God's plans.**
 - c. **God is all powerful...all merciful...serious about His Word/commands.**
 - d. **That there is a price for disobedience...pride comes before a fall...seems like we see that in other places as well...☺ ☺ God's word is proven true.**
 - e. **The punishment is always proportional to the sin... and it always goes with it. I.E. When your child speaks forth "bad words" you smack their mouth to help them see the correlation and connection.**

- f. God allows sin for a time...He is long-suffering but there will be a judgment.**
 - g. Explains the beginning of and reason of various languages**
 - h. Explains the origins of races of mankind. Substructure were put in place that there would be no more inbreeding , and the people would become picky looking for certain physical traits over others.**
 - i. Ethnic characteristics developed...such as skin color arose from loss of genetic variability...hair color...facial features...**
 - j. People are continuously sinful and that without God's grace we will seek to defy and undermine His authority at every turn.**
 - k. God is jealous for His own glory...nothing man can do will stop God from being glorified...God's will... will be carried out.**
 - l. It provides a historical background for what happens next in Genesis.**
9. Now let's look at 11:10-26. Why would you suppose Shem's descendants are listed right after the Babel incident? What does this highlight about God's character? **Signs of hope and promise...He is still moving His people toward the redemption He promised in Genesis 3.**

Next time: Genesis 11:27- Chapter 14- The Call of Abraham

- A. Prayer
- B. Review

1. What was the purpose for the curse at the Fall? **It was an act of judgment against the sins of our first parents. Sin must be dealt with...God's standard demands it. But it also was p[art of God's plan for the redemption of His people.**
2. What was the purpose of the flood? **God decreed it as an act of judgment against man's sin. And so His purposes in redemption could move forward.**
3. What was the purpose for scattering God's people in Chapter 11? **An act of judgment against the sin of the people. But also, to fulfill His Word to fill the earth as well as set up the redemption of His people. See any patterns here? ☺**

- C. Let's look at 11:27-12:1-9 a moment. The Call of Abraham- Genesis 11:27-14

1. Let's think back for a moment. What doctrines have come into play in these first 11 Chapters that are crucial to our faith today?
 - a. **Sovereignty**
 - b. **Radical depravity**
 - c. **The grace of God**
 - d. **Substitutionary atonement**
 - e. **Election**
 - f. **The justice and mercy of God**
 - g. **Irresistible Calling**
 - h. **Preservation of God's people**
 - i. **Think TULIP**
 - j. **God's keeps His promises**
2. What things do we learn here in these verses and why are these significant to the people of Moses' time and to us?
 - a. **Noah had made the prediction that the line of blessing would be the line of Shem. He comes to fulfillment before our very eyes here, but it's all based upon God's choosing, God's blessing. Shem is important because he is the father of Abraham...just like Seth was shown as important for his line led to Noah in God's progression in the covenant of grace...**
 - b. **Next we see the generations of Terah, the father of Abram. And here again the election of grace is made very clear because we now see Abram...aka Abraham...the Father of all true believers. And so we see God's election clearly set forth in the very genealogy as it is recorded.**
 - c. **Next we see Sarai...aka Sarah... is barren...that will be significant when God promises a nation will be delivered through Sarai...a new Eve, if you will.**
 - d. **Lot...Abraham's nephew will be an important part of the story as well.**
 - e. **We see what God told Abram after He had redeemed Him to Himself in verse 1- of chapter 12 confirming to God's**

people that they were on the right track and that God honors His promises to His own.

- f. Abram had to leave idolatry to follow the living God. Israel is now as they prepare to cross over the Jordan going to dwell in the midst of a people who had been devoted to idolatry, and Israel again had to make a choice.**
- g. It's interesting, isn't it, that from the line of Terah begins with an exodus, just as God's purpose with the nation of Israel begins with an exodus. So God's purpose with Abram begins with an exodus as the children of Israel came out of Egypt and into the land of Canaan. So Abram would be called out of the land of the Chaldeans and into the land of Canaan. This would not have been lost on the people.**
- h. Abram made and alter to worship the true God out of His exodus and the people needed to be reminded of that since they made a golden calf. Emphasizing as they prepare to go into the Promised Land proper worship. God will be worshiped as He prescribes.**

- 3. Let's stop a minute and get a broader perspective. There are many Scriptures that speak about Abraham's life but let's consider a couple that will add to our understanding of this section of scripture. Joshua 24:1-3, 14-15; Acts 7:2-4 and Heb. 11:8-10. What do these 4 sets of verses add to our understanding of these verses before us in Genesis 11 and 12?

- a. As you look at the line of Shem listed here, there are idolaters in this line; Terah, Abraham's family, were idolaters. They were pagans. (See Joshua 24:1-3) Ur and Haran both were centers for the worship of the Mesopotamian moons gods NANNA and SIN.**
- b. However, God's election has led to the establishment of a man of faith, a man named Abram, who will leave his family, and leave his country and will go to the land of Canaan, the land of promise.**
- c. Can you imagine the impact of Joshua's referring back to this story as he addresses Israel? Israel has cleared Egypt. She's cleared the wilderness. She's entered into the promised land. She's taken possession of much of the land. As she thinks back on her heritage, she thinks back on the faithful Abraham that we know as recorded in his life from Genesis 12 forward. And Joshua says, I want you to stop and remember where your forefather, Abram, came from. And I want you to remember that you could very easily fall into the same pattern of wickedness from whence he came. He's saying, 'Don't complete that cycle. Don't go from idolatry to Abraham, back to idolatry again. But remember where you came from, by God's grace, and press on to serve the living and true God.**
- d. Abram was the one actually leading the family. Abram took Terah with him because his father may have been ill**

and aged and he wanted to take care of him as long as he could...they fled Ur because God told them to but history also records Ur being destroyed sometime around the year 2000 B.C. by the Elamites.

