

Biblical Foundations

Genesis 1-11

When dealing with the foundation, the beginning of any concept or thing, it is vital to come to an understanding and familiarity with its inception. For instance, we can learn much of each other when we become informed of our beginnings, including our upbringing. When studying an organization or institution, we will often search out its history as well as its charter. This often becomes a point of action when it appears an institution has lost sight of its purpose, its roots, its foundation.

We live in an era in which the professing Church seems to have lost sight of its most fundamental foundations. The first eleven chapters of Genesis lay the foundation (the roots) to all we know and understand. More than just the creation of the universe, we see the creation of mankind, the fall of man, the rise of nations, the flood and the formation of languages. The biblical account has been under constant attacks and criticisms to such a point, that even those who consider themselves to be fundamental in regards to the Scripture have come to either question its authority in all areas, or have sought to “bend” its meanings and interpretations to better fit “modern” science and philosophy. This has been especially true with the first chapters of Genesis.

With this has come associated consequences that now appear to be unavoidable, or have not been seen as negative results. Theologians now cower at the foot of what appears to be uncontradictable findings of the scientific community of our day. We find our teaching striving to blend a mixture of Bible truth with “evolutionary theory”. In attempts to maintain some defense of the Biblical account of creation, we have seen either uninformed responses to the findings of science or we have seen the ongoing adjustment of the meanings of Genesis 1-2 to be in harmony with what is read in science textbooks, science periodicals and related materials. Beyond this, even the innate nature of man has come into question as a result of failing to see the events and lasting effects of Genesis 3. As a result of humanistic thinking and indoctrination, Scripture is now viewed as if it is “about” man versus God’s revelation of His working throughout history and plan for the future. These affects are no trivial matter. They impact how we see (our “world-view”) everything! If we study and understand what is taught (historically) in these initial chapters, we will be better equipped, not just for life, but for the further study and understanding of the rest of Scripture.

I. The Necessity of a Sure Beginning

A. The Creation Debate - Heb. 11:3

1. It is important to determine the “battlegrounds” before we delve into the exposition of the first eleven chapters of Genesis (the creation debate depends on the authority which depends on the “faith”)

a. Even the word “creation” carries with it an assumption that all that is in the universe had a starting point - even those standing by the “big bang” need to consider the source of what goes into the “bang” - what we see was not **created** of what we see!

b. It needs to be determined if the presupposition is that there has been a Creator or that there has been, somehow, an infinite autonomy of energy and matter

2. Much has been debated over the years regarding the scientific “proofs” leading to “Creationism” but it is the purpose of this study to focus solely on the **exposition** of the Genesis account

a. Even with seemingly endless proofs of Creationism, the underlying need for faith is still predominant - Heb. 11:6 - we must realize what the object of our faith really is

b. It is also important to note, that the most important “battleground” in this study is the exposition of creation in Genesis 1-2

B. The Authority Debate - John 7:17

1. True truth is in the Word of God - we can learn correctly but we will never learn exhaustively! - it is crucial, though, that we conclude the final authority of Scripture first

Is is “ex nihilo” creation out of nothing, or “creatio ex materia” creation out of matter?

It is interesting to note that it is by God's wisdom that the world would not know of Him and His truth except through the declaring (preaching) of His message - it would not be through the world's wisdom (in science or philosophy) by His revealed Truth declared - I Cor. 1:21

- a. There is a bigger issue than that of the debate over creation of the earth - if the beginning of God's revelation to us is not to be taken at face value, what are we to assume of the rest?
- b. If the start of Genesis is not literal but simply figurative and symbolic, at what point are we to take Genesis as history? Was the fall of man real or just a picture of how it happened? Was the flood an actual account of events or just parabolic in its essence and can be seen from many differing views? Is the confounding of the languages at Babel just a historical tale passed down through several generations to explain the differing languages?
- c. If the start is uncertain, how can we trust or hope to discern the rest reliably?
- d. If one wishes to topple a structure they may hope to irreversibly do so by seeking to destroy its foundations - the fight for a literal, reliable, knowable Genesis is vital!

2. A basic question is demanded when we look to take any passage (interpretively) off a literal, normal path and seek to use another method of interpretation - that question is, "why am I doing this?"

Literal - "reflecting the essential or genuine character of something; avoiding embellishment or exaggeration"

- a. With some passages the answer is clear in that it is written allegorically - to interpret such Scripture figuratively is literal and normal!
- b. If it is not allegorical then another legitimate reason may be the harmonizing of the passage with another, building off the presupposition that Scripture does not contradict itself
- c. These and others are based in good, reliable and strict hermeneutics (guides of interpretation)
- d. But, there has always been an outside, societal pressure to look on various passages in a different light, not out of an initial motivation of good interpretation, but out of a struggle with a competing "authority" of truth
- e. One of the "for instances" we will be covering will be the dealing of a "gap" of time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 as well as the varying ideas of attributing eras to the word "day" in the initial verses dealing with creation - why would we see a need to see a gap and eras in these initial verses just from reading the text? - we will be looking to make a case that these two examples (and others to follow) illustrate an invasive influence from the outside
- f. Others have said that since science demonstrates conclusively that they measure the age of the earth and other celestial objects as being billions of years old that if we take Genesis literally, then God would be, in a sense, deceiving us - this, of course, fails to take into account that God has definitely revealed to us how He made the earth.. miraculous, and in six days
- g. It is imperative that God's Word be the authority first and our reasoning second - we must not be those who have reached conclusions first and then see if the Bible fits them

This is one of the results of those not "enduring healthy/sound teaching - all motivated by something stemming from their own desires - II Tim. 4:1-5

3. The authority of our presuppositions is to be God's Word and not our "thinking" - II Cor. 4:1-6

- a. Paul clarified that he and those with him had "renounced" the "hidden things of dishonesty/shame" which was demonstrated in their avoidance of "craftiness" and adulterating (adding to it what is not of it) the Word of God
- b. The focus was to clearly present (manifest) the truth - "By making the truth manifest; i.e., by a simple exhibition of the truth. By stating it just as it is, in an undisguised and open manner. Not by adulterating it with foreign mixtures; not by mingling it with philosophy or traditions; not by blunting its edge, or concealing anything, or explaining it away; but by an open, plain, straightforward exhibition of it as it is in Jesus." Barnes
- c. The presenting of the Truth should be able to be open to scrutiny before the consciences of those who are listening and, especially, before God - the first goal is accuracy with clarity but never compromise to gain the agreement of those listening (often with the underlying purpose for the greater good of those being taught) - "good" motives do not ensure rightness
- d. Even if the message being declared is not accepted it is to be because those listening have their senses "veiled" - and this veil will not be removed through clever compromise of Truth
- e. The source (the true authority) is God's Word - which as demonstrated in Genesis 1:3 as giving light and will be the same Who will shine the light of Truth in the darkened hearts and minds of the glory of God "... in the face of Christ"
- f. Much of the compromise in the first chapters of Genesis that we see today are, in many ways, taking away from this glory of God

Far too often "craftiness" and cleverness become a part of the presentation of Truth so as to either better appeal to the intended audience or to avoid what is really being stated

4. So, as we press ahead with these first chapters of Genesis, we must be careful to handle them as being from God and doing all we can to portray them as clearly as He has given them to us!

C. The faith debate - Heb. 11:6; Titus 1:1

1. There is a debate over creation because the authority for our conclusions has been questioned/doubted - this doubt and seeking for other “authorities” stems from a fluctuating faith
 - a. One of the core ideas of faith is trust - no one is an authority to themselves but directs their confidence/reliance on something outside themselves - whatever this is, is the object of faith
 - b. Everyone has faith in something! - it is an integral part of our being and nature - even a professing atheist has and lives by his faith
 - c. As believers, we have nothing to be embarrassed about when professing our faith - it, as all faith, is based in presuppositions (we presuppose what a reliable source is)
 - Even later, as we grow and mature in our learning, the tools and sources we use to scrutinize our faith must be presupposed to be authoritative – II Cor. 13:5
 - d. If we question the Scripture, its contents, accuracy and so on, we must be conscious of what is causing this questioning - there is nothing wrong with seeking to verify and defend the accuracy and source of the Bible, but we must come to grips (sooner or later) with the reality that we will at some point, settle on it in faith! - see Titus 1:7-11
 - e. We must not be taken by surprise when many (if not most) do not look upon God and His revealed Word as being a worthy authority of faith - they will be “foolish” to them if and when they read it - I Cor. 2:6-16
2. The faith that comes by reading the Word of God (Rom. 10:17) is not blind, unfounded and baseless faith - the truths of Scripture are to be the thrill of the believer to see proven in various forms
 - a. Usually, “blind faith” finds its source in ignorance (as to what faith really is) and is based in presupposing certain things to be true or false - for instance, many “intellects”, philosophers, students and teachers will begin with the presumption that God does not exist and therefore cannot be considered in any relevant conversation - this is what is dealt with in Romans 1:18-23
 - b. One aspect of faith is a willful placing of confidence in a person, concept or thing - many come to believe (in error) that faith must be (in some sense) nonsensical
 - c. But we, as believers, unapologetically hold to the Scripture as our authority of “the Faith” leading to and building our faith - this must not be a point that we, fearing philosophical attacks, back away from in intimidation - if we don’t presuppose the Bible to be this authority of Truth, we are apt to not spend the time and effort of seeing its truths revealed
 - d. The world will tend to ultimately place the authority of their faith in their own senses and experience - the obvious flaw in their practice is the realization that what I sense to be the fact of a matter may not be the fact at all- experience itself should prove this!
3. So, realizing the need to have an authority of our faith, we must come to grips with this as soon as possible - it is not intellectually dishonest on any plane to presuppose an authority first and then to endeavour to test its truths
 - a. The alternative being a life always pursuing a solid source of truth, or a life leading to despair based upon the belief/conclusion that there is no absolute truth
 - b. One of the best “treasures” a parent can give their child is the solid foundation by starting their thinking off in the confidence that God’s Word is Truth!
 - Children will automatically start off by believing what their parents and teachers believe and then they will ultimately come to test its reliability as they reach their teenage years
 - c. We look to the source - not just the One who observed all these things but the One who planned, decreed and created it all - Psa. 90:2
4. We look to follow the counsel of Paul given to Timothy - I Timothy 6:20-21
 - a. “O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge” which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith.”
 - b. There are varying forms of knowledge but not all knowledge is true knowledge - we will do well to expect that much of our lives will not only be spent in learning, but much of this learning will be the learning to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong with what we are taught
5. So, we unapologetically presuppose the Bible to be truth and will look to find not only confidence in its truths, but joy in finding them out as we study the beginning of all we know!

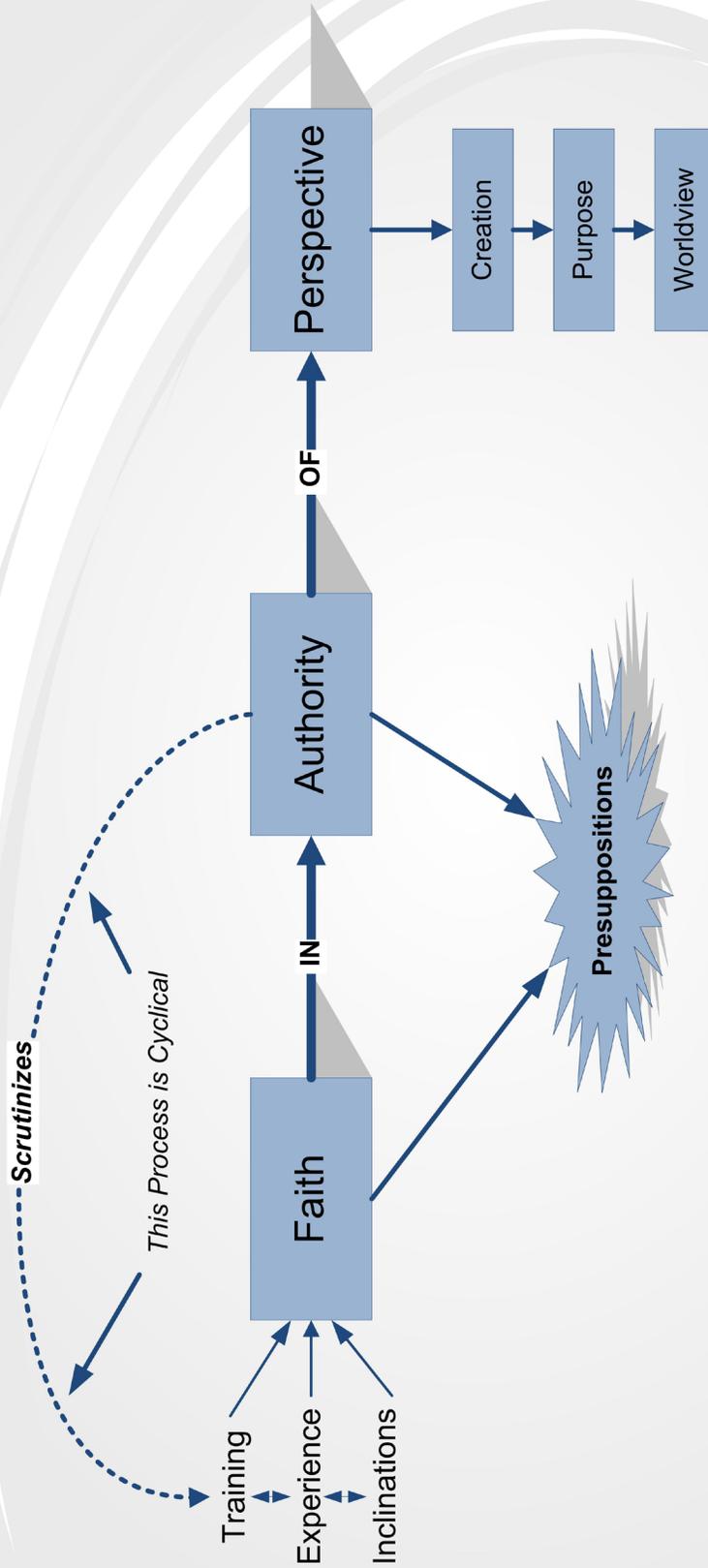
It cannot be argued that reason itself will direct us from faith or be the sole source of solidifying our faith - reason must work with presupposed truths and facts - ironically these presuppositions are based in faith (mostly faith in self and the reliability of personal perception)

It is important to remember that observation can result in various conclusions; some contradictory - this reveals that observation alone is an unreliable source of truth

Parents, grandparents and teachers should expect this process, ready to aid the children and teenagers through this crucial part of growth

“It is not thine: it is another’s property with which thou hast been entrusted: Diminish it not at all” - Chrysostom

The Natural Process of Human Faith



Everyone has faith in something and this faith dictates how we look at life in general. This diagram is not intended to be a depiction of saving faith, but instead the process and cycles of how the faith that one exhibits is naturally started, formed and developed. Everyone starts with a faith that is developed through what we are taught and learn from our parents, families, circumstances and even from our inclinations. Our faith leads us to what we will see as the authority of our life focus and whatever this authority becomes will scrutinize our training, experiences and inclinations. This leads to a change of faith, ending in a change in the authority of our faith. All of this, as life progresses can result in fluctuating life perspectives.