- e. Abram was moving to the will of God even to the point of looking forward to a lasting city built by God Himself...the New earth and the heavenly city.**
 - f. The Spirit of God moves us to do things that we wouldn't normally do like taking us from what is familiar and "safe" to another "country".**
 - g. We are sojourners and aliens in this life just as Abram.**
4. Starting back in verse 2 we see the first of 5 uses of "I will..." What is God communicating here to Abraham that we all need to learn....daily?
- a. He will show Abram where he needs to settle...**
 - b. that he will be a great nation...(remember his wife is barren) ...**
 - c. they will be blessed...their name will be great among the nations...**
 - d. they will be a blessing among the nations... that those who come along side of them will be blessed...**
 - e. that He will curse those who curse them...**
 - f. Obviously God is saying that he will do it all...**
 - g. and that from this chosen family there will be others who have been chosen by God and these who have been chosen will be a blessing to the world...the world won't be as bad as it could be because the Church is in it.**
 - h. God can be trusted...He never changes...His promises always happen.**
5. What do you suppose God is communicating with all the uses of the word "bless/blessing"? **Barak = blessing= kneel- It is to bring a gift to another while kneeling out of respect. The extended meaning of this word is to do or give something of value to another. God "blesses" us by providing for our needs and we in turn "bless" God by giving Him of ourselves as His servants and as we serve others. In other words we are to emulate God because of All that He has done for us by blessing us to be a blessing.**
6. From verses 4-9 what was the promise made to Abraham by God and what did it mean to Moses' audience? What does it mean to us today? **At the end of verse 9 we see Abram as a man who willingly follows God by faith in whatever God asks of him.**
7. Now look at 12:10-20. Why does Abram take his family to Egypt? What is Abram NOT demonstrating here? What has happened?
- a. This story shows us that Abram while faithful was still sinful.**
 - b. Godly people do fail.**
 - c. The pressure of life seems to dictate our actions sometimes.**

- d. **Abram thinks God needs help after all if they die in the famine God's will, will be thwarted.**
 - e. **I mean he is obviously trying to save God embarrassment if He couldn't keep His promise because a famine got in the way.**
- 8. What does Gen. 12 teach us about God and his character?
 - a. **God is sovereign**
 - b. **God is steadfast in His love for His own even when we sin;**
 - c. **God is forgiving**
 - d. **God has elected Abram and his people to be the ones to bear the line of redemption going forward.**
 - e. **God provides restoration and renewal for His people**
 - f. **God has a plan and it will be carried out.**
 - g. **Interesting that he doesn't punish Abram because of his sin...grace.**
- 9. What does chapter 13 reveal to us further about Abram? **He was aware of his sin and his need to seek forgiveness of God hence his going back to Bethel at the beginning of the chapter. His recognition of God's grace so he must seek His face again. He shows us the importance of focusing on God instead of ourselves. He also shows us that forgiveness is available to all who are God's...We can come to Him when we are weary and heavy laden. What about his nephew Lot?**
- 10. How does the saving of Lot in chapter 14 represent how God preserves His own? **Without much care we often get caught up in the concerns of the world. We get embroiled to the point of being carried away with them ...losing sight of God's desires. We, like Lot, on one hand, don't deserve to be saved but God will lose none of His own. How do we know Lot is one of God's own? II Peter 2:4-10. Abram also illustrates a basic principle of life...I John 3:17-18.**
- 11. How does Abram's response to Melchizedek in verses 17-24 differ from his response to Bera, king of Sodom? Why? **He wanted to be associated with all that is righteous not that which is unrighteous as we see from God's own assessment of the city of Sodom in 13:13.**
- 12. Verse 20 is the first time we see anything about a tithe...a tenth...being spoken of. What do you suppose its purpose is?
- 13. Extra credit: Do you notice anything in these verses (verses 17-24) that seem to be overtly New Testament in nature? Vs. 18- "bread and wine"-- - Abram seeking first God's kingdom and His righteousness... (Matt. 6:33)**

Next Time: Genesis 15-20 God's covenant with Abram

GENESIS
May 2

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Why did God create? **To reflect His own glory!**
2. What is the faith issue concerning creation for the true believer? **God created and He created everything that there is out of nothing by the power of His word.**
3. What are some significant things that we learned about God's call of Abram?

C. Genesis 15-20- God's Covenant with Abraham

1. Let's consider Chapter 15. In light of chapter 14 what is God promising Abram here in 15:1? A word study may be helpful. Back in 14:20 we read, *"And blessed be God Most High. Who has delivered your enemy into your hand."* The word translated "delivered" could also mean "who is the deliverer". "Maggen" in the Hebrew. The same word is used here in 15:1 for the word "shield". How does this add to our understanding of the promised reward? **By reminding him of who actually won the victory ...Abram knows he can take no credit and God deserves all the glory. God reminds us of this all the time because we forget. God rewarded Abram by being his shield...his deliverer ...another reminder to the ones wandering that God alone is their deliverer.**
2. What seems to be Abrams greatest fear in verses 2-3? Why? How does God respond to him in verses 4-5? **Gen. 15:5. How dark the night must have been on that night on that hillside some 4000 years ago given Abrams fear...but how brilliant the night sky really would have been with no competing lights sources. If you have ever been on a hillside...in the desert...on a mountain in the middle of the night you know just how bright the stars are...how magnificent...how close...how clear...if you are looking. Abram is struggling about an heir...something of absolute import to men in this culture. And then God tells him (because he was probably hanging his head in worry!) *"Look toward heaven and number the stars if you are able to number them."* He at once looks up and is probably immediately struck at the site of the universe spreading out before him...the awesomeness of it alone was too much ...but God had said *"count the stars, if you can"* ...this must have overwhelmed him in awe of God because he could see nothing but stars...uncountable numbers of stars...and this is how many his children would be? (the above is a paraphrase of a few pages from Frances Schaeffer) What was Abram's response to such a display in verse 6? And what does that mean? (What does Abram actually believe and what was credited to him and how? **Like Abram God declares us****

righteous on account of the faith He gives us in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