II. In The Beginning God Created - Gen. 1:1-2

A. What was created at the “beginning”?

1. It was the creation of space, time, matter and energy as we know it - it is not the beginning of everything (including God) as we see, in this verse, God was already there
 - a. This same concept is demonstrated in John 1:1, “In the beginning WAS the Word...” - Christ (the Word) was already there at the beginning of the universe
 - b. The concept of God as Creator bringing into existence all that we know, see and touch, is reiterated throughout Scripture - Heb. 1:10; 11:3, Psa. 102:25; Isa. 44:24; Jer. 10:12; Acts 14:15; 17:24; Rev. 4:11; 10:6
 - c. There is no indication in these first verses that there was already the existence of matter or space - it was at this beginning that God created matter/energy space and time
2. The beginning is the start and foundation of the “knowable” for all of us - all that we do know, can know and could come to know of this universe is “housed” into this one event in a split second, a singular moment - everything came into existence
 - a. “Herbert Spencer, a non-Christian scientist, hailed as one worthy of many prizes in science, died in 1903. His greatest achievement, Herbert Spencer, was that he discovered the categories of the knowable. That is to say he determined that everything that exists fits into one of five categories. This was hailed as a massive, massive cataloging of realities. Spencer said, “Everything fits into one of these categories, time, force, action, space, matter,” and was hailed by the scientific community. Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning,” that’s time, “God,” that’s force, “created,” that’s action, “the heavens,” that’s space, “the earth,” that’s matter. Everything that Herbert Spencer discovered in 1903, or before that, was in the first verse of Scripture. The Bible says that God created everything, and in saying that, the Bible gives us all the categories that exist. And He did this out of and from nothing, that is with no preexisting material, and He did it in six days.” John MacArthur
 - b. So, the “beginning” is not the beginning of God, but the start of the physical universe and all that it contains - “The Transcendent, omnipotent Godhead called into existence the space-mass-time universe” Henry Morris
 - c. The “universe” being, “everything that exists anywhere” though we are not told (at this point) anything (directly) regarding the creation of angels (and ultimately Lucifer/Satan)
3. From just a Biblical perspective, how long ago does this beginning appear to have occurred?
 - a. There is a great deal of extra biblical sources with conflicting information from various sources and much of these as well as some of the Biblical research can be reviewed in Henry Morris’ book, “The Genesis Record” on pages 42-46
 - b. One of the more scholarly looks at the time frames of the Bible, James Ussher (1581-1656) dates the creation back to 4004 BC (and whose work Isaac Newton concurred) - this would place the age of the earth at about 6000 years
 - c. Other sources have similar times - Septuagint (5270), Josephus (5555), Luther (3961)
 - d. No matter how others may try to “stretch” time estimates with gaps in genealogies and other Biblical chronologies, they will never begin to reach the evolutionary estimate of 3,000,000 years as to when they see man starting

Time, as we know it, started at this point and there is no reason to believe that there was anything created before this point other than the angels (Job 38:4-7). We cannot restrict our concept of God into time or see Him as linear in His being

This fact is what forces many to add either a “gap” of time between Gen. 1:2 and 1:2 or to take the days of creation as “ages”

B. The state of the created matter and space before God fashions it - vs. 2

1. In the following verses, it needs to be noted that first of all, they start with the conjunction “and” indicating a running narrative and that these verses demonstrate creation by “Divine fiat” (command)
 - a. It is similar (though not perfectly) to what we might see with a potter working with a lump of formless clay and water (though with the matter of the creation it most likely would have seemed boundless)
 - b. It was “without form and void/empty” - it seemed chaotic in that it had no seeming structure and purpose (as if useless) and was uninhabited
 - c. This is illustrated in Isa. 45:18, “For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, the God that formed the earth and made it, that established it and created it not a waste, that formed it to be inhabited: I am Jehovah; and there is none else.” (ASV)
 - d. This formless, uninhabited “stuff” was to be formed into something of purpose

Hebrew conjunction “waw”

2. "...and darkness was over the surface of the deep" - vs. 2

There is no contradiction in the fact that darkness was also created by God. It was a created "physical" darkness as illustrated in Isa. 45:7

Literally the earth and all it contains

- a. This formless mass of all the matter of creation was a watery mass surrounded by darkness
 - "Darkness" being the absence of physical light
- b. It was, as it were, an abyss (great depth) of water, pregnant with creation's components (all of which make up all that we can see today in the formed creation of the matter)
- c. Job 26:7 - "He stretches out the north over the void, and hangs the earth upon nothing" (RSV)
- d. Psa. 24:1-2 - "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For it was he that founded it upon seas, and established it upon floods." (DBY)
- e. This aspect of the earth coming out of water was referenced by Peter in II Peter 3:3-7 - he warned of scoffers coming and claiming that everything continues as it always has "since the creation" while forgetting that it was by God's Word that all this was made (and is sustained). It was He that formed the earth (land) out of the waters and later used the waters coming over the land to destroy its inhabitants: all that exists is sustained and under the direct jurisdiction of His control! - all matter, energy and life depend constantly on Him - see Col. 1:17

3. "...and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water." - vs. 2

Keil and Delitzsch

- a. "The chaotic mass in which the earth and firmament were still undistinguished, unformed, and as it were unborn, was a heaving deep, and abyss of waters, and this deep was wrapped in darkness. But it was in process of formation, for the Spirit of God moved upon the waters... the creative Spirit of God, the principle of all life, which worked upon the formless, lifeless mass, separating, quickening, and preparing the living forms, which were called into being by the creative words that followed... the Spirit of God moved upon the deep which had received at its creation the germs of all life, to fill them with vital energy by His breath of life."
- b. The term for "moving" in the Hebrew was used of a hen "brooding" over her nest as if protecting and bringing on the life about to hatch
- c. The term is also used of a vibrating, agitating, and stirring the waters - it pictures God's creative Spirit at work and the continuing work of creating
- d. The word for "moved" used of the Spirit can also be translated as "vibrating" - "It is significant that the transmission of energy in the operations of the cosmos is in the form of waves - light waves, heat waves, sound waves, and so forth. In fact (except for the nuclear forces which are involved in the structure of matter itself), there are only two fundamental types of forces that operate on matter - the gravitational forces, and the forces of the electromagnetic spectrum. All are associated with 'fields' of activity and with transmission by wave motion. Waves are typically rapid back and forth movements and they are normally produced by the vibratory motion of a wave generator of some kind. Energy cannot create itself. It is most appropriate that the first impartation of energy to the universe is described as the 'vibrating' movement of the Spirit of God Himself." - Henry Morris

"More than any other concept, physicists are finding that waves characterize the structure of the universe at every scale imaginable. As you learn about the physics of waves in everyday life, keep an open mind towards finding waves and wave behavior everywhere you turn." WikiBooks - FHSST Physics/Waves/Definition

4. If God takes away His life giving spirit, things return to their original forms; "dust", or the basic particles from which their physical form was created - take away spirit and all you have is matter
 - "Psa. 104:29-30 "Thou hidest Thy face -- they are troubled, Thou gatherest their spirit -- they expire, And unto their dust they turn back. Thou sendest out Thy Spirit, they are created, And Thou renewest the face of the ground." (YLT)
5. In Proverbs 8:22-31, while describing the pre-existence of Wisdom in God, we are given a picture of creation when not only were the elements were created, but the "laws of nature" were established such as the "compass" (circle) on the "face of the deep" and the boundaries of the waters
 - a. God's wisdom existed before even the "dust" (the matter that makes up) of the earth
 - b. The shape of the earth (as a sphere) and gravity had to be established first indicating, that at the very first (Gen. 1:2) this was not so
6. All of this is significant to remember, not just in the realization of God as creator, but also of God as former of all things and as purpose giver
 - a. One example being Jer. 33:1-3 where God is about to explain what will happen - He begins by clarifying that He, as God, is the former of things and situations
 - b. The same One is He who should be the authority to the answers to our questions with the purpose to show/demonstrate "great and mighty things which you do not know"

III. The Six Days of Creation - vs. 1-31

A. As discussed already, the first day in time began with God creating all matter and space

1. The creation was instantaneous and was now in a state of “potential”
 - a. God would now take of this created matter and space and form it into what we see and know today - there would be several **divisions** of one aspect from another
 - b. These divisions and “formings” would occur over a six day period and would happen as a result of God speaking it to be so (God says, and it is!)
2. Some of the most powerful words in effect and permanence are, “Then God said..”
 - a. As emphasized in Psalm 33:6-9 (and beyond) God speaks and “it was done” He commanded and “it stood fast” - “For He hath said, and it is, He hath commanded, and it standeth. “(YLT)
 - b. This is the reason all the earth should **fear** the Lord and stand in awe of Him
 - c. And in verse 11 the “counsel” (purpose/plan) of the Lord stands forever! - He Who made and formed all things is clearly sovereign over all things (including our counsels and purposes) as illustrated in His “nullifying the purposes” and **frustrating** the plans of people

B. After the instant creation of all matter and space God calls into existence light - vs. 3-5

1. Physical light exists because God spoke it into existence - it is not an entity to itself (just as matter was not eternal, so physical light was not eternal)
 - a. The word for light is a basic word indicating “illumination”
 - b. Light as well as the other parts of creation were not necessary for His existence (or in the case of light, His seeing) but were in anticipation of the creation of Man
 - c. “It did not, however, happen from inconsideration or by accident, that the light preceded the sun and the moon. To nothing are we more prone than to tie down the power of God to those instruments the agency of which he employs. The sun and moon supply us with light: And, according to our notions we so include this power to give light in them, that if they were taken away from the world, it would seem impossible for any light to remain. Therefore the Lord, by the very order of the creation, bears witness that he holds in his hand the light, which he is able to impart to us without the sun and moon.” John Calvin
2. Paul used this part of creation in II Cor. 4:6 - “Indeed, the same God who said ‘Out of darkness light shall shine,’ has shone in upon our hearts, so that we should bring out into the light the knowledge of the glory of God, seen in the face of Christ.” (TCNT)
 - a. The same God that caused light to shine out of the darkness is the same who (in our dark hearts) causes “lights” to shine to see God’s glory “in the face of Christ”
 - b. Just as we could not see in the physical world without light, so we cannot see spiritually God’s glory apart from His **illuminating** work in us!

God created the ‘laws’ of physics but He is not bound by them

3. “And God saw the light that it was good” - vs. 4

- a. God is the definer of what is good - apart from God we could not define what was good and what was bad/evil - it is good because He “saw it as good” (and because He, as good, made it)
- b. For us the term “good” often seems like a subjective term, though when God declares something “good” (approved) it is definitive
- c. It is interesting to note that later, man (Adam and Eve) questioned God’s goodness and the goodness of their situation and became “curiously **dissatisfied**” and disobeyed

Some curiosity finds its source in doubt or speculation against what one has been told

4. God “separated the light from the darkness” - vs. 4-5

- a. Light had been created and seen as good and now was being divided (distinguished) from the darkness as a point/division of time
- b. When there was light, God distinguished it by calling it “day” and when there was darkness God also distinguished it by calling it “night”
 - Just as we will see, other parts of creation used for measuring time (as well as other purposes) so here God establishes the two parts to a day
- c. Based upon this, then, there was “evening” (day transitions into night) and there was “morning” (night transitions into day)
- d. This evening and morning equate to a “day” - if this day or the others are not to be considered a “day” as man knows it, then how would God have indicated a literal day any other way?
 - If this “day” does not mean a day, how would we know what a day is and when did a day begin to be a day?

It is key to remember that all language (and concepts of communication) that we use came from God - he would later “confound” it at the Tower of Babel

A complete day being made up of “daytime” and “nighttime”

The word “day” is used of “ages” and vast time frames later in the Old testament, but never with a number as used in these verses as well as the distinguishing of evening and morning - a symbolic use of a word or literal “object” does not demand the use of the term to always be used symbolically, else we would be left without a concrete concept on which to base a symbol

Acts 20:28 the flock is God’s which He purchased - it is not ours to “fiddle with” however we please

- e. When the word for “day” used here in the first chapter of Genesis is used with a numeric value (e.g. one day, second day) it is never used of a period of time greater than our “day” today
- f. With the previous point added to the use of the phrase, “and there was evening and there was morning” it will be the position of this study that the use of the word “day” in these verses is in reference to a twenty-four hour day as we know it
- g. It is understood that there are differing viewpoints among well-studied believers on the time actually represented in these first two chapters, but differing opinions do not equate to an unknowable interpretation, nor does it demand that a definitive conclusion cannot and should not be reached - taking these verses as literal days as well as the flood account (to be covered later) as a literal world-wide flood will meet with resistance from the scientific communities and will be looked upon as foolish in light of the most recent conclusions of science, but these factors are never a basis for reinterpreting any passage of Scripture - nor does the difference between other Christians on these points mean that we should not draw a **solid** conclusion

- Every teacher of the Scripture must reach his conclusion aware of the accountability associated with such a position - as In Heb. 13:17, a “leader” in an assembly must give an account, and in James 3:1, teachers will “be judged with greater strictness”

C. God makes the atmosphere on day two - vs. 6-8

1. The atmosphere as we know it is present because God commanded it to be so - there are physical “laws” that are used to sustain the atmosphere as it is, but these “laws” did not create the atmosphere
 - a. The earth, as it appeared after day one, was a watery mass
 - b. God created an “expanse” to separate the waters below from waters above - it was literally a making of space between “the waters” which became our breathable atmosphere
 - c. This expanse is referenced in various ways such as a “curtain” stretched out in the heavens (Psa. 104:2, Isa. 40:22), and God “stretches” it out Himself (Isa. 44:24)
2. God, in His infinite wisdom, chose to design our atmosphere as such with the consequences that we would ultimately be dependent on Him for every **breath**
 - a. It is interesting to note the dependency that God designed in creation - we will always be dependent on Him for our life with not only air, but with food and water and numerous other necessities
 - b. These are to serve as constant **reminders** of our reliance upon God for everything - Paul clarifies this when in Athens in Acts 17:22-28 - “He Himself gives to all life breath”
3. This “expanse” is literally a “thin, stretched-out space” - there has been much discussion as to what the “waters” above the expanse are in reference to - some believe it to be in reference to a solid canopy of ice in the upper atmosphere while others believe it to be a vapor of water which would later lend to the flooding of the earth
 - a. Either way, it is clear that God created “waters” above the atmosphere and the waters below - all as a part of the necessary process to sustain life on the earth
 - b. The waters below are in rivers, springs, lakes and oceans while the waters above are in the clouds and the general atmosphere
 - c. The evaporation process, as we know it, was created by God - to this day we know that it is God that **controls** the rain (or the lack thereof) - Mt. 5:45
4. It’s interesting to note the two segments of this aspect of His creating - on day one God said that there should be light and suddenly there was light. On day three God will command the waters to “gather” into one place to have the dry land appear and it happened. On day two, God declares what must be, but rather than it just happening in verse 6, we are told that God “made” the expanse in verse 7
 - a. This occasion and the similar ones in verses 16, 21, 25 and 27 we see not just creation by “divine fiat” but God’s “divine fiat” (command) involving not just His creative work but His declaration of how things **must** be
 - b. It’s not just God creating and it “just somehow happened” - it is reiterated in these descriptions that what was made/created by God was in accordance with His foreordained will - as He said/declared it should be, He made it to be so
 - c. It’s an interesting way of emphasizing God’s control - not just in creating but In His setting the way things should be - there is a plan (blueprint) and then the unaltered outworking of it!

God is not just the commander and designer, He is the doer - the cause, the means!

5. And God called the expanse (firmament) "heaven" - vs. 8

The word for "heaven" and "expanse" are often used synonymously for the sky and space (where the stars and planets are

- a. The "stretched out place" above the earth God called "heaven" (or heavens)
- b. This is in reference to all the sky and into space - it is what God called "shamayim" when looking to the sky from our frame of reference
- c. These "and God called" phrases are further illustration of not just creation of the physical realm but of language and vocabulary - this would be the primary form of communication; the words, phrases and their meanings

6. The phrase "and God saw that it was good" is not found at the end of day two, possibly because the working with water was yet to be complete

7. This day consisted of an evening and a morning being called a "second day"

D. Dry land and vegetation is created on day three - vs. 9-13

1. Once again "God says" and it "is so" - He commands the dry land to appear by separating the water from the land (possibly indicating that all the "land materials" were intermixed in the waters) - vs. 9

- a. The text does clarify that it would be the "waters under the heaven" that would be gathered together to form "seas" (oceans)
- b. There are skeptics that look upon these verses stating that such a process would take longer than the time allotted in a day - it is essential to remember that we are still in the "miraculous" - there are other miracles in the Scripture that demonstrate such examples of "creation" in a faster time frame - it is always essential for us to remember who we are discussing - far too often we are apt to limit God to the "laws" and "proofs" of the physical realm
- c. This is the same God that created lice out of dust (Ex. 8:16-18), caused the sun to stand still (Joshua 10:12-13) and fed 5000+ with five loaves of bread and a couple fish (Mt. 14:17-19) and more - if God is recognized for who and what He is at the start of Scripture we are less apt to question His ability and work later in the Scripture

God would often redirect perspectives to His work in creation and nature to lift the confidence of those questioning what He has said or what he can do

2. We are not told in these verses if the rock or land-like materials were at the core of the earth (the differing crusts) just that the land was separated from the water - it is also important to remember in this study that the Bible is God's revealed account of what He did and it does not constitute a book of science (revealing and describing all the minute processes at work)

3. "And it was so" implies not just that what God said happened, but that it remains so - as He set up the processes, so they remain - by "Him all things consist" (hold together) - Col. 1:17

- "The meaning is, that they are kept in the present state; their existence, order, and arrangement are continued by his power. If unsupported by him, they would fall into disorder, or sink back to nothing." Barnes

4. God calls the dry land "earth" and the gathered waters "seas" - vs. 10

If our "pictures" (perspectives) of the words are wrong we will miss the meaning - this is related to the ongoing struggle in communication to ensure that the words that are used communicate the correct pictures

- a. It is interesting to note that the word for "earth" has the idea of it being "firm" while the word for "seas" carries with it the idea of a "roar"
- b. Both of these illustrating a picturesque idea of language - all language one way or another plays off this idea: a word is known for what it is with some type of "picture" in our minds - the better we know the picture the better we know the concept
- c. There is debate as to whether or not there were "seas" divided by land (continents) or if there was one land mass formed and the plural use of seas was in reference to either the waters on the various sides of the singular continent, or in reference to seas inland (like lakes) - this is speculation as we do not know for certain the make-up of things before the flood
- d. As it was, though, God saw it as good - it was as it should be. We will cover this more later, but one of the results of the fall of man is the creation not being "good" in many respects, as when certain types of floods leave their "set boundaries" and overcome the dry land, or needed water not being available causing droughts and deserts

5. Vegetation is formed with a means to reproduction - vs. 11-12

- a. Three categories of vegetation are mentioned - ground covering vegetation (grass), bushes and shrub-type plants (herbs) and larger "woody" plants (trees)
- b. These were "brought forth" bearing seed to reproduce after their "kind" - this is a clear statement that the vegetations did not spring from one type of vegetation over many ages, but that they were instantly created into their various "kinds" (species)

- c. The vegetation was created with its seed already in it, clearly indicating it was created mature - each “plant” was designed to reproduce itself “in its own image” - many play off the significance of the word “kind” which is crucial, but the concept of the “**seed**” is also essential to understanding the concept - it carries “genetic information”
- d. Some have stated that the phrase “after its kind” was the beginning or foundational concept to the whole area of genetics (the study of heredity and variations) - there has been much discussion over the word “kind” and its basic meaning, but it is clear that it is in reference to a **limitation** (there are variations in “kinds” but these variations are within limits)
- e. Paul uses this as an illustration in I Cor. 15:38 and surrounding of the distinctions God made (as it pleased Him) in seeds (ultimately plant life) and animals
 - “...at creation, when He gave to each of the (kinds of) seeds (so the Greek is for “to every seed”) a body of its own (Ge 1:11, “after its kind,” suited to its species). So God can and will give to the blessed at the resurrection their own appropriate body, such as it pleases Him, and such as is suitable to their glorified state: a body peculiar to the individual, substantially the same as the body sown.” JFB
- f. As mentioned earlier, God created the earth with interdependent relationships, all constantly dependent on Him - so, when we see the fruits, grains and vegetables around us, and when we are able to have them for food, they should be an ongoing reminder of their source, their designer
- g. It is interesting to note that God created the vegetation and its growth/reproduction process a day before He creates the sun - this seems to have a precise intent to remind us that it is not the “natural processes” that sustain the earth, but by the power of God all life finds and borrows its life
- h. “... it did not happen fortuitously, that the herbs and the trees were created before the sun and moon. We now see, indeed, that the earth is quickened by the sun to cause it to bring forth its fruits; nor was God ignorant of this law of nature, which he has since ordained: but in order that we might learn to refer all things to Him, He did not then make use of the sun or moon.”
- i. Many often read these passages and do not take them literally because they see what seem to be discrepancies, missing the point that the underlying purpose of this passage is to point our attention to the **creator** and not the creation!
- j. So all happened as God commanded and before Him it was good - vs. 12

6. The day of God’s creating work is once again described as “evening and morning” being a third day

E. The sun, moon and stars on day four - vs. 14-19

- 1. On the fourth day God again commands there to be “lights” (light bearers) in the “expanse of the heavens”
 - a. In the detailed description of verse 16 we are told that these lights were, respectively, a greater light (the sun) to “govern” the day and a lesser light (the moon) to “govern the night”
 - b. Light had already been created and separated from darkness (to distinguish between “day time” and “night time”) and now God would place this light in “celestial bodies”
- 2. It is interesting to note the uniformity of the first three days of creation to the last three days
 - a. On day one God creates light and separates it from the darkness, while on day four God places the light in the Sun and stars (and the moon, from the earth, is also a light bearer)
 - b. On the second day God creates the “firmament” (the atmosphere) and the “waters below” while on the fifth day He creates birds and fish (to occupy them)
 - c. On the third day God created the dry land (separating it from the waters below) while on the sixth day He created “land creatures and man”
- 3. These “luminaries” would serve three purposes - divide daytime from night time, be used for “signs, seasons, days and years,” and to provide lights for the earth - the earth was not just part of a universal creation, but was **central** to God’s plan
 - a. Another outcome of the creation of the heavens, moon and stars, is illustrated in Psa. 8:1-4 - when the vastness of the heavens, the splendor of the moon and stars at night are “considered” our seeming insignificance becomes very apparent begging the question, “What is man that You consider him?” or “the son of man that you care for him?”
 - b. It is interesting to note in the consideration of the sun and moon being used in the measurement of time (days and years), we realize that the concept of a week is not found in them but in the creation account and its “time” being seven days (including the day of rest)

I Cor. 15:38 - “and God doth give to it a body according as He willed, and to each of the seeds its proper body.” (YLI)

see Psa 104:14

Calvin

The extreme version of this ending in those who “worship and serve the creation rather than the creator” - Rom. 1:25

4. Our lives are profoundly affected by the Sun and Moon and their functionality

Who saith not upon the view of another, surely yonder man looketh by his countenance as if he would not live long, or yonder woman is old, her days cannot be many: thus we can number other men's days and years, and utterly forget our own, therefore this is the true wisdom of mortal men, to number their own days. --Thomas Tymme. in Treasury of David

- a. Our days are dictated by the light of the sun and then the coming of night and the appearance of the moon - not only night and day but in tracking our time through months
- b. We can measure how far we have come in our lifetime (time wise) by numbering the accumulations of these sequences
- c. More than just the measuring of time, we also use these "statistics" in the realization of how much time we may or may not have left - it is a core component of a life driven by true wisdom to "number our days" with the focus of having a wise heart before God - without such markers of time, we would be apt to lose track of the resources we have been given and the resources we have already "**spent**" - see Ps. 90:12
- d. The regular reminders of the passing of time not only sober us to the shortness of time but they also remind us of the sovereign control of God - we may disagree with our "feelings" of the passage of time and may try all we can to stop it but we cannot alter it in any way - God has set **absolutes** in His creation providing constant evidence of His control, His plan and purposes

5. And, "He made the start also" - this statement in light of what we learn in astronomy seems profoundly lacking in emphasis and content

C.S. Lewis in "God in the Dock" and "Miracles"

- a. And ye, these were made for lights, times and seasons FOR THE EARTH also - they would profoundly "declare the glory of God" (Psa. 19:1)
- b. They "speak" clearly to not only the creative power of God but His creative genius! - these should be clear "proof" of God's creating versus **accidental** creative coincidence
- c. "If the solar system was brought about by an accidental collision, then the appearance of organic life on this planet was also an accident, and the whole evolution of Man was an accident too. If so, then all our present thoughts are accidents- the accidental by-product of the movement of atoms. And this holds for the thoughts of the materialists and astronomers as well as for anyone else's. But if their thoughts are merely accidental by-products, why should we believe them to be true? I see no reason for believing that one accident should be able to give me a correct account of all the other accidents.. Each particular thought is valueless if it is the result of irrational causes. Obviously, then, the whole process of human thought, what we call Reason, is equally valueless if it is the result of irrational causes. Hence every theory of the universe which makes the human mind a result of irrational causes is inadmissible, for it would be a proof that there are no such things as proofs. Which is nonsense."

6. A few more interesting items of note regarding this day of creation

Just as we need the "lofty" perspective of God, in His Word, to direct us through life - His vantage point is limitless and only fools disregard it! It is essential to having a stable life to have stable/fixed points of reference.

- a. It is key to remember that light existed before the fourth day of creation and that the Sun and Moon were to serve as "distinguishers" between day and night
- b. The stars have also been used as points of reference to see where we are and where we are heading (as used by sailors throughout the past) - this is a good illustration to remind us, constantly, that God has created us to need points of reference outside of ourselves to know where we really are - we learn more of where we are by learning/seeing where we are not and by focusing on things **far** beyond us
- c. We can, though, be guilty of missing the core purposes of the stars as illustrated in astrology and the superstition that they play a determinative role in our lives - the "heavens declare the GLORY of God" and His handiwork - they should be used to point to God - others such as E.W. Bullinger have written on "The Witness of the Stars" seeking to demonstrate the Gospel message in the signs/pictures of the zodiac; as seen in Romans 1, the creation account is enough to demonstrate God, His invisible attributes, eternal power and divine nature but Scripture does not indicate the Gospel message being clear in the stars

7. God having placed these luminaries "saw that it was good" - it was as it should be and they were, in fitting the core idea of "good," fulfilled their **intended** purpose as He determined it should be

- a. And, there was "evening and there was morning a fourth day"
- b. It may be a good practice, in remembering and focusing on God as creator and His creative work to take time on Wednesdays (the fourth day of the week) to take note of the celestial entities allowing ourselves to better realize our smallness in the physical universe being in awe of His limitless greatness!

F. Sea creatures and birds on day five - vs. 20-23

1. Two categories of “living creatures” are created

The variety of “kinds” of fish and birds is astounding, and it is clear in these verses that they were all created instantaneously and not over a long period of time - birds and fish/water creatures being created at the same time

- a. Verse twenty can literally read, “Let the waters swarm with swarming things”
 - (1). This is from the greatest (in size) down to the smallest in size
 - (2). Microscopes allow us to see even thousands of living creatures “swarming” within a drop of water (micro-organisms)
- b. The birds (flying things) were created to fly “in the face of the firmament”
 - (1). The wording describes “feathered creatures” flying
 - (2). Some have included flying insects in this grouping though it is more likely that insects are included in the descriptions of “creeping things” in verse 24

2. This day is particularly interesting for a few reasons

Creation should demonstrate to us that what God allows, creates and performs has a predetermined purpose

- a. “But on the whole an entirely new type of being has come into existence, creatures that breath and are animated and have power of their own volition to go from place to place” Leupold
- b. It has been pointed out that the creation of these creatures is as much, if not more impressive than the creation of the stars and planets - these (creatures) are extremely complex
- c. Now that God created a habitation, provisions and lights for life (living things) He now proceeds to create the creatures to inhabit them - this continues to demonstrate the creative purpose of God - He created what was necessary for the life, and then created the life itself. This concept continues in our lives, realizing that what God calls and brings us to, He has already prepared it for us while preparing us for it - Php. 4:19, Rom. 9:23, I Cor. 10:13; Psa. 23:1

3. Special attention is given to the creation of “sea monsters” on this day also - vs. 21

It seems integral to human nature to desire to come up with a concept or creature independent of God, being out from under His control

- a. The Hebrew term used for these “sea monsters” literally mean, “the long-stretched”
- b. There were pagan and Israeli traditions that subscribed to the belief that these larger sea creatures such as whales and crocodiles were evil creatures in rebellion against God
- c. Passages such as Psa. 148:7 seem to indicate they were made to praise the Lord as were all other creatures and elements of the creation
- d. Psalm 104:24-30 lists the sea creatures and the “Leviathan” are all God’s “possession” and they were even created to “sport” and play in the waters - this passage also clarifies that all these creatures wait for God to give them their food
- e. Even if we cannot see the good in any of God’s creatures, we need to realize they serve God and are His to do His bidding for His glory - as we are warned not to taunt/oppress the poor in light of their creator, maybe we also should be careful not to sincerely reject His other creatures - even when in fear or repulsion of these creatures we should not forget who made them

4. So, on day five, God created “every living creature” that swarms in the waters and flies in the sky” vs. 21

In Rom. 12:3-5 Paul begins his discussion on spiritual gifts reminding the readers not to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think.

- a. Each one was made “after its kind” - just as the vegetation so also God, using His design, created these creatures as separate “kinds” to reproduce after their “kinds”
- b. Clearly, as seen here and the rest of creation, God wanted distinctions between the various parts and aspects of the creation - in His wisdom, He set things up to be distinct in kind and function demonstrating distinct purposes - just as Paul clarified in His examples in I Cor. 12, God gives distinctive gifts to the church for His various purposes - interestingly enough, this gives us one of the foundational concepts of the wrongness of envy (coveting a perceived advantage)
 - Envy starts with a dissatisfaction with one’s situation in life - this can be related to not just circumstances but also our physical design - as in Psalm 139, we realize God made us just as we were planned to be made in His wisdom
- c. The physical design and its variations within limitations has been studied down to the DNA level - “Modern genetics has shown that all replicating systems function in the framework of the marvelous information program in the DNA molecule. The DNA for each kind is programmed to allow for wide individual variations within the kind, but not beyond the structure of the kind itself.” Morris

5. Then God blesses these creatures with the ability to multiply (reproduce) - vs. 22

This blessing and instruction is the same as given to Adam and Eve - Gen. 1:28

- a. In our society, this point is often missed - God’s blessing is in the ability to reproduce ourselves physically just as it is God’s blessing for the fish and the birds to do so in large numbers
- b. Over-population messages have altered even believer’s perspectives on reproduction

In the KJV, the word “replenish” was used instead of “fill” though it is the same Hebrew word - this led some to believe that this reinforced the idea of a “gap theory” and that there was a race living on the earth before man

The point of Romans 5:12 when speaking of sin entering the world and death by it clarifies that “death passed upon all men for all sinned”

It appears that this time (yet to come) will be representative of how the creation was before the fall

God did not need time for His creation to evolve into what it was when Adam was made, so His choice of the time He did take should hold significance to us - He “worked” for six days and rested on the seventh setting a work pattern for us to follow

- c. This blessing was given with “instruction” to “fill” the waters (the fish) and to keep increasing (the birds) - the word for fill is used also in the instruction to man to fill the earth
- d. There might be varying reasons for people to not have children and animals not to reproduce, but overpopulation of the earth is not to be one of them
- e. There has been much discussion and speculation on this and other points all stemming from deduction and how things are now - for instance, some believe there must have been the death of “living creatures” before the fall of man because overpopulation would have occurred seemingly soon - we must remember though, to always take God’s clear instruction over our deductive reasoning and calculated possibilities - see Isa. 40:13, Rom. 11:34
 - Romans 9:20 is a good example of what happens when one allows their reasoning to usurp (be counted more authoritative) what God has said
- d. It is certainly conceivable that there might have been the death of animal life before the fall and that death as a result of sin came upon man also - though it is also understandable, in a basic (first impression) reading of the Scriptures to believe that there was no death of “living things” (as separated from plant life) before the fall - either way, God knew precisely what was going to happen and that death would come as a result of sin - this then, does not demand the need for the death of living things before the fall

G. “Cattle, creeping things and beasts” on day 6 - vs. 24-25

- 1. As with days four and five, day six has a parallel; day three - the land and vegetation was created and now land “creatures” are made for the land and to feed on the vegetation
 - a. In these groupings of land creatures we see animals as we would normally think of them (cattle, horses, sheep and so on) as well as “creeping things” which are more than just insects but anything that “creeps” along the ground (any type of animal) and “beasts of the earth” which appear to encompass all other non-domesticable animals
 - b. It is interesting to note, in the study of “cattle” type animals, that they do seem to have been created with a plan to be useful for the purposes and needs of mankind - milk from cows for dairy products, heavy lifting and travel needs from horse-type creatures
 - c. Based on verse 30 of this chapter, it indicates that the vegetation was created (as part of its purpose) for food for all land creatures - there is no indication, at this point, of carnivores - there is a later example of animals that are now carnivorous eating straw such as in Isaiah 11:6-9 and Isaiah 65:25 (the Millennial Kingdom as mentioned in Revelation 22)
- 2. The phrase “let the earth bring forth living creatures...” is not speaking of the creative power of the earth/dirt, but as will be discussed with the creation of Adam, they are made out of the earth and at death will return to that state
 - a. “Life” as expressed in the term “living things” is in reference to a type of soul - this is in distinction with the plant life which are not described as “living creatures”
 - b. Once this soul is taken, the body turns into what it is in its basic parts; dirt - this is a good reminder to us not to identify our “true” selves with our bodies
 - c. Also, as discussed earlier, each reproduces after its “kind” and each kind is made with distinct purposes in accordance with God’s will - thus the term “good” - it is in harmony with His purpose
- 3. “All three categories of land animals were made simultaneously, as is evident from the inverted order of listing in verses 24 and 25. Once again, it is obvious that there is not the slightest correlation with the imaginary evolutionary order.. Neither could one kind evolve into a different kind, because God made each category ‘after its kind.’” Morris
 - a. Examples such as this are further proof that those subscribing to “theistic evolution” have issues not just with science, but with the Scripture also
 - b. Once there is a yielding to macro-evolutionary conclusions/interpretations of and from science, then there must be either a yielding of a literal handling of Genesis 1, or an excusing of the Genesis account before those of the godless groups of scientists (in contrast to scientists who believe God - taking God at His word)
- 4. And all this God saw as good - anything ideal in the eyes of God (the creator) is truly ideal!
 - a. These “good” are all compiling towards the “very good” coming in verse 31
 - b. The “scene” is now set for the focal point of His creation; mankind