3. In 15:7-21, God formalizes His promises to Abram in a ceremony that would easily be recognizable to the people of Moses' time. He was cutting a covenant. Covenants were made in OT times to bind parties in relationship to one another. Covenants had terms for the binding parties... "Do this ...and you will receive this reward... don't do what is required under the terms of the agreement and suffer the consequences." A blood covenant was more binding ...sort of like a written contract today is more binding than a verbal one .A biblical covenant definition- "*A bond of blood sovereignly administered.*" (O. Palmer Robertson in *The Christ of the Covenants.*) After reading this section, what does this reveal to you about the character of God? How would you define this covenant to someone else?
4. Where is Abram during all of this? What is he doing? What is required of Abram? What does this tell us for today? **There is nothing we can do...nothing we can add...nothing that is required of us to receive God's favor.**
5. God is represented in the smoking fire pot and flaming torch passing in and through the torn animals. What is God communicating here by this gesture? **God knows we can't fulfill the covenant so He doesn't require Abram to pass through as would have been the custom of the time. This covenant is bigger than us. We wouldn't chose to walk through such a scene...for like God we would be promising to have a punishment like what was done to these animals done to us if we can't keep this covenant. God knows we can't do this... but He will require that we keep the covenant stipulations or terms. And because He has walked through this "mess" He is committing to us keeping His covenant with His total existence. He alone can fulfill His law and He alone is accountable to make sure we keep His law...and He alone is responsible to provide a way for us to keep it ..and that provision is the sacrifice of God the Son...Jesus.**
6. Now skip over to chapter 17. How does God present Himself to Abram? **Yahweh the Almighty One...for what He was getting ready to do...He gives His covenantal name and the title that speaks of His sovereignty.**
7. In what way is 17:6-8 similar to 12:1-3? **5 "I wills" from God...speaking about His promises...and the promises while a bit more spelled out are the same.**
8. Most covenants were accompanied by a sign and seal. What was to be the sign and seal of the covenant with Abraham in 17:11? **Circumcision.** Why do you suppose God would have required such a radical sign and seal of this covenant? **While God did not require us to walk between the cut up animals He wanted His children to bear the sign of God's**

covenant upon them. Blood must be shed as a sacrifice...a remembrance...as a consecration of God's people before Him.

9. Now let's go back to chapter 16 a minute. Why does God tell us this story sandwiched in between the explanation of the covenant? **Even people of faith sin and suffer the consequences of their actions. Sarai pushed her husband not to wait upon God and then interestingly enough blames Abram for not protecting the marriage ...Abram took the bait, listened to his wife rather than the voice of God and did what came "naturally" to him bringing into this world Ishmael which means interestingly enough "God hears". He also did nothing to keep Sarai from breaking the law by driving Hagar out of her presence. Hagar, an Egyptian servant, sin was being disrespectful to Sarai even cursing her because of her barrenness... cursing God's anointed. Hagar is part of God's plan...she was not and her progeny were not chosen...her people would represent the cosmic battle of wickedness against righteousness. But we also see God's common grace upon the non-elect and how even when His people act harshly He will still bless those made in His image...** *"Even when God's people failed to live up to the covenant, God is faithful. God comes to Hagar, He reveals Himself to her, He blesses her, He promises her protection, and He points her eye to the future. He says, 'Hagar you do have a son within you, and you will bear that son, and he will become a great nation.' And so He focuses Hagar's eyes on the future and on His promises and not on the wrongs which have been done to her. There is a poignant exchange between Hagar and the Lord here. In verse 13 she calls on the name of the Lord who spoke to her. "You are a God who sees. Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?" This is a very difficult passage to translate, but the sense is pretty clear. Hagar by this time must not have had a great deal of confidence in the religion of Abram. Abram had wronged her, and yet the God of Abram tracks her down in the wilderness and meets her face to face just like He met with Abram, and just like He would later meet with Moses. And Hagar is stunned by this. And she says, 'How can it be that I can live after I have seen a glimpse of the one who sees me?' The name that she gives to this God is the one who sees. (**"EL ROI" the only time this name for God or title is seen.**) And as you know, the idea of God 'seeing' in the Old Testament is identical with the idea of God 'caring.' If He sees, then He cares. And this woman feels cared for by God, the God of Abraham, even if she is not cared for by Abram himself. And so the Lord Himself sends Hagar back to Sarai and says, 'Look, you go back to your mistress and you submit to her and I will take care of you.' This is a tremendous lesson for us, friends. For though there may be those in our own experience who seem marginal to God's purposes and insignificant in the great flow of things, we have an obligation to them as God's people. God calls on us to mirror His own love for the defenseless, for the marginal, for the unimportant as an expression of our realization that He has loved us when we did not deserve it. And so God gives us again an example of how we are to love."* From a sermon by J. Ligon Duncan...^{1st} Presbyterian Church Jackson, MS...**However...** What does the curse of verse 12 communicate to the people preparing to go into the Promised Land and to us today? **There is a reason why these people don't like them...also this would be their lot with these folks from now on...and this would be the fact of this region it will**

always be in war with one another or someone else. Ishmael's becomes the father of Islam... a religion of coercion and fear...they cannot be a "peaceful" because God cursed them in this way forever...Islam and the Jews and Islam and Christianity have a history of clashes.