5. God had created creatures to “maintain” differing aspects of His creation and all that remained was ones to oversee (rule) over all other creatures

Man is above all plant and animal life in quality (image of God) and in responsibility - those fearing cruelty to animals would be better served in pointing potential offenders to their responsibility to God (the creator) versus a responsibility to the creation

- a. As alluded to previously, God built into His creation an interdependency
- b. There are differing roles and responsibility all identified by what they were designed to do
- c. On the earth, Man (Adam) was (originally) to have the “work” to cultivate and keep the garden in which God had placed him. Adam was then given one restriction regarding the tree in the middle of the garden - he would be surrounded by responsibility (2:15-17)
- d. Many of the animal rights activists of our day see mankind as equal with the rest of creation, clearly contradicting the defined purposes delineated in Genesis 1 and 2
- e. Imbalance in life focuses is always a result of straying from God’s Word

H. The creation of Man on day 6 - vs. 26-30

1. This next aspect of creating takes a totally different “tone” from what God had been using

This is why living as “people pleasers” is wrong - it distracts and can ultimately take the place of living to please God

- a. All other created things were made by “fiat” (command) - called into existence
- b. With the creation of Adam there is now, as it were, God speaking within Himself - a divine counsel - man would be set apart in his creation by this special attention of God - our significance is not in ourselves as much as it is in God’s attention

2. There is an allusion to the plurality of persons in God by the use of the term “Let Us” - vs. 26

- a. The purpose of creating man was not to satisfy a loneliness in God - God was not alone and did not need fellowship with man, though fellowship with God was part of man’s purpose
- b. One of the significant purposes of this plural form is to indicate (as dealt with in the study of the tri-unity of God), that God is one essence and three persons - this is important in helping us see the significance of being made in the “image of God” after His likeness - we are created persons and not animals - we are distinguished in our “personhood” and not necessarily in our physical make-up/design
- c. It cannot be concluded that we can clearly see the trinity in this verse, just the plurality in one

3. The “Divine Counsel” decreed to make man in their image

The realization of being created in God’s image carries with it a responsibility - it’s not our likeness, it is His and sin is the distortion and marring of that likeness

- a. There has been much discussion over the ages as to exactly what is meant when describing man as being made in the image/likeness of God
- b. We know it cannot be in reference to a physical form as we know God is “spirit” - John 4:24
- c. It is in more harmony with God being “person” having a will, emotions, self-consciousness and so on and in like manner, we are made with a will, emotions, intellect and so on
 - We have the ability to reason and are accountable for the decisions we reach with it - the image of God is also reflected in our ability for language and communication
- d. It is crucial to remember though, that we are made in His likeness and not made as the very form of God - we were made like God, but not God

Our likeness with God being seen in our “knowing” (thinking) and in, originally, righteousness and holiness (the absence of sin)

- e. We were made in God’s image as beings of interpersonal relationships (as in the Godhead)
- f. This “likeness” also carries with it moral and ethical characteristics (none of which the rest of creation and creatures have) - they find their “goodness” in God’s purpose and nothing else while we find “goodness” not just in God’s purpose, but in the exercise of our wills, decisions and thought processes
- g. We are given a better idea in the same terminology being used in Col. 3:10 and Eph. 4:24 - “.. created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” and “.. renewed in regard to knowledge, after the image of Him who did create him..”
- h. There was an aspect of this lost at the fall and restored (redeemed) by Christ (who, interestingly enough, came in the likeness of man while He was the “express image of God”) - it is also interesting to note that the holy/righteous likeness to God in man was lost in the supposed pursuit to be like God - Php. 2:5-11
- i. One of the last phrases in a song entitled, “In the Image of God” reads, “I will live for my Lord, not for gain or reward, but for love thinking of what His grace has restored.”

It may be noted that angels also appear to have personality and maybe more - so are they also in the image of God? Possibly, but the discussion in this text is dealing with man being in the image of God in contrast to the rest of this creation.

4. God assigns “dominion” of the creatures of the earth to man - vs. 26

- a. Man, having been given the likeness of God is assigned a like responsibility - some of the initial “work” is detailed further in chapter 2
- b. The initial tasks given to man were “earthly” and not “spiritual” - we must be careful in how we rank “works” before God - earthly labors are to be done for Him

I Cor. 10:31

So much of this would be clearer if we all were seeing ourselves responsible to God in the upkeep of our “part of the world”

Our “dominion” is not dictatorial but that of an accountable servant - as mentioned earlier, our value is not innate but given to us by God - pride truly is over estimating one’s own merit

We do not curse other people realizing they are made in God’s image (and it His image that is respected) as well as realizing that we are not above them in any capacity

And there is equality of quality and standing before God as both male and female were created in the image of God

- c. It is key. also, to remember that this “assigned responsibility” is still ours to be doing - not to worship the creation (plants, animals, seas or the earth) but to have dominating responsibility over them (they being beneath us while the **Creator** of them all is over us)
- d. In the same way we should be mindful to care for it as a God-given responsibility - many “conservative” believers shy away from this aspect in reaction to extreme “environmentalists” who place the plants and animals above us - yet we are to see ourselves responsible to the Creator in our oversight of the resources God has provided
- e. It is an ongoing responsibility we have to follow, as “man” to labor in the upkeep of the “world” (the physical creation and the order of it) - The normal course is to “..eat the labor of our hands..” (Psa. 128:2) and to aid in the supplying of others (Eph. 4:28) - see also 2 Thes. 3:6-13
- d. “Rather, God, ‘His laws’ and His glory are the only true end of all human activity, whether in daily work or worship. Along these lines, Von Rad correctly states that man’s dominion is derivative, not absolute: ‘Just as powerful earthly kings, to indicate their claim to dominion, erect an image of themselves in the provinces of their empire where they do not personally appear, so man is placed upon earth in God’s image as God’s sovereign emblem. He is really only God’s representative, summoned to maintain and enforce God’s claim to dominion over the earth. ‘ In other words, even at his highest dignity, man is only God’s **steward**.’” Douglas Kelly

5. The clarity of mankind being created in God’s image - vs. 27

- a. In case it was not clear that God did as He planned in the “Divine Counsel” of His persons we are clearly told that God did just that - He created man in His own image
- b. This image containing, as discussed, personhood (containing self-consciousness, language, relationships, emotions, intellect, reasoning) and morality (being righteous, holy, without sin)
- c. After the fall of man some aspects of this image were lost or better yet, distorted - our self-consciousness is now infected with pride, language is corrupt and ineffective, relationships falter and fail, emotions uncontrolled, intellect and reasoning are **misinformed** or ignorant and our morality dysfunctional
- d. Was the image of God totally lost at the fall? Not all aspects; other passages indicate we still have it and need to bear it in mind when dealing with other persons - such as in the dictate for capital punishment in Gen. 9:6 as well as warning against cursing another person realizing they are made in God’s image (James 3:9 where it mentions the contradiction of the tongue glorifying God and yet cursing man who was made in God’s likeness)

6. God made mankind after His image and mankind as male and female - vs. 27

- a. Why is this verse stated like it is? - first, it states clearly God did as He said
- b. Second, before indicating that mankind was made male and female, it makes it clear that mankind (both male and female) are made in God’s image, and then God made those in His image male and female
- c. The creating of male and female indicates a few fundamental concepts - there was to be companionship (Gen. 2:18), procreation (Gen. 1:28) and authoritative/organizational structure (Eph. 5:23) and in the creating of a separate **family** unit (Gen. 2:24) where the man leaves father and mother and “cleaves” to his wife
- d. Many point out the biological significance of this point (not just the aspects of male and female), but that the woman (as to be detailed in chapter 2) was taken from the man - males have both X and Y chromosomes, females only having X chromosomes
- e. As part of the distortion of this aspect of creation, we see the feminization of men and the masculinization of women, and it is seen clearest in various forms of what has been commonly called “**perversion**” (it is perverse because it is a distortion of the original design)
- f. As a result of a society avoiding a focus on God and His purposes, we have women longing to be like men in their purpose and roles and men longing to be like women in their responsibilities - women seeking headship over their husbands or over their families and men neglecting their “headship” responsibilities and duties to provide for their households (in physical as well as mental and spiritual matters) - most of these finding their greatest distinction in the family
- g. There are other passages that indicate that women are to show submissive/quiet responses in varying situations - such as I Cor. 14:34 where women are instructed to “keep silence in the church”

7. The previous point, God making us male and female has, become controversial in many aspects
- Some believe that the distinctions (in the earthly order) between men and women (husbands and wives) was a result of the curse (e.g. that the wife's submission to her husband is a result of the fall and that before this was not the case)
 - It is important in this discussion, though, to keep our categories separated: we have absolute equality under God no matter how it is viewed, but we have differing earthly roles (some evidenced in our physical differences) and those remain - for instance, in the church we have distinctive roles referenced in I Cor. 14, while we have various spiritual gifts given (referenced in I Cor. 12) to both men and women to be used for God's purposes - see also Acts 2:17-18
 - This "organizational structure" is reflected in the Godhead - "The creation of man as male and female shows God's image in (1) harmonious interpersonal relationships, (2) equality in personhood and importance, and (3) **difference** in role and authority." Wayne Grudem
 - We would not say Christ is any less God in His subservience to the will of the Father just as we would not say that a woman is less than a man in her subservience to her husband or in her role as helpmeet in the family structure
 - It is important also for us to keep the distinctions between the family and the Church distinct - the husband is the "head" of his wife in the family, but the men of the church are not the "head" of the women of the church (there are separate roles and responsibilities in each)
 - These and many other related points will be discussed further as this study progresses, but it is essential that we realize and accept that God made us distinct as male and female for His specific purposes - as He has done with the rest of creation - significance is found in our God-given, distinctive purposes and uses - God determined and designed us precisely as we should be, long before any of us were **born** - Psa. 139:13-16
 - We are to look upon our selves as God's first and then, in light of His position as Creator, we see our sex as ordained by Him as well for His purpose - He defines our purpose and if we seek our contentment and significance outside of that we will be disappointed

Roles are organizational while gifts are practical (one is the structure while the other is the "muscle" and the "nuts and bolts")

These points of "headship" and "submission" do not make the point that all women are subject to all men - in the family and in the church there is submission - not just for women but for men

This will always be a matter of faith for us - that God made us the way we are supposed to be (physically) and has placed us perfectly in our life situation and point of history

The following is a simple diagram providing the basic structure of the position of women. The title is "A Woman's Place" because that phrase is often the start of a contentious discussion often associated with "male chauvinism". It is interesting to note the equality that is clarified in the Scripture and that the differences lie not in our positions and calling before God but in His organizational structure. We are not necessarily given a "woman's place" outside of these four categories and should be less dogmatic when scenarios do not fall within these.

"A Woman's Place?"

Positional

Before God

- Equal before God, made in His image
- Gen. 1:27

In Christ

- There is no distinction
- Gal. 3:28

Organizational

Family

- Submission to Husband as "Head" of the Family
- Eph. 5:22-24

"Church"

- Submit to God's Design of Male Leadership
- I Tim. 2:12; Titus 2:3-5; I Cor. 14:34

There is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free,
there is neither male nor female;
for you are all one in Christ
Jesus. - Gal. 3:28

But I would have you know, that
the head of every man is Christ;
and the head of the woman is
the man; and the head of Christ
is God. - I Cor. 11:3

8. "And God blessed them." - vs. 28

So often, these days, it seems that even professing believers think it not a blessing when a child is born into difficult circumstances and yet we can see from our known history that many significantly used people have come from the most difficult circumstances

- a. There are two general concepts of "bless" in the Old Testament used between God and men: one demonstrating adoration the other carrying the sense of benefitting and enabling another - the first (adoration) usually of men t God, the second of God to men
- b. This blessing (gracious enablement), as with 1:22 and in 9:1 with Noah and his sons, is in line with reproduction - not necessarily intending to carry the idea that to be blessed in this way is to have children (though this is the core idea in this case), but generally it is a blessing to all man kind when a child is born - God blesses mankind in the blessing of children
- c. This is not just blessing in the propagation of mankind (though again this is the core idea), but is to be seen as a blessing by us that another "being" has been created in God's image and (from our perspective) is full of **potential** "blessing" because of God's potential use
- d. In this blessing, God instructs them to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" - in His blessing He **sanctions** this, in a sense "allows" the participation in the propagation of mankind - God could have just created the number of people there were to be and left if at that - any participation in God's work is a blessing to us
- e. This concept is reiterated in Psalm 127:3 clarifying that children are "the Lord's heritage" (an inheritance from the Lord) and the "fruit of the womb His reward"
- f. Jacob acknowledged this truth when first greeted by Esau - Jacob, answering his brother's question regarding all the people with him, clarified that these were the children that God had "graciously given him" (Gen. 33:5)
- g. "Where society is rightly ordered children are regarded, not as an incumbrance, but as an inheritance; and they are received, not with regret, but as a reward." Treasury of David

To society in general, not just to the parents and family

9. The command and purpose to subdue and rule over the earth - vs. 28

- a. As described previously (H.4, pages 14-15) mankind is given dominion over the earth and it is a God-given responsibility not to be taken on as dictators, but as **stewards**
- b. The word "subdue" having the idea, "In the sense of "bring under control by physical force; make tractable; bring under cultivation"; not in the sense of "conquer or subjugate; vanquish"
- c. Thus wanton use is wrong (Lk 12:45-46), neglect is wrong (Mt 25:24-26) and wastefulness is wrong (Lk 15:13,30) - and we see everything in the world (except energy) is cyclic (i.e., recycled); **waste** in the plant/animal world is uncommon
- d. There are, generally, three "camps" in the approach to mankind's responsibility in this area
 - (1). Materialistic - human comfort (profit) at the expense of nature - based on the belief that the world belongs to people, characterized by reckless exploitation and a throw-away mentality
 - (2). Naturalistic - nature at the expense of human comfort/profit - based of the belief that people belong to the world, characterized by extreme environmentalism and an extreme recycling mentality
 - (3). Theistic - balance between human comfort and nature - Based on the belief that the world belongs to God, characterized by wise utilization and entails a stewardship mentality

Taken from Dan Carpenter's Biology notes

see also Douglas Kelly's comments in "Creation and Change", page 224

10. God bountifully provides for the food needs of man and animals - vs. 29-30

- a. There is no mention of eating meat - when available foods are detailed to mankind and to animals, **meat** is not listed - this seems to be a solid case that, before the fall, man was vegetarian and there were no carnivores
 - Many would reason from the physical design of today's carnivores that the concept of all animals eating vegetation is in error and would use this to discredit the Genesis account - we must be careful, though, not to fall into the trap of allowing deductions taken from today's "evidence" to usurp the revealed truth of God's Word
- b. There would have been an obvious abundance of food everywhere they would look - their "lust" for the forbidden fruit would not have been as a result of hunger
- c. Part of the temptation process we will face daily will be the questioning of God's provision (His ability and willingness (goodness) to do so) - if we doubt Him in the daily necessities, we will most certainly doubt Him in the provision for our souls - the provision of a sacrifice for Abraham in Gen. 22, was a profound picture of God's provision for us in Christ

What we observe today is flawed not just because we are now under "the curse" but that we are also so far removed (in time) from these events

Gen. 22:14 - Abraham called the name of the place "Jehovah-Jireh" (the Lord will provide)

Even our every breath is provided by God

- d. The provision of food, since the beginning, has been associated with God - Christ stressed this in the Sermon on the Mount in Mt. 6:25 when instructing “Do not worry” what we will eat or drink realizing our “Heavenly Father” knows we have need of these things
- e. Paul also stressed, “But my God will supply all your needs” in Php. 4:19 - this is the core reason we pray to thank God before we eat - He designed us with ongoing needs that He would supply and it is the height of presumption for us to receive them without thanksgiving
- f. It is the lack of gratitude to God for such things that marks a person, people and society headed for rampant immoral thinking and actions (disregard for God is an ominous sign) - Rom. 1:21
- g. It is not just the quantity of what He provides, but as seen with Israel, God even controls the time something lasts (or can last) - Deut. 28:4, 9:5; Neh. 9:21

I. And it was “very good” - vs. 31

1. This verse “sums up” God’s perspective of the creation as a whole

- a. “And God saw ALL that He had made..” - now that man was made (in His image) and provision was made for his life, the creative work of God was complete - the “system” was set
- b. This, of course, does not mean that He would never “create,” but that this work of the creation of the universe, its parts, and its processes was finished
- c. God’s assessment was of not just the parts (as on the previous) days, but of the whole

2. “..and behold, it was VERY good.”