- 10.** Was the covenant of Chapter 17 a plan "B" as the dispensationalists would have us believe, since man sinned through Chapter 16 continuously making God's plan null and void?
- 11.** What is the purpose for the stories/events of chapter 18 and 19? **After 25 years of waiting the date is finally set...in Abraham's 100th year his son would be born...God's plan continues to unfold...nothing can stop it not even the barrenness of mortals.**
- 12.** A couple of specifics about chapter 19. What does 19:16 teach us about Lot? About God towards His people? **Lot was a wimp but he is also a believer ...he did not want the change that was being thrust upon him even though as we see in the NT he knew where he was living was wicked and the people caused him much stress. God will not let His people perish...He will deliver them even if they are unsure of their own deliverance. This proves the point of His not leaving His people to perish.**
- 13.** What do we learn about the relationship between Abraham and Sarah that we may not have seen in previous passages that enables Abraham to justify his behavior once again? **She actually is his sister...half-sister...Vs. 12**
- 14.** It is interesting to me that when Abraham prays the wombs of these pagans were opened up in 20:17. I wonder how many times Abraham had prayed for a son in the space of time that God had him wait? What do you think God was teaching Abraham through this?
- 15.** In time: How were the saving of Lot in chapter 19 and the forgiveness of Abraham in chapter 20 similar? **Similar in that God would not let his own fail completely...he will bring them back to obedience one way or another for His own glory...none who are His will perish.**

Next Time: 21-27- Isaac- The Long Awaited Son

GENESIS
May 9, 2012

- A. Prayer
- B. Review
 - 1. Why did God create?

2. What does it mean that we are to be a blessing to the nations?
3. Why did God cut a covenant?

C. Isaac- the Long Awaited Son- Genesis 21-27

1. Chapter 21. Laughter seems to play a huge role in the lives of Abraham and Sarah. Abraham laughed in 17:17... (he laughed so hard he fell on his face); Sarah laughed in 18:12-15...and she was chastised, next we see Sarah laughing again probably with Abraham as well in chapter 21:6-7 and lastly we see Ishmael laughing just before he and his mother are banished. What can we learn from this? **Laughter = joy IN the Lord for believers. Sarah was not chastised for laughing. ..rather she was chastised for denying she laughed...deny the joy in the Lord that was evident in her spirit. Laughter for non-believers is foolish behavior...mocking of God's people will bring consequences.** How does God enter into the laughter with Abraham and Sarah? **God named Isaac 17:19...Isaac means he laughs. "God had the last laugh...in a positive way... by giving them Isaac" ...He promised, they wandered and wondered...He granted them a son...the Joy of their life!** Have you ever seen God's sense of humor in your own life? Would you like to share?
2. What is God communicating to Abraham in 21:8-21 by "saving" Hagar and Ishmael once again? **His plan will go on and they are part of that plan. He promised Hagar and Ishmael that he would be a great nation...** Why would God show such great mercy to one destined to rise up and be such a ferocious enemy of His people? **God is a promise keeping God...what He says He will do...but as is clear there will be a day of reckoning. But it is NOT this particular day.** Does this prove that we are all brothers with the same God as some within the Christian Church would like us to believe? Why or Why not? ***"Ishmael wasn't an heir!"***
3. What is it that makes this pagan king and the commander of his army come to make a non-aggression pact with Abraham in chapter 21:22-34? **They are aware of Abraham's mighty God and they want assurances that His wrath will not be placed upon them.** How does Abraham deal with these men who were the rulers of the land Abraham was in? **Respectfully.... honoring!** What does this say to us today? **Even if our rulers are not Christian they deserve to be treated with respect and honor because of the position they have been given by God. Abraham's dealing with Abimelech demonstrates that he understood the concept outline for us in Romans 13 in how we are to deal with those in authority over us. Just because we are the "chosen" people doesn't mean we are to act "chosen"...for much is expected from those much has been given! We are sojourners in this land...we must not forget that!**
4. Chapter 22- the Sacrifice of Isaac. What does Abraham's response to God in verse 1 indicate about where his heart is? **First answer that comes to**

mind is his readiness to do whatever God says. Also in verse 11? But what was it that made him so ready? What had to be there before there could be such a readiness? TRUST...absolute and unadulterated trust...that God would fulfill His promise made to Abraham. There was no apparent hesitation on Abraham's part...too many details in this story to think that his hesitation was simply left out. How do our responses reflect our heart toward those who are asking? Think about some of our responses when someone calls to us: "What?"(as in what do you want now); silence hoping they don't know if you are in the room or not; quickly leave the room as if you were doing or going somewhere else...and this is usually done to the one we say we love. Look at how the Fall so has affected us...our "natural" default is to be defensive even with the ones we say we love the most. But Abraham exhibited "NO ATTITUDE!"

5. Now look at 22:2 where God says to Abraham, *"Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love..."* What is significant about this statement? ***"You will willingly give your son (this is a command, you can't get out of this yourself, you must fulfill what I am telling you)...your only Son...the Only Son you can or will ever have...Isaac...the joy/laughter of your life/heart...whom you love with everything you have ...and offer him up as a burnt offering."*** Only son of the promise...just like God's own Son. It was with similar resolve that God offered up His One and Only son whom He loved to vindicate His Law and to save His adopted children.
6. How could Abraham do such a thing? **See Hebrews 11:17-19.** Why did God need to test Abraham? Why does God test us? **I submit that God was NOT testing Abraham in the way we naturally think of His testing us...because our first thoughts concerning testing often go to thinking about what we lack...there doesn't seem to be anything that Abraham needed to LEARN in this situation. He willing, faithfully, trusting totally in His God to fulfill His promise did what God wanted without hesitation, attitude or complaint. So I submit that another reason for testing that we don't often consider is that God used this to confirm Abraham's faith for all that would come after him...solidifying the promises of God to be able to actually do God's will...when God calls we can do what He says. The children of Israel needed to be reminded of that message as they wandered...we need to be reminded of that message as we wander. God delights in affirming in us what He has done so that we will "know" and believe His promises and often He takes us to the brink in doing so. God didn't need to test Abraham to see what He would do...He knew that Abraham would be faithful so this story is for all of us who forget that we can BE as well, by the grace of God! Events like these confirm our faith, prove our commitment, and strengthen those around us. Verses 15-19. This is not for God but for God's people.**