- a. This adds the word “very” before good and the underlying Hebrew word carries a strong emphasis - it was “exceedingly good,” or “extremely good” carrying the idea of **complete** perfection - the environment of the universe, its systems, order and workings were perfectly good
- b. It is key, though, to remember who was deeming it as good - it was good to God, thus it was “extremely good” in its fulfillment of carrying out His purposes - the outworking of the purposed plan was as perfect as its planner!
- c. “.. everything perfect in its kind, so that every creature might reach the goal appointed by the Creator, and accomplish the purpose of its existence.” Keil and Delitzsch
- d. Clearly also, for God to call it “good exceedingly,” there was no sin in the creation - this would be introduced by man (in chapter 3) - sin is not a created “thing” anyway
 - We do not know when Lucifer fell so we cannot conclude that he had sinned at this point - and it would be irrelevant because the “very good” is God’s assessment of the creation (“topped-off” by man and not by angels)
- e. We cannot say either, that it could not have been truly “very good” to God because man had the possibility of sin - we may deduce this from our considerations of the holiness of God, but it does not truly counter that the creation, as it was, was perfectly complete in the fulfilling of the purposes of God - in Heaven/New Earth it will be different, because we will not even have the possibility (nor the propensity) to any sin because we all will be redeemed, in Christ, forever!

It (the “very good” in creation) is what was lost at the Fall of man and will be restored by God again - only in a creation of another kind beyond what we know in this universe (as described in the Holy City in Rev. 21-22

God knew all that He would do “from eternity” - Acts 15:18 - “Known from the ages to God are all His works;” (YLI)

3. It is essential for us to keep our focus on the Creator and not on the created - we have a tendency, as fallen people, to look on the focal point of creation as being mankind over and above the true focal point, that being the purposed plan of God IN the creation

This is the core to the idea of “..in all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths” Prov. 3:6 - and this is the reason we are challenged to “trust in the Lord with all thine heart” and not to “lean unto thine own understanding” - Prov. 3:5

- a. Man is *A* focal point in creation, but not above the purposes of God in it and through man
- b. To “keep our heads” as we journey through our lives on this earth, it is necessary for us to keep our eyes on the hand of God at work around us rather than on our hands or the hands of mankind - we should always be seeking what the Lord is doing, and knowing who He is, finding comfort in His working and not what may appear to be the happenings “by chance”
- c. Thus, we should challenge ourselves to always seek to conform our definition of “very good” to what God has already demonstrated in His revealed Word as what is very good!

4. “And there was evening and there was morning *THE* sixth day”

- a. This is the only ending of a day with a proper article used to describe the day
- b. It is used to emphasize the concluding of the work of creation by God - the creation of the universe was finished; there was nothing to be added to it - the designer had declared it as such
- c. This day also, in describing the amount of time taken in the “work day” uses the terms of a day with “evening and morning” making up this sixth day
- d. With this work complete, the Lord would now “rest” ceasing from His work of creating the universe

Again, we have no reason to take this “day” as anything different than the “day” we have now regarding time

IV. The Seventh Day - 2:1-3

A. "Thus the heavens and the earth were completed.."

1. The word used for "completed" has the idea of work being ceased (the creating work)
2. All of outer space, all the earth with its complexities, and all the "hosts" in them were complete
 - a. The word for "hosts" is often used militarily as each member of the "host" fulfilling its intended purpose
 - b. All has been done that is to be done in the creating of the universe, and now something else is about to be done - something, that because it does not necessarily fit with all that has come before, will set it apart for emphasis
3. It is interesting to note when considering these truths, that as seen in science (particularly the second law of thermodynamics) that things are running down (entropy); this indicates at least two things to us
 - a. First, that there is not enough in this universe to have caused the universe to be - all that we know in the physical universe, in light of entropy, demonstrates that things begin with order and deteriorate into "chaos" (disorder) - thus, any theory trying to promote the idea of the universe (all the matter and energy) as being eternal and perpetually remaking itself, is unreasonable
 - b. Second, even science (to some degree) demonstrates that things are "winding down" - kind of like a clock - time is running out (at least with how things are now) - so if all hope is to be sought and found in this universe, it is a limited and faltering hope!

The universe had to have an outside "cause"

B. The seventh day, in the creation account, is of great significance for at least a three reasons - the three verbs used of God indicate something special (holy) about this day - He ceased, He rested and He blessed

1. First of all, it is the cessation of the creation work of God

The fall of man and the curse would alter some of the creation, nevertheless, the creation was complete

- a. "No permanent change has ever since been made in the course of the world, no new species of animals been formed, no law of nature repealed or added to." JFB
- b. All previous days had "creating" in them - this day was special and was made such by God no longer creating - this is an illustrative point - while someone is working on a project, it indicates that the "creator" or "worker" still does not see the work as complete. But when work stops, and is declared "finished" it indicates that the "creator" sees it as complete
- c. So, the seventh day is a reminder to us that God's plan for the creation was as it should be - the musings of mankind as to possible improvements or additions should not distract our focus from the design (thus the "designs") of God in them

2. Second, God's "resting" on the seventh day brings it significance

The Lord was clarifying that it was good to do good on the Sabbath seeing that God (and He) do the same - rest is not the cessation of all activity and even all "work" but the cessation of "regular" work

- a. Having ceased the creation work, He now "rests," or as stated in Ex. 20:11, He was "refreshed"
- b. This, of course, does not mean that He was wearied or had lost energy realizing that, "The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding" (ASV) - Isa. 40:28
- c. He delighted in the work He had done - seeing it was "very good" - see Psa. 19:1-6
- d. This rest and cessation of work do not indicate that God has no work after this point in the creation - our Lord indicated Himself that "...My Father is working until now, and I myself am working" - John 5:17
- e. "He created the world in six days, and ceased the work of creations; but he has not ceased to govern it, and to carry forward, by his providence, his great plans on the Sabbath." Barnes
- f. God's rest sets an example for us - not just in a day of rest, but in the establishing of one more day just for this purpose - it is not just a day of rest, but a day to change the course of our week and remember God (with special focus on His creating, all His works)
- g. Not only is it not wise to not have a day of rest, but it is even worse to not have a day set aside to focus upon the Lord - without rest (a change of the pace of daily labors) we grow fatigued and without a day of focus upon the Lord we grow distracted (even, as it were, spiritually fatigued) - just as we need physical refreshment, so we need spiritual refreshment
- h. This example of God sets for us the seven day week - He could have stopped all on the sixth day (seeing the creation was complete and now functioning)

As demonstrated by God, time should be set apart for these

All this, the works of His "fingers" - an easy work for God!

- i. For us, it can be a day, as it were, to "stop and smell the roses" - when we do this and take the time to observe the intricacies of the creation it will (should) drift our focus to the greatness and wisdom of the designer - it raises our thoughts of Him and keeps our self opinion correct - Psa. 8:3

3. Third, God “blessed” and “sanctified” it - vs. 3

It can be used as a day to remember God’s delighting in the “goodness” (fulfilling His purposes) of the creation, and as a day for rest - but it can also serve, now, as a reminder of the “rest” still yet to come as explained in Hebrews 4

- a. God essentially honors the day by ceasing His creating work
- b. This is the precursor to the Sabbath day which is first referenced in Ex. 16:23 - it is believed by many that this is when the observance of the Sabbath day was instituted. Technically this is true though it cannot necessarily be stated that it was not observed before this, though there is no indication of it being observed by mankind
- c. Regardless, the day clearly was given significance by God (from the start) and based upon His revelation of such, it clearly demands our attention to be observed as a day of rest and remembrance (delighting)

V. The Beginnings of Man - 2:4-25

- A. It is key to realize that the bulk of chapter 2 is not a “re-telling” of creation, but instead, serves two general purposes - it fills in details that were left out of the “linear” description of the creation and then it begins to focus on the beginning of mankind - vs. 4

1. This verse (4) is a transitional verse introducing what comes after it - this is the same pattern used several more times later in Genesis (5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2)

Each (as it were) outline level, taking us point by point through the out-working of God’s plan in the history of mankind

- a. As seen in 5:1, the “change in direction” is not changing in any way what came before, but focusing on another “topic” (in 5:1 it is the following the line of Seth from Adam)
- b. In 2:3 and forward, we are filling in details from the creation account and then shifting focus to the beginnings of mankind, through the “Fall” and then to the line of Seth

2. As this begins, we are introduced to the first use of the name of God, “*Jehovah*”

Jehovah being His personal name - typically intended (as with us) to be used with those who personally know Him

- a. It begins stating, “This is the account of the heavens and the earth..”
- b. The initial details given will demonstrate man’s purpose in the creation - we will be given, in the following chapters, a physical and spiritual purpose, both intertwined
- c. The key, though, is to keep focus on “*Jehovah*” Who is “the God” (it is interesting to note that there have been other claims to being God, and yet no other claims to another “*Jehovah*”)

Many will not be comfortable with the true “Lord God” of Scripture because they do not know Him, neither do they desire to know Him

3. He is literally called, “Jehovah Elohim” - the LORD God - in most translations you can tell when the name “Jehovah” is being used because “Lord” is spelled out in capital letters - Jehovah is the name used to describe His self-existence and it, “.. implies eternal, independent, unchanging self-existence, and infinite perfection.” Family Bible Notes (FBN)

- a. He exists of Himself and is eternal in His being - He always “has been” as He explained to Moses when Moses asked what name he should use of God, “I AM THAT I AM” - Ex. 3:14
- b. Even though He interacts with His creation, He is not dependent on it nor does He come from it
- c. Sometimes the phrase “Lord GOD” is used which is literally “*Adonai Jehovah*” carrying the meaning of “Sovereign, Self-existent One” (as in Gen 15:8 when Abraham asked God how he would know for sure he would inherit the land)

4. The phrase, “..in the day the day that the Lord God made the earth and heaven”

The point of this next section is not to describe time as much as it is key details in the days of creation that will lead us to the “point” of the texts altogether

- a. Some take this usage of the word “day” to mean a period of time (encompassing many days) which may be Hermeneutically appropriate in this verse - it could be describing all six days of creation (and filling in some of the key details - demonstrating God’s purposes and plan)
- b. Though, it may just be a reference to the first day of creation where it specifically mentions the creation of the “heavens and the earth” (space and matter)
- c. Either way, it does not change the usage of the word “day” in chapter 1 since those, in context, are used with a specific number (day one, day two) as well as the phrase “morning and evening”

- B. Clarifying the immediate creative work of God in the creating of the vegetation - vs. 5-6

1. The condition of the earth was that it had no “shrub” or “plant of the field” when God made the “heavens and the earth” in the beginning

The focus is to stay on the Creator if we are to stay “on-track”

- a. The next verses are about to emphasize the creation (including man) being of the “LORD God”
- b. We would normally expect (if we see the creation as being subject to the “laws” of nature and their processes of today) that the vegetation would need rain and man to cultivate their growth
- c. Realizing (from the previous chapter) that vegetation was created, then it had to have come immediately (with what we might call the appearance of maturity) - God created them without the rain and man - after they were made, He had another method of watering the vegetation without rain - the second part of this scenario (man) will come starting in verse 7

c. "The earth did not bring forth its fruits of itself, by any innate virtue of its own but purely by the almighty power of God, which formed every plant and every herb before it grew in the earth. Thus grace in the soul, that plant of renown, grows not of itself in nature's soil, but is the work of God's own hands." Matthew Henry on Gen. 2:5

2. God set up the "watering mechanism" to supply vegetation with the needed water - vs. 6

a. Many have tried to make the word "mist" mean rain but its most basic idea is "fog"

b. As clarified in the word "used" this was how it was before (most likely before the flood)

• Rain and the rainbow would be results of the flood (and a change in the watering system)

C. The formation and placement of Adam - vs. 7-17

1. The same "LORD God" molded man out of the dust of the ground - vs. 7

a. The word for "formed" demonstrates a special interest in this part of creation in contrast to the other parts - He "squeezed into shape" (as it were) Adam

the last part "wonderfully made" having the idea of being uniquely distinguished

b. The Psalmist in Psa. 139:14 knew this when making the statement, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" - the word "made" carrying the idea of "distinguished"

c. Our creation is not just distinct because of our differences from other created things (since our substance is essentially all the same) but is more to be found in God's purpose

d. The word "formed" is used often of the potter forming a vessel for his use - as we recognize and reflect on how we were individually formed, we should be reminded (aware) that God is the "potter" and we are the "thing formed" - we exist for His purposes, His uses - see Rom. 9:21; Jer. 18:3-6; Prov. 16:4; Isa. 64:8; II Tim. 2:20

see also I Cor. 15:45-49

e. This was not man, just his body - as we come to realize more throughout the rest of Scripture, we are not just the physical, but also the spiritual - we must not define our whole person (our whole selves) by our bodies

The word for "frame" is the same word as "formed"

f. As Creator, He fully knows what we are made of physically and this was used to demonstrate God's compassionate understanding in Psalm 103:13-14 - He knows our "frame"

2. So, God formed, then He "breathed" - vs. 7

a. The "thing formed" was specially given life (literally the "breath of lives" (living)

In the New Testament the word "inspiration" has the idea of something being "God-breathed" meaning it's source, thoughts and ideas are of God - this breath of God is not just life, but is understanding as well as "thinking" (in which we are also separated from all other "breathing souls")

b. "...this phrase is used to show that man's life originated in a different way from his body--being implanted directly by God (Ec 12:7), and hence in the new creation of the soul Christ breathed on His disciples (Joh 20:22)" JFB

c. Realizing our life is literally "borrowed" from God, we are to see ourselves as "vessels" filled with life from Him, to be used for Him - it's not only our possessions of which we are stewards and the physical world around us, but we are also stewards of our "living" (time, strength, ability, rationality, etc.) - see Acts 17:24-31

d. The forming, breathing and becoming are simultaneous - some have tried to use this verse to demonstrate a body before a soul (which may have repercussions in the abortion debates)

3. And "man became a living being" - vs. 7

a. Literally a "living breathing being" - this compilation of wet dust was "animated" by God

b. "That strange combination of dust and deity produced a marvelous creation, made in God's own image. As a living being, man was destined to reveal the qualities of the Giver of life." Kyle Yates, Wycliffe Bible Commentary

4. A specific place and occupation for man - vs. 8-15

a. The "LORD God," still in action, "planted a garden" (a "paradise")

"Eden" meaning "pleasing, pleasurable"

b. Demonstrating that this was a literal place, specific descriptions and locations are given to identify its location (though it is commonly believed that since all the changes in the earth since this time, the location now would not be discoverable)

c. It is interesting to note (for future reference), that it would be (in this paradise) that man would still be tempted with dissatisfaction (giving thought to what was forbidden more than to the abundance of what was "freely/generously given")

d. In this garden, God caused to grow "every tree that is **pleasing to the sight and good for food**" (two of the things Eve would observe of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil)

see Gen. 3:22

e. In the garden was also the "Tree of Life" from which they could partake and always live

f. The garden would also be a learning/testing place (obedience) - it had a "moral" purpose

see Deut. 8:1-4; Php. 4:19; Mt. 6:25-34 regarding God's provision

It would appear also that we will be sustained (physically in our new bodies) by eating of this tree

The reference to "no more time" in Rev. 10:6 does not mean that time will cease to exist, but that there would be no more delay for the 7th trumpet judgment

East of the position of the one describing its features and location at the time

Just as our lives will be busy in the New Heaven, New Earth and the Holy City - Rev. 22:3

Eph. 6:6-7; Col. 3:23 - work if primarily for the eyes of God, not for the eyes of men

"freely eat" meaning "eating you will eat" carrying the idea of it being non-stop, no restriction, no end

".. he found by sad experience what good he had lost, or might have enjoyed, and what evil he had brought on himself and his posterity, he might have avoided." John Gill

The word "mortal" carries with it the idea of being "subject to death"

- g. Either as man was being created (or before) or just after, God planted this garden for man to dwell and to "keep" it - all this demonstrating God's love for him, care for him and purpose for him - purpose in an occupation as well as in a "moral obligation" (obedience)
- h. God clearly demonstrated to Adam the abundance of His provision for the his needs (and its continuation) - this garden was planted between four rivers (well-watered)
- i. The Tree of Life is referenced again in Rev. 22:1-19 which seem to indicate more than one of these trees (probably multitudes of them) on either side of the river that flows from the Throne of God - each bearing "twelve fruits" "yielding its fruit every month" (which seems also to indicate a measurement of time as well as a twelve month year)
- j. Verses 10-14 provide geographic details clearly demonstrating that the Garden of Eden was a literal place (not a figurative place) - just as Adam was a literal man
 - These names and locations would have meant more at the time to the reader/hearers than they do to us now - the key is not that we use them to locate the garden of Eden today, but to realize that it did exist and that Adam and Eve were really there
- k. It is believed, by some, that this account was written (recorded) by Adam (these verses written in the past tense and then in the present tense - what God did and where the location is "now") - this garden is described as being in "the east, in Eden"
- l. It was in this place, this "paradise" God placed Adam to "cultivate and keep it" - "Even in a state of innocence we cannot conceive it possible that man could have been happy if inactive. God gave him work to do, and his employment contributed to his happiness; for the structure of his body, as well as of his mind, plainly proves that he was never intended for a merely contemplative life." Adam Clarke
- m. We were made to work, labor and be productive - compare some of the instructions listed in Proverbs - Pro. 6:6, 15:19; 26:11-16
- n. When Adam was instructed to "keep" the garden (which is used later to describe protecting something), it was not so much it being protected from weeds (which did not exist at that time) but more protective of his (Adam's) calling - he would be careful to do his work, seeing it was given him from His creator - his initial motive in his work (as should ours be) was to please God Who made him for that purpose

- It may be legitimate to consider some type of "keeping" the garden from such influences like that of the serpent, though this is just speculation

5. God's first commands to man - vs. 16-17

- a. God, as Creator has all rights to command - this is another reminder who is "in charge" - His sovereignty over all is clearly indicated here (we needing to see Adam as the head, the representative all all humanity and man's obligation, from the start, to obey God)
- b. God's command is first gracious, generous - the positive is placed first with emphasis
 - (1). Literally, "From ANY tree of the garden, eating you may eat"
 - (2). All trees (with one exclusion) were his to eat, including (especially) the Tree of Life leading ultimately to immortality (which would still be dependent on God seeing their "eternal living" would not be of themselves)
 - (3). The serpent would later question God's generosity and magnify His restriction
- c. God's command is second one of caution and warning (this is also gracious as giving out the truth for the positive or the negative is loving)
 - (1). The tree of "knowing good and evil" they were restricted to partake with the clarification that in the "day day that you eat from it, dying you will die."
 - (2). This knowing of evil was not so much as not knowing of the concept as it was to know it experientially (to know by participation thus becoming "one of it")
 - (3). This death would be instantaneous - many often mistake this because they miss the literal rendering of the result, "dying you will die" - at the moment of disobedience, man became, instantly, mortal - man would also die spiritually - see Eph. 2:1
- d. Adam now, essentially, had two commands to follow - he was to be sustained by God's generous provisions and he was to avoid positively (neglect negatively) the Tree of Knowing Good and Evil - to this day we are still to depend on His provision and must be subject to His way of dealing with the consequences of experientially knowing (by being, thus doing) evil

The process of physical dying would be immediate as would the “spiritual death” - see Eph. 2:1, 5:14, Col. 2:13

- e. “Thus through his own fault the tree, which should have helped him to attain to true freedom, brought nothing but the **sham** liberty of sin, and with it death.” Keil and Delitzsch
- f. Man’s purpose was to do (obey/submit to) the will of God and to understand that all that is not following God’s will is evil - this could be understood without eating the tree

D. The making of Woman - 2:18-25

This account of the man first and then the woman is referenced in I Cor. 11:8-9 as well as I Tim. 2:13 both dealing with male “headship”

Celibacy (not marrying) is not a “virtue” in itself for which to strive - though chastity is

Names often bringing on the question, “Why is it called that?”

There are certainly other examples where God wants our patient waiting, resting, reliance upon Him while He demonstrates His work - see Ex. 14:13

Interestingly enough, even with what one might consider having a “bad wife”, it can still be sought as good when looking for God’s purpose and acting in it - Hosea had a “bad” wife but God had a good purpose in and for it - “goodness” is not to be found in our “take” on a situation, but in God’s usage (or even potential usage) of it!

There is clearly no room given in this account of macro evolution (man from animals)

1. The immediate context of this section demonstrates the “goodness” of man having a counterpart - vs. 18
 - a. God, conferring in Himself, declares that it is not good that man be alone (by himself)
 - b. It is easy to deduce why it was not good, but the core idea (as with all other references to God calling something good) was that it would not fit His purposes for man
 - c. It is true that man would need companionship, aid in his labors, and one who would help in the fulfilling of “filling the earth”, but God’s purposes outrank man’s **perceived** needs
 - d. God then declares, “.. I do make to him an helper--as his counterpart.” (YLT) - ultimately carrying the idea that he would see his equal (in contrast to the animals) - not as his “servant” but as a fellow laborer in responsibilities
 - e. Man is not superior to the woman in quality before God - his position was established as a point of organization, but not one of a defining, superior quality
2. God then brings the “cattle”, “beasts of the field” and “birds of the sky” to Adam to “name” - vs. 19-20
 - a. We need not assume God did not know the names of the animals and needed Adam to name them, just that he allowed Adam to “say their names” - naming carries with it the ideas of acquaintance and authority - he would call them as they related to his perspective - he **instinctively** knew what they were
 - b. As the context demonstrates, the purpose for this was to allow Adam to see the counterparts of the animals and that he would not find in any of them a suitable counterpart
 - c. Adam, as being in God’s image, uses language and reasoning (intuitive) to give each of these animals a name - names being an essential part of language - each carrying the idea of purpose, significance, relationship and even (later) historical ideas
3. Woman is “**built**” (fashioned) by God out of the man - vs. 21-22
 - a. This process begins after Adam is aware of his need (his situation without a counterpart as God demonstrated in the animals) - clearly Man needed to see his need before the need was met by God (and that this need needed to be met by God alone)
 - b. God caused a “deep sleep” to come on Adam - we don’t need to assume this was to avoid pain or any type of grief, but that it would demonstrate this being God’s doing, and not by the effort or even **counsel** of the man (it was God that let him perceive the need)
 - c. God would be provider of more than just basic necessities - He would bring companionship as well as ability and “resources” to fulfill His commands - see Php. 4:10-20
 - d. God took part of his “side” and literally “built” (fashioned) out of it woman - she would be exactly “of his substance” and not a separate creation of the dust - they would be one
 - e. Then, just as God brought the animals to Adam now He brings to him the woman - God “shows off” His work, and His provision to Adam - God provided a wife and as indicated in Pr. 18:22 “He who finds a wife, finds a good thing.” - not that a wife (or husband for that matter) will be good in and of themselves and that marriage will be without difficulty, but good in the sense that it is not good for man to be alone (in the fulfilling of God’s commands)
 - f. Human companionship has its challenges, but in those challenges comes God’s working - so much of our interactions are of greater significance than just our immediate communication, but are the fulfilling of **responsibility** - as our Lord demonstrated in the meeting of the needs of “.. the least of these my brethren..” - Mt. 25:40
4. Adam’s response, verbal response was, “Now this is bone of my bone..” - vs. 23
 - a. The “now” seems to indicate a contrast to his seeing the animal counterparts - the woman is his equal, one of him, his own flesh and blood
 - b. The tone of the text carries with it the idea of joyous excitement and astonishment - this was not a casual response to God’s provision, God’s work, but one of being thrilled - not necessarily a thrill at just her appearance, but a thrill that she was “perfectly fitted” for him - this is to be core to consideration in marriage still - our fitness in the fulfilling of God’s purpose for us.. together

There is no need to add time to these texts to allow Adam to learn - his intelligence was from God

This is the way it was meant to be, though through many situations, people will not find this closeness as was intended

The husband is to be, as it were "crazy" about his wife - they, as a couple, are truly one

see also I Thes. 2:9-12 - Paul explaining the reason for his sacrificial labor

Contrary to what seems to be popular thought, the sexual union of a husband and wife is a result of the relationship, not the goal of the relationship!

It is clear that divorce was permissible under the Law and ultimately comes about because of sin (the curse) and the conflicts that arise from sin - but this is not to be seen as usurping the original design

see Php. 3:18-19

The word for "shame" having the idea also of "delay" - we might think it of being hesitant just as they would be when they would hear the voice of God after they sinned - they were hesitant to be seen by Him - this same affect damages our relationships with each other - when we feel shame, we hesitate to face others

c. Don't miss a key point here - It may be easy to focus on Adam too much, dwelling upon his "genius" and intelligence, and yet the context demonstrates the working of God in all creation - having seen Him just form man. Now seeing and hearing this man reason and speak, should we not still be in more awe of man's creator? - see I Cor. 2:1-5 - faith must not be built upon (find as its object) the wisdom of man!

5. The institution of marriage and family - vs. 24

- a. "For this reason..." (therefore), as God designed it, a man leaves his parents to be "joined to his wife" - "So marriage requires a greater duty of us toward our wives, than otherwise we are bound to show to our parents." GBN
- b. "There shall be, by the order of God, a more intimate connection formed between the man and woman, than can subsist even between parents and children." Clarke
- c. We should note that the responsibility of the marriage formation is focused upon the man (as the covenant initiator) - this is what is to characterize the man (again, as God from the beginning intended) to leave his parents and to "cleave" to his wife
- d. The ideas encompassed in the term "cleave" (joined to) are several - literally, it carries the idea of "sticking or clinging" to as was used in Jer. 13:11 with the waistband clinging to the waist of Jeremiah (picturing Israel being made to cling to God)
 - The same word is used in Ruth 1:14 when Ruth would not leave Naomi
- e. This "clinging to" has the idea of affection, commitment and permanence - He LOVES her
- f. This picture of the pre-fallen state of marriage is a vivid reminder of what has been lost (even in the best of marriages) - it is still our objective in marriage and is foundational to all mankind - this is not just "binding" on believers
- g. We must not be those that are characterized by looking for the exception to the ideal, but are to be characterized as being pursuers of the ideal - Php. 3:7-16
- h. They, in coming together, become "one flesh" - this literally makes them as "one in the flesh" carrying the idea of family (as Adam said in verse 23, "bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh") - we say something similar to this now when referencing family - "they're my flesh and blood"
- i. This is more than just a reference to the physical union (though that is included) - it is a oneness on this earth like no other (one in spirit, heart and body) each belonging to the other, and out of such a relationship comes children - a family is formed (the same "flesh")
- j. The Lord referenced this verse when countering the popular arguments for various reasons for divorce - He stressed the original intent "from the beginning" that one man and one woman come together and become "one flesh" (one unit... family unit) - divorce (as it literally means) divides this - Mt. 19:5-6 - so, what God has "joined together" (by His ordained institution) man is not to separate (divide/divorce) - polygamy is also a distortion of the original marriage
- k. The original intent is ideal and ideally to be sought - when the ideal is contradicted, focus must go to the creator of the institution, the Creator Himself!

6. The absence of shame - vs. 25

- a. The condition before the fall was that they both (the man and his wife) were naked (unclothed) and in that condition they did not know shame
- b. The concept of nakedness is not "really" known without shame - just as a child is not aware of their nakedness until they become more aware - sin brings with it a sense of guilt which was first sensed in nakedness and note that sin/perversion produces a glory in shame
- c. The shame now associated with being naked is one of personal awareness - sin brought with it a misuse of the body and soul, immediately stirring in man bad intentions, lust, covetousness, pride and more - in this verse, an immediate affect of guilt - as will be seen in chapter three, man's initial response to guilt is to hide it from God rather than face it before Him
- d. It is to this state of original holiness that we long to return, and it will only come by means of Christ and His "covering"
- e. Imagine a life of no guilt, no shame, no self-consciousness! Along with this, in the life to come, will be living without fear, fatigue, dread, sickness and pain - see Rev. 21:4
- f. It may be that their sense of shame would come ultimately when sensing themselves before God, the one they disobeyed - shame is a constant reminder of our "natural state" without Christ

VI. The Fall of Man - Gen. 3:1-7

A. Initial thoughts and observations regarding temptation (a need to understand the core idea of sin)

1. The temptation to fall occurred in the best of “environmental conditions” (all was “very good”)
 - a. Many throughout history and to this day strive for and believe that man can come to a societal and moral ideal if conditions can be improved - man striving for self-righteousness
 - b. Yet, in the best of circumstances, man succumbed to temptation - sin is not a matter so much of environment as it is one’s heart - Government will never truly “legislate morality” in such a way as to make its subjects moral people - sin is a battle in the soul and spirit in each individual
 - c. Man did not evolve from the lowest of life forms into a superior being, man “evolved” as it were instantly from a superior being to a fallen, depraved and dying creature
2. Temptation works from the outside inward while God works from the inside outward - compare with Rom. 10:10
 - a. It would be from without; a tree, a serpent, what was seen - these would be used negatively
 - b. God’s work in us begins within us and works outward - many religions seek to work from without, just as the original temptation, leading to another form of deceit (causing their followers to see righteousness as an outward appearance versus an inward reality)
 - c. Christ clarified the reality of sin, now, being inward and the real “defiler” - Mark 7:14-23
 - d. One of the key focuses we should have as a result of the study of our fall is the importance of the “inner man” over the “outer man”
 - See II Cor. 4:16-18- the inner being of greater importance in our life’s investments
3. Temptation, in its varying forms, adds to and takes away from God’s Word - see Prov. 30:5-6
 - a. We are tempted most when God’s generosity is lessened in our thinking and His restrictions are magnified (added to) - and this usually framed as being “in our best interest”
 - b. **This is the crux of all temptation - question God and His intentions** in light of self-interest
4. This account is the actual explanation of sin in the world (this creation) - it would find its roots, its beginnings in a disbelief in what God said (not in God, but what He said) which ultimately leads to a disobedience to what He said - it is disbelieving God more than not believing in God!
 - a. Temptation seeks to alter our perspective of God and our circumstances
 - b. Temptation seeks to exalt independent reasoning over dependent reasoning from God’s Word
 - c. Temptation seeks to exalt self and belittle God (values become switched)
 - d. Temptation is only as strong as our confidence in its “arguments” (which is often directly tied to the amount of time and attention we give to them)
5. Satan (acting through the temptation by means of the serpent) worked “from beneath”
 - a. He came in the form of a serpent (an animal under the headship of mankind)
 - b. He then worked through Eve who was under the headship of Adam - I Cor. 11:8-9; II Cor. 11:3
 - c. We will often be tempted to work around God-given authorities to get what we desire (de-emphasizing the point that the “powers that be are ordained of God”)
6. As alluded to in a previous point, this “fall” was our fall and not just Adam and Eve’s - Rom. 5:12-21

B. The “instrument” of temptation - in this case, “the serpent” - vs. 1

1. There has been much debate over the serpent in this passage but this should be less important to us than the use of the serpent itself
 - a. Clearly a serpent was used in this narrative and this one in particular is described as more “subtle” or “crafty” than any of the other animals “of the field which the LORD God had made”
 - b. “Crafty” does not necessarily mean it was evil - it has the idea of cunning and clever
 - c. Regardless, the tempter utilized a means that would involve cunning and subtlety as he still does
 - d. This was explained and illustrated by Paul in II Cor. 11:3-15 when describing Eve as being “beguiled” and the underlying Greek word carrying the picture of being cheated out of something - Paul then goes on to describe later that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light and his followers do the same
 - e. It is key to note also, this tempting was allowed to happen and the devil used one of God’s creatures to communicate with Eve - why she was not astonished or questioned this talking serpent we do not know though, no doubt, to some degree she and Adam were still exploring and learning of the wonders of God’s creative work
 - f. The most subtle of temptations are such because they do not appear to be what they really are and what they really will bring - temptation is deception

The “inner self” is the real battleground of sin and temptation - compare with Rom. 7:14-20

Realizing that temptation works from without allows us to recognize that it is its appeal to what is within us that gives it any power - if we are settled inwardly, temptation loses its power - this stresses the importance of learning, knowing and meditating upon the Truth

This is at the heart of all temptation leading to sin

Temptation is not just from Satan - it comes more often from within our own lusts - James 1:14-15

Effective temptation from without is usually so because it is not at first seen to be what it is - we are led to feel comfortable with it and see its “sense”

This had to be part of God’s plan/design for the only other alternative is a less than omnipotent God

2. The serpent would be an instrument, but temptation would follow a process involving several factors
 - a. Temptation to sin always begins with some type of questioning God, “Has God said?”
 - b. Consider/view God negatively - question what He said, question His motive, question His rightness, all leading to a consideration of disregarding what He said altogether
 - c. **Neglect** to stay focused on God’s generous goodness
 - d. Turn focus on restrictions (the forbidden becomes the appeal)
 - e. Listen to and think on arguments against God’s Word - hear-out the “sales-pitch”
 - f. Interest is stirred in experiencing the sin (first-hand) - questions arise that we are possibly missing out on something if we don’t yield (we start to consider that we could make a better judgment of the command if we could experience what is forbidden, failing to realize its nature is to distort perception) - **opinion** becomes biased rather than objective (sin blinds)
 - g. The pursuit for independence begins (become “as God” having self-rule)
 - h. Work out an internal list of benefits to yielding (talk self into final decision) - fear self-disappointment
 - i. Yield to sin, surrender to commit sin, deciding for one’s self
 - j. Seek out **companions** in sin, leading others to the same decisions and actions
 - k. Design and seek out ways to cover guilt (deal with shame by seeking to hide it using excuses, and works of self-rightness to appease the conscience) and strive to hide from (avoid) God
 - l. When confronted, seek to **justify** and blame - blame God, people and environmental influences or circumstances (protect self at “all costs:” preferably at the cost of others)

C. The beguilement from questioning God - vs. 1-3

1. “Is it true that God actually said...?”