7. Chapter 23. It was customary for a family to bury their dead in the place of their ancestors. Why is it significant that Abraham negotiates and buys this plot of land for Sarah in the place of his sojourning? **He recognizes this as the promised land that his people will come back to so he is burying Sarah in the ancestral land...the Promised land that God will bring His people back to. Also...the conquering of the land had begun...quietly. The Hittites offered to bury Sarah in one of their own tombs...no land. Ephron wants to give the land to Abraham...seems innocent enough but future generations may not recognize Abraham's family at some point and take the land back...no land. But Abraham purchases it fair and square ... They went out of their way to confirm this sale so no question...it is the children of Israel's land. The conquering has begun!**
8. Chapter 24. Look back at minute at 22:23. What do we see there? **First mention of Rebekah and from whose household she will be coming.** Verse 2 seems strange to us today, *"Put your hand under my thigh that I may make you swear by the LORD..."* Why does Abraham ask such a strange thing do you think? **Not many men would do this today...but this was an extremely important way to ensure an oath in that day from a servant for it symbolized the binding of all future descendants to take vengeance should the agreement be broken by the one doing the touching. The underside of the thigh was regarded as the seat of procreative power.**
9. What are the things done in this passage to get a mate for Isaac? What role should parents have in this process? What does this say about Isaac's relationship with his father? What were some of the things Isaac knew about his father that would enable him to trust his father with such a huge task for him? How much trust did Abraham have in this servant?
10. Chapter 25. What interesting facts do we learn about Abraham from verses 1-8? What does it say about Abraham that both Isaac and Ishmael were at his funeral?
11. What does the prophecy that God gives to Rebekah in vs. 23 mean for them and for future generations? **God's choice in election is often unusual from our perspective. The divine choice of Jacob cannot be explained by birth order or natural rights. God freely chose Jacob , the younger, over Esau the older. This is the autonomous prerogative of divine sovereignty in election.** And why do we see such a "silly" story played out between the brothers and how does it support what God prophesied?
12. Chapter 26. What has happened in the ensuing years concerning the "respect" these people once had for Abraham? **Verse 15.** Why does Abimelech now come to Isaac and sign a non-aggression act? How is this similar to the one he signed with his father?

13. With all of this in mind what are some of the major themes to come from these chapters that would have been an encouragement to God's people in the desert and to us today?

- a. **God is in charge of every detail...**
- b. **God confirms our faith over and over again to strengthen our assurance but more so to strengthen those with in His family.**
- c. **God calls on parents to consider and act on how important it is to grow your children up in the LORD...something the past generations had not done well while in Egypt.**
- d. **God's divine guidance ...taking the servant right where he needed to be and providing for him exactly what He promised...just the way that God is leading and providing for His people now.**

Next Time: Genesis 27-36- How do you solve a problem like Jacob?

GENESIS
May 23, 2012

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Last time we look at Isaac in Chapters 21-27. With all the things pointed out in these chapters, what are some of the major themes to come from these chapters that would have been encouraging to God's people as they wandered in their desert?

2. What about us as we sometimes find ourselves wandering as well?

C. Genesis 27-36: How do you solve a problem like Jacob?

1. Look back for a moment to Genesis 25:19-34. What is God communicating to Rebekah in verse 23 for that day...and then for us in this day and then for the Coming day?

2. What things do we learn about Jacob here in chapter 25 that we may have not seen last time?

- a. **Jacob="he takes the heel"...the picture is one of wrestling...the act of tripping up an opponent in a wrestling match, to outwit by any measure "legal or not" - to supplant.**
- b. **"A quiet man"... an upright/civilized man, a man of steady, domestic and moral habits.... "Gentleman" of days gone by!**
- c. **"Dwelling in tents"... in contrast to his brother, "a man of the field" a reference to his wandering ways. Jacob seems to have preferred the stability of family and all that went with it...instead of wandering around in search for pleasure and amusement.**

- d. He was loved by his mother for all the reasons listed above...**
 - e. Jacob had a different view of the birthright then Esau. We focus a lot on the fact that the name Jacob means “deceiver” as we should since he gives us more than adequate reason to place that label upon him ...even here perhaps. But for a moment let’s think of them as brothers...one abusing the family name...one seeking hard even if perhaps not for completely righteous reasons...to uphold the family name...wouldn’t this be a perfect way to seek to preserve what Esau was throwing away? The privileges that are spelled out later with the birthright are not so clear here in these times...but what is certain is that the 1st born or the one with the birthright would garnish more respect; then become the head of the family as a prince/chieftain at the death of the elder...it also looks as though they would take on the role of family priest as well. These things seem to have been of little importance to Esau...so Jacob was seeking to preserve the “sanctity” of these things.**
 - f. But he was also selfish...maybe started out by being selfish for the family name...but then that sin drug him into further selfishness of his own...my guess his mother had told him about the prophesy and Jacob came to think of this as his to the exclusion of all other matters. Scripture openly reveals the faults and weaknesses in each of these brothers...also showing us the one who is among the seed of the woman and the one who will be passed over by God.**
- 3. Now back to Chapter 27. In his younger days we know Isaac as a man of faith, what has happened in his older days as he comes to death? He is tied to the physical things as food, touch, smell, and hearing...though that sounds like it is going as well...given he can’t tell the difference between Jacob and Esau by voice... to give him pleasure. He could not see so his other senses would have kicked in...and he was not as careful with others.**
 - 4. Just so you know, Isaac probably knows of the birthright being sold...by the fact the Esau took wives who were Hittites. He was also probably told by Rebekah what God had told her as well just before the boys were born...but favoritism seems to get in the way. Rebekah has been often portrayed as a deceiver herself but her sin is more the same as Isaac’s...favoritism and trying to force God’s hand but there is also a point to be made about her concern for Isaac and the future concerning Jacob. How does this ruse actually keep her husband from sinning and fulfilling his role as priest? She knew her husband...and while a man of God ...he had become obstinate maybe even jealous that God would have come to her and not to him....I don’t want to add to much here ...but human nature is and always has been the same...and God shows us this stuff for a reason...and He doesn’t always fill in all the details on purpose so we can connect the dots. Isaac**

was neither providing spiritual leadership at this point nor he was listening to his wife as his helpmate...her methods might have been less than admirable but her heart was in the “right” place, as we might say today. She believed, “...but not with that faith, which can patiently abide till God works out His plan of providence.” (The Bible Commentary, 1872)

5. I have decided to spend a few extra minutes on this event because of the remarkable place in the history of redemption that it plays in the rest of scripture. Soooo...what is praise worthy and what is blame worthy in each?
 - a. **Isaac- with dignity of the patriarch and faith in God sought to fulfill his role to place the blessing upon his 1st born, but he lets his physical senses and worldly motives influence him.**
 - b. **Rebekah and Jacob- see the promises of God and desire their spiritual blessings above all else, yet they practice deceit and fraud to obtain them sooner, not being willing to wait for God to show Himself faithful to His promise. They believed, “...but not with that faith, which can patiently abide till God works out His plan of providence.” (The Bible Commentary, 1872)**
 - c. **Esau- can exhibit a natural feeling of sorrow for what he did , but he had little to no concern for its true meaning willing selling off his birthright for a pot of lentil soup. He didn't know what he had until later only that was worldly power nothing spiritual in mind at all...the sign of the unrighteous.**
6. What is your reaction to this event? **God's sovereign plan rolls on amidst deception, intrigue, favoritism, and murderous threats.** Does it all seem fair? Does His chosen family seem qualified? How do we square this story with what we know to be true of God: that He is just, loving, sovereign, merciful and gracious? What might be wrong with how we ultimately judge this event and God for that matter?
7. Now to chapter 28. What is significant about the second blessing that Isaac places upon Jacob in verses 3-4? **He clarifies him and his line as being of the same faithful line of Abraham...the chosen people...the elect of God Almighty...El Shaddai...same title of God used when God blessed Abraham. Same blessings and same promises once again conveyed to the next generation. The first one he may have felt somewhat pushed into... the second one from the heart.**
8. Look at Jacob's dream in verses 12-17. Be able to describe the picture of Jacob's vision/dream. (For the older ones in the room you might want to hum a little Led Zeppelin while you are doing it. ☺ ☺) What was Jacob's interpretation of the dream? Do you concur with Jacob's assessment of this vision? Why or why not? It may seem insignificant but what does this interpretation reveal to us about Jacob? **His heart is sensitive to the things of the LORD. We would think that anyone having such**

a dream would be affected...and they probably would...but without a heart and a faith for God the reaction would be one of indigestion, confusion, and lack of sleep rather than one of worship, thankfulness, fear and joy. “This is awesome...” in the true meaning of that phrase! He recognizes the majesty of God which is the meaning of that word “awesome” that we use so flippantly today.

9. What was his response to the dream and what does this tell us about the state of Jacob’s faith? Why is our assessment of his maturity an important thing for us to look at?
10. Chapters 29 through 33 catalogue for us the difficulties and the hardships of Jacobs early married life. The deceiver, of course, gets a taste of his own medicine...although we have to admit that Jacob and Rachel’s deception was a bit more “righteous” right?!? But Laban had a problem...Rachel means “ewe Lamb” and Leah means “wild cow”. If names are any indication of things as they often are in Scripture, which of the 2 daughters do you think Laban was going to have to hardest marrying off? (Extra credit: Daniel. ☺ ☺) But really how does this story of Jacob and Rachel and Leah mirror the story of Abram, Sarah and Hagar? **The general answer among the attendees was that these stories could make a pretty secular soap opera. ☺**
11. Look closely a minute at chapter 31. Why does Jacob finally leave? **God ... Jacob’s God of Bethel...told him to leave. So the events surrounding his vision impacted him heavily.** What was the purpose behind Jacob’s breeding scheme? **To further reveal Laban’s dislike and dishonor of Jacob...build his case...as well as to remind Jacob that God is with him.** How does what Rachel and Leah were saying in verses 14 and 15 reveal what they think about their father at this time? **That he was deceitful, a liar, and a thief towards them, as well. Another way God opened their hearts to want to leave with Jacob...they couldn’t trust their father...but they could trust Jacob...God was with him and he was an upright man in their eyes.** Now comes verses 44-54. What is the purpose for Laban’s covenant...what is he hoping to secure? **Laban is trying to secure a foothold that he can use against Jacob if in his opinion something doesn’t go well with the family. Still bent on control.** What about Jacob’s end of the covenant and what is he hoping to secure? **Complete separation from his father-in-laws control. He is willing to be amiable until they cross the line in the sand ...but after that there is no going back and there will be no visits from Laban either as a consequence of Laban’s evilness and dishonor to Jacob and his wives. This was the Mizpah Covenant that we see symbolized in so much jewelry in our culture.** So why do we buy the Mizpah necklaces and wear them as a sign of friendship? **(I couldn’t help myself, this is one of my pet peeves.) This covenant is the farther things from friendship...this is Jacob protecting his family against**

his deceitful and evil father-in-law. Interesting that we have wondered so far away from this original intent.