Our Lord in Matthew 4 responded to the tempter with an accurate handling of God’s Word - this He did and did not seek to reason with him.

- a. The initial question from the serpent was multi-faceted (it was intended to misdirect **focus**)
- b. The first part, “Indeed, has God said..?” - “Has He actually said what you believe He said?”
 - This, concept at its most basic idea, demonstrates the necessity of being not only confident in what God said, but being sure exactly what He has said
- c. It is possible that Eve had not heard the command directly from God but through Adam, though it would have been ideal for her to have checked it out
- d. “The divine law cannot be reproached unless it be first misrepresented.” Matthew Henry
- e. The goal of the tempter was to have God’s word considered in a different way than was intended; from the beginning he has used God’s word to his own purposes and does to this day

II Cor. 2:11 - we are not to be “ignorant of his schemes”

2. Did God say, “You shall not eat from any tree of the garden”?

The goal in questioning God’s word is to question His intent and motive - once we begin questioning another’s motive we are apt to “read into” all they say

- a. The serpent was partly quoting God correctly with a major change - God had said they could freely eat of all trees in the garden except one
- b. The few key word changes were pivotal, God said, “From **ANY** tree of the garden you may **FREELY** eat,” while the tempter replaced “freely eat” with “not eat from any”
- c. Staying seemingly close to the record of what God had said, the serpent was countering the meaning in an extreme opposite to its original meaning - see Heb. 13:7-9 with the reference of the heart being “strengthened in **grace**” (God’s goodness)
- d. Some temptation begins (as did this) with a jump to an extreme - we will often entertain thoughts exaggerating God’s restrictions, all leading to a false conclusion of the “need” to focus upon “liberty” or “freedom” over responsibility (Eve should have focused upon the liberties she had from God, rather than the pursuit of liberty from God)

3. Eve responds ineffectively - vs. 2-3

- a. She counters the serpent by rightly saying they may eat of the trees in the garden, yet she does not **stress** the words of generosity used when God gave the original command
- b. She does not reference eating “freely” and “any” but she does state that they are not to eat of the tree, adding to the command with “neither touch it” - to not touch it would have been a good idea, though to keep focus on not eating it would have been sufficient - it is still in our tendency to build “perimeters” around God’s commands and making these perimeters other commands in themselves - all with good intentions
- c. She also leaves off God’s emphasis in the restriction “you shall **SURELY** die” - she strays from what should have been her focus on God’s goodness, over-emphasizes (unnecessarily) God’s singular restriction, and fails to stress the gravity of God’s warning

This is a self-made trap we set for ourselves often - we look on God in relation to ourselves instead of looking on ourselves in relation to God

“..it becomes a temporizing, a partial refutation, but at the same time a statement that allows room for the suspicion that perhaps God has not been as entirely good and gracious as they had hitherto supposed.”
Leupold

- d. “Very dangerous is the temptation, when it is suggested to us, that God is not to be obeyed except so far as the reason of his command is apparent.” Calvin
- e. As instructed in Proverbs 3:5-6 our trust, confidence, and hope are to be in the Lord contrasting our natural inclination to lean and depend upon our own understanding - we do this by “acknowledging” Him in all we do (consulting Him in His word) always seeking and expecting His directing of the paths we will face and take in life
- f. There have been some who draw the conclusion that what is translated in some versions “lest you die” indicates she was not sure they would die, and that she meant “perhaps”: this point cannot be made definitively since it may also just simply reference the idea that death would happen - though leaving off God’s emphasis in the warning shows a lack of reverence
- g. So, the objective to plant a seed of doubt was accomplished, and room was left for God to be questioned in a speculative manner - see Luke 12:22-34 in reference to God’s provision and our focus

D. The contradicting of God by the tempter - vs. 4-5

1. Doubt of not just what God said, but doubting the truth of what He said is now raised - vs. 4

see Rom. 1:32; Num. 15:38-39; Ecc. 11:9-10; Pro. 11:21, 16:5 - all these and many more assuring that judgment, just as God has said, will come on sin

We are living seeking to ready ourselves for the changes coming through-out life (readying with the intent to stay consistent and grounded)

- a. The serpent now directly contradicts what God said - God saying “dying you will die” (surely die) and the serpent stating definitively “dying, you will NOT die” (not surely die)
- b. Another “point of counsel” is heard and apparently the confidence of the serpent was believed - most, even to today, still seek out other points of view that emanate confidence: thus personal confidence to disregard and disobey God is founded upon (partly) the confidence of others
- c. The serpent assures that death, as God stated, will not occur - Paul warned of this type of craftiness that leads from a single (“simple”) and unadulterated focus in/on Christ - II Cor. 11:3
- d. Just a note: it is interesting when thinking upon the literal phrasing of what the serpent stated, “Dying you will not die” that there seems to be a way of thinking that even though we know there is death, we strive to live in the belief that we will not die (that even though we are dying, we will not actually die)- see II Pet. 3:4 (believing all things will continue as they are)

2. God is now made out to be the enemy in what He supposedly conceals - vs. 5

“..and so an attractive suggestiveness, more seductive than a specific promise, is achieved.” Leupold

- a. The serpent, in his brash contradiction of God, now presumes to reveal the mind (thinking) of God on the matter of forbidding them to partake of the fruit - “For God knows...” - Rom. 11:34
- b. The intent is to frame God in a setting to make it appear He is hiding something from them, as if in jealousy or envy - “.. Eve erred in not regulating the measure of her knowledge by the will of God. And we all daily suffer under the same disease, because we desire to know more than is right, and more than God allows..” Calvin
- c. The promise is two-fold - the knowing (firsthand) good and evil (for one’s self) and that in so doing this becoming as God (gods themselves) acting in independence of God’s command - though, as the name of the tree indicates, God intended them to know “good and evil” by obeying His command (identifying the distinction strictly by His command versus personal, experientially opinion)
- d. The knowing (defining) of good is always ideally to be sought in what God says regardless of our personal thoughts on the matter, and that evil is identified as such because it (conceptually) stands opposed to what God has said - Eve knew the concept of evil that she was not to eat of that tree and became convinced to learn it experientially
- e. She knew enough already of the concept of good and evil and was lured to the desire for experiential knowledge of what evil is and of independence (her will versus God’s)

There are “con-men” type influences constantly seeking to gain our confidence

3. The promise of “eyes being opened” - vs. 5

Just as when we are told “you will enjoy it” leaving out associated costs and consequences

- a. There was truth in this statement by the tempter (as much of temptation will utilize) but it would be the effects of such perception/knowing that were left out
- b. Their eyes (perception) would be opened to what they had not experientially known (practical evil, guilt, shame) with no turning back
- c. There are ideas, concepts and experiences of which it would be better to not know them or experience them at all - as in I Cor. 14:20 Paul desired that the Corinthians not be as children in “understanding” though when it comes to evil, he wished them stay as babies
- d. This underscores the importance of guarding our hearts with all that we can - “Above every charge keep thy heart, For out of it are the outgoings of life.” (YLT) - Pr. 4:23

see also Rom. 16:19

4. The lure to “be as God knowing...” - vs. 5

Notice that the serpent does not say they will be as the “Lord God” but as “god(s)” not being self-existent

As seen in 3:22, the Lord Himself declares they have “become like Us” in their knowing of good and evil

God knows evil in that He defines it by His commands and by His holy nature - He cannot “do” evil just as now man, whose knowledge of evil is a part of his nature cannot truly “do” good - Rom. 3:12

Contentment is an invaluable virtue to foster - contentment cannot be tempted to long for the forbidden

- a. Playing off the concept of their “eyes being opened” the serpent declares to her that they would have a perception that only God had in deciding good and evil for themselves - not as God had set for them to distinguish good from evil, but in the sense of choosing for themselves
- b. They were promised that this act of disobedience would bring them new knowledge regarding good and evil - again, they already had the concept of good and evil in the understanding of God’s command not to eat of the tree, but the serpent was offering a broader understanding, an experiential knowing of evil (which would give them a different perspective of “good” as well)
- c. In their coming to know good and evil (in the sense the serpent was proposing) they would know it experientially, which when in reference to evil, means they would become experts in the worst sense in the arena of evil and would now see “good” as tainted and skewed - they truly knew “good” before the fall and after, truly knew evil
- d. The statement of them being “as god(s)” had elements of truth in it, but what is left out was the point of deception - their choosing for themselves, in opposition to God, would be as if declaring themselves as God in their step towards autonomy (self-rule) - this is in harmony with God’s declaration in 3:22 in acknowledging man’s “knowing good and evil” and the result that they (man) would still try to partake (stretch out his hand) of the tree of life (man would seek the benefits of obedience on their own terms, and thus were “driven” out of the Garden)
- e. In summary, their pursuit of god-likeness would be in their act of sovereignty over themselves
- f. The key to countering this point would have been the remembering that they were already “in God’s image” (even in holiness) - yet the desire to be like God in His authority was alluring

Isa. 14:14 • The Devil knew, by experience, the consequences of seeking to “be like the Most High”

E. Final steps to surrender - vs. 6-7

1. Now that her perspective had been affected, she looked upon this tree differently

Rom. 12:2 - Our minds are in need of “renewing” - they cannot be trusted in their “natural states”

- a. This is a key example of the dangers of certain influencers of perception
- b. In all this we should learn that not all learning is good learning and that not all new information is information we really desire to know - if we ever should be highly critical, it should be in the area of our “teachers” (all of which needs an underlying authority set early on)

2. She now identified aspects of the tree that were essentially true observations, but discounted the greater of all considerations: the command of God! - vs. 6

See II Sam. 13:1-19 for an example of a desire being driven wrongfully

- a. As the other trees of the garden with fruit, this fruit met her criteria of “good for food”
- b. She should never have taken the time to notice this attribute - it was irrelevant! - God had forbidden it and she already had an over-abundance of fruit “good for food”
- c. She now saw this fruit as a “delight to the eyes” - ironically it was to her as if this fruit were more nutritious and more striking in its appearance than any of the other trees in the garden - this is a common result of listening to temptation in that it makes what is really undesirable temporarily a desperate need - desire usurps thoughts of consequences and risk becomes OK
- d. As she compiles her lists in favor of partaking, she uses the advice of the serpent to top off her internal list with the desire to be made wiser (to learn what she was not to learn) - the underlying concept is the desire to be wiser than God (or to at least to take the position that we are wiser than He, which is at the core of the reason we finally surrender to sin)

3. These same three areas are still points we consider in temptation today - see I John 2:15-17

- a. The “lust of the flesh” - where the desires of the flesh seek to be catered to - laziness, gluttony
- b. The “lust of the eyes” - where outward perception of something outranks true scrutiny (e.g. as many have pursued a marriage with another because of what they see over what they know)
- c. The “boastful pride of life” - self-exaltation, self-authority (excessive self-confidence)

4. She took, ate and gave - vs. 6

She is now usurping authority, discrediting God’s authority and living by sight, not by faith

- a. “For now, having shaken off the bridle, her mind wanders dissolutely (unrestrained) and intemperately (excessively), drawing the body with it to the same licentiousness.” Calvin
- b. It is a good rule of thumb to remember that the partaking always comes after the taking - we cannot take “just one step” into sin and not sin - the step is sin in itself!
- c. She then “gave to her husband with her” and he ate also - sin loves and welcomes company with others bringing the same ensnaring in which we find ourselves

see Psa. 91:3 and the “snare of the fowler”

d. "The way of sin is down-hill; a man cannot stop himself when he will... Therefore it is our wisdom to suppress the first emotions of sin, and to leave it off before it be meddled with.

Also, "resist the first advances"— *Obsta principiis*--Nip mischief in the bud." Matthew Henry

Often, we allow ourselves to proceed into sin because we do not see quick "justice"

e. So, ultimately through the sin of unbelief and misguided ambition, they both sinned and thus "fell" - We have no account of Adam discussing this with Eve though he may have been partly convinced seeing she had not immediately died after eating the fruit

f. Some have made the point that no sooner had Eve been tempted than she became tempter herself - this also is common; not only does misery love company, so does sin!

5. Their eyes were opened (as had been promised) though what they saw was humbling - vs. 7

a. They both now had a perception they had never had before - shame, nakedness and guilt

b. As discussed earlier, they were naked before sin though they were unaware and unashamed - 2:25

c. "Though their eyes were opened to see their nakedness, yet their mind was clouded, and their judgment confused." Clarke

d. Their immediate response was to cover themselves, and to deal with the results (guilt) of their sin by covering it their own way - interestingly enough, sin must be covered to be properly handled, though not covered by our own efforts (but by the blood of Christ)

see also Psa. 32:1-5

e. They sewed together fig leaves to cover themselves - their first response (as is ours) was not to seek out God for remedy, but to hide their sin and shame from Him - see Pr. 28:13

f. They had despised God by despising (disregarding) His Word - to this day, it is important to realize that God reveals Himself to us by His Word, and to neglect, distort or counter His Word is to do the same with Him - Isa. 66:1-2

This is the perspective and definition of evil we are to hold to: not evil as we see it, but evil as God sees it

g. We must be careful in our "ranking" of evil and sin; evil is evil because it is against what God has said/commanded: murder is sin because God forbids it not because of the inherent "goodness" or value of man

h. "If anyone prefers a shorter explanation, we may say unbelief has opened the door to ambition, but ambition has proved the parent of rebellion, to the end that men, having cast aside the fear of God, might shake off his yoke." Calvin

VII. God Confronts and Deals with Sin - 3:8-21

A. Adam and Eve had sought knowledge and equality with God over seeking God's favor

1. We still struggle with the same aspirations leading us to our own sins (whenever we choose against God)

2. We often lack the foresight to count the costs of our actions, though better to look to God's revealed truth for these consequences (as so many are unseen by us) than to rely on our own perception and estimations of the supposed benefits and costs of disobedience!

3. Yet as soon as they heard God in the garden, the realization of the ineffectiveness of their coverings became apparent and they sought to hide from Him - the realization of the presence of God casts down any pretense we may hold at hiding or covering our sin on our own

B. They attempted to hide themselves from God's presence - vs. 8

1. Having heard "the sound of the Lord God walking" they hid among the trees - exactly what this represents we do not know for sure (if God was in a visible form or if a special wind of some sort identified to them the presence of God) - either way, they knew God was there

a. It is here that we get a glimpse of what man would have had in relation to communion with God

b. The presence of God had been apparent (at least to Adam) before this point

c. As is seen from this moment on, sin is the great separator, not just in communion with God but as so vividly seen in death (sins result)

2. As we know now, we cannot hide from God - see Psa. 139:7-12

a. God already knew what had happened, but now confronts the couple

b. Seeking to lie, hide or excuse our sin before God is fruitless - God's perception is not deceived or limited and it is our wisest response to always be fully open with Him - see Jer. 23:23-24

3. Sin clouds good judgment and what should be common sense - they should have known they could not hide from God and that their solution to their situation was futile

Sin creates a dependence upon flawed perception

a. This is a consequence to sin - "sense" is infected and cannot discern itself

b. A sin-infected discernment cannot discern that it cannot discern!