12. According to chapter 32:1-21, how is God preparing him for the wrestling match in the first half of this chapter? **He is struggling with in himself...God has softened Jacob's heart and is making him a man of stronger faith so God is preparing him now to battle with his greatest fight...** In general, how do we see Jacob's faith maturing in these two events? **His faith has grown to the place of recognizing he doesn't deserve God's grace though he asks...in the midst of his fear he goes first to God...he prepares for what he thinks will be the inevitable but the main way he is preparing to meet with Esau is through meeting with God.** Was Jacob really strong or was God extremely patient? Back up your answer either way? **Vss. 25-26 are peculiar verses to me... "When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched (gently touched or lightly touched) his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled him. Then he said, 'Let me go, for the day has broken."** What was the purpose for the wrestling match? **They wrestled until dawn. Jacob was clinging to this man...this manifestation of His God for dear life not willing to let go for perhaps the first time in his life. He has a consuming fire for God...God had forged Jacob's heart so that Jacob could become Israel...God's Chosen.** Now, why did God let Jacob prevail in the wrestling match? **With God there is always victory...and there will be victory with the coming of Esau as well. The ESV does not complete the thought in 29 after Jacob asks the man His name... "The man said, 'Why is it you ask my name...seeing that it is secret or wonderful?" In other words, it probably should be rendered, "Why do you ask my name, as if you do not know who I am?"** (To compare God's work look also at John 21:15-18 and II Cor. 12: 7-10)

13. Looking at chapters 34-35, what would you say is the overarching reason these 2 chapters are here? Why such carnage and such restoration especially with God re-confirming his covenant with Jacob?

14. So how did God solve a problem like Jacob?

Next Time: Genesis 37-50- Joseph in and over Egypt

GENESIS
May 30, 2012

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. How does the recounting of Jacob's life speak to the wandering Israelites? How does it speak to us today?
2. How did God solve a problem like Jacob? **Wrestled with Him in the darkness and then gave him a new name. Or maybe as was stated at Bible study...Jacob was not a problem to be solved...everything happened just as it was planned by God.**

C. Joseph in and over Egypt- Genesis 37-50

1. **The story of Joseph is a familiar one to any who have spent any time in the church. There is a richness to his life from the story of his brother's jealousy over the coat of many colors to his dreams to where his brothers were bowing down to him. Then we see his brothers selling Joseph into slavery and being taken to Egypt as a slave. He is sold to Potiphar and then he is wrongly accused and thrown into prison. From Joseph simply being in Egypt, we see Joseph rising up through the ashes to being over Egypt as Pharaoh's right hand man and then finally, the reconciliation years later with his family.**
2. How old is Joseph when we pick up his story in chapter 37? **17** Why does Jacob love Joseph more than his other sons? **Just like Benjamin he is the son of Rachel ...the wife of his choice and heart.** What do we learn about Joseph from the fact he tells his dreams to his family? What is ironic in the way that the sons deceived their father about Joseph's death? **What goes around comes around to be sure...**
3. In Chapter 38 we take a detour and look at Judah's life for a moment. Anytime you see Judah referred to it is smart to pay close attention. Why? What is significant about Judah? **The Messiah will come from Judah's line...and interesting beginning...he does not deserve God's favor...but then who among us does...Did he do anything to warrant such a place in history as the line of the Messiah? No...it is God's choice. Tamar is talked about in the genealogies of Matthew for the Messiah as well... As a side note: what is shown here is the custom of levirate marriage where upon the death of the husband his brother is to take over all the duties of the deceased brother even to the point of bringing about children if none has been born yet. So it was Onan's duty to marry his brother's widow and conceive children with her so that his brother's inheritance (double portion as the firstborn) could be passed down to the offspring. Though the children would biologically be Onan's they would legally be his brother Er's heirs. But if no children were born of this union...conceivably the firstborn's inheritance could pass to Onan. This arrangement would have been widely known and practiced by the time of Moses and the wandering throng. We also see it in Deut. 25:5-10. Why do you suppose God tells this story through Moses to His people ...past, present and future? **God's perfect plan worked out through imperfect vessels.****

4. In Chapter 39-41 we see Joseph in Egypt. 4 times in this chapter we read the phrase, "...the LORD was with Joseph..." What does that tell us?
Obviously...the LORD was with Joseph...HeHe!!!
5. What enabled Potiphar, a pagan, to see that the LORD was with Joseph?
 - a. **God gave him the ability...opened his eyes to see this about Joseph in the same way he opened the eyes and hearts of those around Esther and Daniel.**
 - b. **Joseph's life exhibited the righteousness God had given him.**
 - c. **Think Matthew 5:14-16**
 - d. How do people know we are Christians?
6. What does the fact that Joseph only gets thrown into prison after being accused by Potiphar's wife tell us about Potiphar? **He was a fair man and he obviously liked Joseph and that he was also a discerning man. Most commentators conclude, and I concur, that Potiphar wife must have had a reputation, that she may have been a princess of some kind or the daughter of someone extremely close to the Pharaoh given Potiphar's position as the captain of Pharaoh's guard. Captain of the elite of the elite of Pharaoh's military... and with that position came the power of life and death over all people with or without Pharaoh's input. Any way as a slave he would have been put to death with the threat of rape from his wife and he was only put into prison. (We see these guys in the movie The Mummy coming to the aid of Pharaoh all be it too late.)**
7. What characteristic (s) of Joseph seem to shine? **Integrity, responsible, wise, discerning, his trust in God, hard worker, steward.** Where did they come from? Was he taught them from his father or brothers that we can tell? **They come to him through faith in God...God teaches Him, His Spirit enables him to want to do the right thing and then to carry it out for he is that close to his God.**
8. In Chapters 40 and 41, what does God do to enable Joseph to do to move him along in His plan? **Interprets dreams...a great skill given that the Egyptians were so superstitious and looking for signs from the gods.** Why does God keep Joseph in prison for so long? **God's timing is always right. God's slowness... from our perspective... may not reflect badly upon us though we including Joseph always have more to learn.** When it comes to interpreting the dreams how does Joseph explain this gift? See 40:8 and 41:16. What message is there for us in this today? What was it that Pharaoh saw in Joseph that made him desire to place him over all the land as 2nd only to Pharaoh himself? **Humility, truthfulness, integrity, faith, his lack of desire for fame and fortune. SIDE NOTE: He was in Egypt sometime between 1728 BC and 1680 BC...during the Hyksos rule...they were non-Egyptians... a time of tolerance in the lands. Interestingly we have little to substantiate the Bible claim on this except an**

Egyptian Classic entitled THE ELOQUENT PEASANT - this literary classic speaks of a slave that rises to ruler status even speaking of the 7 years of plenty and the 7 lean years that struck during this ruler's presence. With this new position came a new name which meant "the god that speaks and lives", along with a new wife...the daughter of a pagan priest close to Pharaoh. This position brings with it almost absolute power which required everyone to bow before him...just like with Pharaoh you were not allowed to look directly into Joseph's eyes...you were to be bowed in his presence unless he gave you permission. He was also given Pharaoh's signet ring which qualified that he spoke for Pharaoh in all matters. In other words, he became a son of Egypt. Now how does this strong believer receive all of this and not compromise his faith? Would it have been appropriate for him to turn away from this? Why or why not?

9. Look at Hebrews 11:24-28 a minute. We see 2 men Joseph and Moses mentioned. Joseph accepts the things of Egypt and Moses throws them off once he finds out who he really is. Is the way these 2 handle similar situations a contradiction in any way to us? Why or why not?
10. In Chapters 42-47 we see Joseph ruling over Egypt. Egypt was feeding the world at this time. Something they wouldn't have done if the real Egyptians were in power. Why does Joseph throw his brothers into jail for 3 days?**He said they were spies...an act to spend more time with his brothers?...an opportunity to cause his brothers to reflect on their sin? ...Fulfilling the prophecy of Joseph's earlier dreams? What was the outcome of their time in jail? In verses 21-23 we see them admitting their guilt...recognizing the suffering they caused their brother...recognizing their hardness of heart at the time. ..recognizing the consequences of their choices, their sin. One commentator says (which I haven't confirmed) that this is the only acknowledgement of sin by a person in the book of Genesis. How do their words affect Joseph and why?**
11. Why was Joseph so interested in seeing Benjamin? Which brother steps up above and beyond anything he had done in the past? Why? **Judah has been changed...he has been solemnly affected by his sin and pledges even his own sons to his father. That being so then why set up the ruse with his cup being placed in Benjamin's pack? He is testing his brothers once again to see their hearts. Once again Judah steps up and sacrificially offers himself to be Joseph's servant in the place of Benjamin. Major change in Judah is complete. Judah who sold a brother into slavery, married a Canaanite woman, chased prostitutes and cheated Tamar...this same Judah now demonstrates repentance and Christlikeness in his behavior. The brothers seem to have been brought to place where they are understanding grace...that none of them deserve the grace they are receiving.**

12. What is Joseph's response to Judah's impassioned plea for Benjamin and his father? **He can't take it anymore and he reveals himself to them.** What else does Joseph reveal to his brothers? (see 45:5,7,8)
- a. **That he needed his family...he missed them...(see 45:4)...**
 - b. **Also before we ever get to 50:19-20 we see him telling his brothers that all that was done was in God's plan. 3 times he tells them "God sent me" ...to preserve life...to preserve a remnant... it was not you who sent me here but God...In other words, "Look at what God has done to fulfill His purposes." He wasn't saying they weren't guilty of their sin...he wasn't saying that all was forgotten...but what he is saying is that though you meant it for evil God meant it all for good...just what he would say later in 50:20....putting the focus at this moment on God's sovereignty rather than their sin.**
13. Jacob and his entire family are now in Egypt and he has come before Pharaoh and he makes this statement, *"The days of my years of sojourning are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning."* What was the point of saying this to Pharaoh and what might this reveal about the state of his heart at this time?
14. Chapters 48-50 bring this book to a close. Chapter 48 and 49 record the last hours and days of Israel/Jacob's life...what he says to his sons and grandsons... the blessings and the curses. What might we learn from this that could strengthen our family relationships and our relationship with the LORD? What do we want our children to carry with them of our final years? **The public mourning period for a Pharaoh was 72 days so we see the prominence with which the people of Egypt paid to Joseph and his family by mourning Jacob/Israel for 70 days. Even Pharaoh was benevolent by letting them go out to worship and bury their beloved dead...the next Pharaoh that is recorded won't be so benevolent to be sure.**
15. After they return from the burial of their father in 50:15 the brothers begin to wonder about Joseph's loyalty to them. What is it about the human sin nature that causes us to doubt distrust and questions the motives of even the ones who have shown us nothing but grace and kindness? **When we have sinned so greatly we are often consumed by that sin to the degree that we begin to project wrong motives and possible wrong action on to someone else because that is what we have been doing or would do in the situation...even or maybe especially towards people who have shown nothing but grace to us.**
16. What causes Joseph to weep again in vs. 17? **They doubted with no reason. Or he was grieved by the fact that they still don't get God's grace. In some ways they are still falling back on their conniving...trust of self...self-perseverance and they are missing what Joseph wants to give them.**

17. What 3 things does Joseph say to his brothers to assure them in the famous verses of 19 and 20?

- a. He is where God wanted him... God has a place for us...**
- b. God had/has a plan... this is called the doctrine of concurrence. This doctrine tells us that every time we act, in some way God's will is being served. When we act to do evil, the sovereignty of God reminds us that God's hand works in the midst of such evil. However, God works through such evil in a way that does not make Him responsible for the sin. For whatever evil is intended by man, God intends for the ultimate good of His people and His glory. See Hab. 2:6-10 and Acts 2:23.**
- c. God has the power-God had the power to use this...for He ordained that it would happen just like it did.**

18. How does Joseph's life prefigure the experience that the children of Israel would endure?

19. From beginning to end what has God revealed to you that you will take from this study?

Thank you for your diligent study. I pray that this has been very helpful in your continuing faith walk with the Lord of glory. And thank you for the input that you gave as I have incorporated many of your thoughts into the body of this study for future use by someone someday. 😊 😊