C. God confronts... man blames - vs. 9-13

1. God comes as he apparently had come before.... not with fury

God does the same with Cain in 4:9

Our putting stock in the effectiveness of shifting blame and seeking excuses for our sin are evidence of an ignorant theology

- a. God calls out to Adam with a question - "Where are you?" - Lord God (Jehovah) could have immediately **accused** Adam of sin, though he provides him a chance to answer
- b. It is key for us to learn from this example and others in the Scripture that God is interested in confession and not blame - God deals with sin appropriately for all involved and in His time - our seeking to shift blame does not sway God's perception of what is actual (which is why confession (agreeing with God about the sin) should make the most sense) - Ps. 32:5; I Jn. 1:8-10
- c. As first illustrated here it will be, ultimately, God's goodness that leads us to repentance - Rom. 2:4
 - Notice it His kindness/graciousness that leads us to repent and not His tolerance that leads us to **license** to sin

II Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6

Mercy is found in God's goodness but His goodness is not to be presumed upon! - Jude 1:4; Titus 1:16

- d. As God had done with the angels that rebelled, so He could have (and rightfully so) with us - there are more contexts in the Bible that demonstrate God's judgement (and that without remedy) than there are of God's working a plan of redemption - Peter dealt with this in II Peter 2 making the point that there is real judgement and that people should not lull themselves into thinking there is safety from deserved judgement **apart** from Christ alone

2. Adam, trying to hide from God must now face his sin - vs. 10

Rom. 1:28

Man prefers to deal with the consequences of sin more than having the sin itself resolved

- a. Adam's response to the awareness of God's presence is typical of us all - it is dreaded (and as described in Rom. 1, mankind tries to do all they can to get God out of their thoughts)
- b. "...at the time he actually thought more of his nakedness and shame than of his transgression of the divine command, and his consciousness of the effects of his sin were keener than his sense of the sin itself." Keil - Delitzsch
- c. God's response to Adam's admission of trying to hide brought it back to the real issue - disobedience to the command of God - this is always the issue and that more than the results or consequences of our sin - the more we truly know of God the more weighty our sin is revealed to be in light of His holiness (versus what may be the consequences of sin)
- d. Adam admitted his fear of God's presence because of his sense of nakedness (shame) seeking to evade the truth of his actions - fear and shame are the "first-fruits" of sin and man has been striving to find ways to disregard their fear (by misdirecting their confidences) and their shame (by seeking to justify or popularize it) - both seeking alternatives in their pursuit to avoid God

These ongoing attempts still demonstrating man's attempts to independence (free from God and self-ruling)

3. God immediately confronts with two questions (both to convict the conscience) - vs. 11

Answers such as "I'm embarrassed about my sin" and "I can't live up to God's expectations" are related to Adam's initial response - these and more

As to be discussed, this is God's remedy but humanity has an endless variety of "fig leaves" to offer to deal with sin

- a. "Who told you that you were naked?" - How could you have learned something you did not know and that you were not to **experience**? - this first question leads to the next - the evasive answer (founded on self-defense) was countered first by God's revealing that the results of sin are meant to point attention to the sin itself needing to be dealt with
- b. To this day we are still prone to respond to God with diversive answers founded upon the results of our sins - we look upon guilt complexes, feelings of inadequacy and desires for more sin as reasonable "excuses" for avoiding a direct admission to our sin before God - the results of sin are not the priority (as is so often the priority we have) but the need to deal with the sin itself - identifying it as such first, and the proper covering of the sin as only God can do
- c. The second question, "Have you eaten from the tree which I commanded you not to eat?" goes directly to the real issue/problem - the best answer was "yes" and then hope for mercy
- d. The sin was not the eating of fruit, but was eating what God had forbidden - it was the seemingly insignificant sin of eating from this tree though the sin was by no means insignificant - it was not to be measured by our standards or perception but by God's command (regardless of our thoroughly **thought**-out conclusions) - beware the Rom. 1:32 scenario
- e. Now that Adam's initial "smoke screen" was countered, God asks the direct question - Adam now has the ideal opportunity to "come-clean" and admit his sin though he seeks to evade it

The use of our reason and intellect is used in the decision for sin which lends to the importance of reason and intellect needing to be subservient to faith and to be properly informed

4. Adam build a "blame wall" before admitting his sin - vs. 12

- a. Adam's first response is to blame God (and not so indirectly) - he starts with "the woman YOU gave to be with me.."
- b. His order was interesting - The woman You gave, she gave and then "I ate" - he has attempted to build a defensive wall two layers deep - God, others and then "me"

This is one of the underlying sources of defining levels of “holiness” by the “things” that are avoided

As with David in his sin with Bathsheba - He lusted, adulterated, sought to conceal and essentially murdered - all followed by suffering - II Sam. 12

These all may be correct but do not excuse sin and personal responsibility

Neither response, self-excusing or self-condemnation will lead to the proper answer to sin - the solution begins with an open assessment of the sin for what it is before God

If we do not instigate a sinful situation but simply participate we are still “accessories to the crime”

An honest and defenseless confession of sin is a key start but even it does not cover the sin - true confession is only doable when we are aware of God’s mercy and grace else all our efforts will be directed in avoiding death (the consequences to sin) with all possible means we can use

- c. “...the very nature of sin is that it will not suffer the mind to flee unto God, but instead thereof, compels it to flee from God...” Luther
 - d. The first words of his response are “The woman...” - Adam (as would the woman) blamed the delivery method of the sin (or temptation) as the person or thing at fault for their sin - man still tries to, oddly enough, “_____ **justify** _____” himself by shifting blame
 - e. Sin, as in this examples, always compounds itself (adding to what is already there) - now Adam seeks to hide his sin by blaming his wife and ultimately placing the blame upon God - sin is never singular in and of itself, seeing that with its many facets it will reproduce offspring at an innumerable rate - sin begets _____ **more** _____ sin!
 - f. Adam, knowing God’s omnipotence, uses the argument that since God gave Eve, that it was partly His blame as well - we also realize this though not as directly as we should with reasonings such as “The body that you gave me”, “The circumstances that you provided”, “The parents you gave me” - all not owning-up to our responsibility - Job learned from this - Job 31:33
 - g. And yet his feeble defense further demonstrates his guilt as Paul demonstrates when mentioning that Eve fell because of the temptation (being deceived) - I Tim. 2:14 (Paul was not dealing with the guilt of Adam, but the beguilement of Eve in this text though it does demonstrate that Adam partook of the fruit directly _____ **without** _____ being deceived)
 - h. “And thus does every sinner hate the punishment of his transgressions; and because he hates that punishment, he also hates the justice of God, and God Himself, and endeavors by all means in his power to persuade both God and men that he suffers innocently.” Luther
 - i. Many, even after knowing of God’s answer to the problem, in pride and self-pity drive themselves into depression and obsessive self-loathing leading to a despairing of life altogether... and all of this being needless! (suicide and suicidal thoughts find their source in a proud and a “full of _____ **self** _____” life-focus because we do not see things “going my way”)
 - j. So, Adam’s ultimate implication is directed at God - had God not given him a wife, he would not have been given the fruit to eat and the whole thing would have never happened - it is key to realize that proper blame can never be affixed to the circumstances nor the instruments of our sin, but upon our own choice - tempting situations cannot make us sin!
 - k. So, after trying to shield his guilt two layers deep, he admits he ate - the woman God gave, she gave and then he ate (received) - at best this response simply masks the pain of the cause but the cause (as a growing disease) will not be properly addressed this way
5. Eve also seeks to deflect the guilt following the example of Adam - vs. 13
- a. God, not the least intimidated at the initial arguments of Adam, continues the questioning to bring to light, clearly, the actual sin and guilt apart from the twisted perspectives of them both (brought on by their sin) - the truth was needed so the solution could be described
 - b. “But the fruit of original sin everywhere presents itself; being blind in its own hypocrisy, it would gladly render God mute and speechless. And whence arise daily so many murmurs, but because God does not _____ **hold** _____ his peace whenever we choose to blind ourselves.” Calvin
 - c. God asks the woman, “what is this that you have done” carrying with it the sense and idea of “How could you have come to this point to have done this?” - again, the response should have been a direct confession
 - d. Ironically, she also (whether or not she was fully aware) blames God indirectly - she does not say “the serpent that you made and allowed to roam freely through the garden” but she does seek to blame it and the deceit that arose from it (the snake being God’s creation)
 - e. Her account is accurate regarding the serpent and the deceit but it is no excuse - she, as Adam, also freely chose to partake of it as if it was any other fruit of the garden - she was guilty even though she was deceived by an imposter - we all answer for our sin and if that answer is in ourselves, our reasonings or excuses, we will find only proper _____ **judgment** _____
 - f. Better for her to have added, “I ate and should have known better than to have done this” - our response is to be in harmony with James 1:14-15 - we, when drawn away by temptations, are done so by our own desires for if we did not truly desire it (inwardly) we would not act on it outwardly!
 - g. Eve listened of her own will - the best response to temptation is to not listen and be ignorant of its offers and arguments against God

To truly understand God's answer to our sin is to be one not afraid to fully identify our sin as such without excuse or blame - we do blame and excuse either out of pride (a sin in itself) or out of a misunderstanding of the Gospel

- h. The crux of Eve's answer was one seeking excuse and blame as well in identifying that she was "deceived" (seduced, tricked) - God does not excuse her because of her being deceived - she, as are we, still was guilty of disobeying the command - sins of ignorance were dealt with in Lev. 4
- i. It should also be noted with what reasoning she was seduced - it was one of ambition, stemming from a mistrust (and irreverence) of God and His command as well as His warning
- j. As with Adam, her sin was further revealed (and multiplied) in her attempt at a defense - Adam sought exception to the rule, though he did eat, as did Eve (both revealing that even if sin comes by means of something God made/created and we're tricked into sinning, we are still held guilty) - **there is no such thing as an excuse for sin!**

D. God Curses the Serpent - vs. 14-15

1. "Because you have done this..." - who exactly is the "you" in this phrase?

As all the creation was made subject to "vanity" (a form of "inutility" and futility) not being able to fulfill its purpose fully (and "not enough" of even the best things is futile) - Rom. 8:20

- a. The answer is two-fold - the serpent, though more precisely, Satan
- b. The serpent/snake would be cursed as an animal in its being used as a tool against mankind - it was here to serve and be subservient to man as its head - even though the snake in and of itself is "unthinking," as an object, it was specially cursed "above all cattle and every beast of the field" (since animals along with all creation suffered the results of the fall of man)
- c. The serpent was used by the devil and is more directly addressed - see Rev. 12:9; 20:2
- d. Satan, along with his tool would be first cursed and that without question (as with Adam and Eve)

2. Who is Satan, generally? - time and revelation have provided more insight

Far too often we aid in his work!

- a. The name "Satan" means "adversary" as one who is against us (being so "for" himself) - as with so many adversaries, they approach us with deception appearing to have our best interests at heart
- b. The name "Satan" also carries the idea of "accuser" seeing he not only seeks to accuse us before God, but seeks to accuse God before us - see Rev. 12:10
- c. He is called "the father of lies" by Christ (John 8:44) and is described by Paul as appearing as "an angel of light," seeming to be good, righteous and one bringing truth (II Cor. 11:14)
- d. And, to this day we also may be susceptible to being deceived away from the "simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" - single-hearted devotion to Christ - II Cor. 11:3
- e. And, of course, he is the "Tempter," being the one who not only aided in the first temptation but tempted our Lord (Mt. 4) and he and his followers aid in tempting us - I Thes. 3:5

3. To the serpent first, God "curses" - He pronounces an "abhorrence" and "denunciation" - vs. 14

This account is illustrative of the disadvantages of being used of the Devil - it is another reminder, not just of the fall but of the lasting consequences of being one of his tools

- a. This tool used by the Devil now is cursed to "go on its belly" and to "eat dust"
- b. There has been much speculation as to the stature and overall appearance of the serpent before the fall, but it is just that; speculation (though we do know it was characterized as "clever")
- c. Now, for all its days (even, apparently later as in Isa. 65:25) it will "eat dust" (not that it's food would be dust but the result of crawling along the ground)
- d. "The devil's instruments must share in the devil's punishments. Thus the bodies of the wicked, though only instruments of unrighteousness, shall partake of everlasting torments with the soul, the principal agent." Matthew Henry
- e. The creeping snake is an ongoing reminder of God's curse of the tempting agent

4. God placed "hostility" between the woman, her seed and the serpent and its seed - vs. 15

The woman was used in the fall of man and a woman was used in bringing the redeemer of man

- a. Dealing with the actual snake, there would be hostility (enmity) between her offspring and the offspring of snakes (being a detestable thing to people) where in the physical conflict, snakes will hurt people (seeking to "crush their heel") but people will win out over them (crushing their heads)
- b. As revealed in other passages, more was meant by this verse than just the conflict between people and snakes
- c. The use of the "seed of the woman" and the concept of crushing under foot the head of the serpent are picturesque of what would be done in Christ over Satan and sin
- d. The "seed of the woman" would be Christ, born of a virgin (not of man) - as referenced by Paul, Christ would be the "second Adam" - Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 15:45
- e. Ironically enough, we will be used in the "crushing" process by God's power! - Rom. 16:20
- f. This is the first verse in the Bible dealing with the plan of God in His conquering of sin, death and the Devil through Christ - we will face suffering (bruising of the heel) also, but none of this will be fatal as was and will be the head-crushing of that old serpent!

Read Heb. 2:14

In Jer. 44:15-30, the “queen of heaven” is referenced as one that those of Judah were offering burnt sacrifices - they were determined to continue arguing that while they did, they had plenty and when they ceased, they lacked - this “queen of heaven” was one of the many carry-overs from Satan’s counterfeits

Satan will offer a limitless numbers of alternatives to the solution found in Christ (based on reasoning, feelings and biased, uninformed perspectives)

We are born “in Adam” but find redemption, justification and salvation only “in Christ”

- g. It is at this point, while pronouncing the curse on the serpent/Satan and before He describes the consequences on Eve and Adam, God foretells the one who would destroy Satan (and ultimately sin itself and its consequence of **death**) - see also I John 3:8 (and context)
- h. Note further the phrasing in this verse: in referencing “the seed of the woman” God goes on to say “He will bruise...” - it is commonly asserted by some that Satan, from that point on, was looking for two general things to attack and stop; the line of the woman (the “chosen line”) and the man that would be his defeater (crusher) - This may lend to the apparent potential attacks against the “line” when twice, Sarah was placed in a position (by Abraham’s lies) to be compromised
- i. This also would appear to support the apparent counterfeits of Satan throughout history with the “mother and child” gods - “The image of the queen of heaven with the babe in her arms was seen everywhere, though the names might differ as languages differed. It became the mystery-religion of the Phoenicia, and by the Phoenicians was carried to the ends of the earth. Astoreth and Tammuz, the mother and child of these hardy adventurers, became Isis and Horus in Egypt, Aphrodite and Eros in Greece, Venus and Cupid in Italy, and bore many other names in more distant places.” - Dwight Pentecost
- j. To this day, the concept of the “mother and son” (both being deities) is still in place and the Devil is still seeking to “**crush**” Christ in defiance of this promise of God
- k. The fulfillment of the “crushing blow” is described in Rom. 5:12-21 - through the one (Adam) came one sin and death by that sin (on us all as his progeny), while through the other (Christ) came justification of the “many” transgressions (see particularly 5:16) - “The condemnation by Adam was for one sin; but the justification by Christ is an absolution not only from the guilt of that first offense, mysteriously **attaching** to every individual of the race, but from the countless offenses it, to which, as a germ lodged in the bosom of every child of Adam, it unfolds itself in his life.” JFB

E. God pronounces the consequences to the woman’s sin - vs. 16

1. The first consequence of her sin would be the pain in childbirth - “greatly multiply your pain..”
 - a. There is speculation over the use of the term “multiply” or “increase” seeming to allude to the idea that there would have been some pain in childbirth without the fall
 - b. This is idle speculation because it lends nothing to the reality of the situation - significant pain would now be a part of child conception, birthing and even **rearing**
 - c. What was originally a blessing (that of multiplying and filling the earth) would now have discomfort attached to it - the blessing is still there, but now with profound inconvenience
 - d. And now, as a result of the transference of sin, the pain associated would be life-long - the pain of the ongoing affects and results of **sin** in the lives of children
2. The second consequence would be a disharmony in the relationship with her husband
 - a. There is an abundance of materials written on the latter part of 3:16 trying to determine the meaning of the phrase, “..your desire will be for your husband.” - some state that this is in reference to her desire (physically) to her husband and that even though there would be pain in childbirth, she would not be able to resist uniting with her husband and conceiving a child
 - b. Others state that the meaning is related to her own ambitions and now she would not be “free” to pursue these being under the rule of her husband - this thinking lends to the error of believing the headship of the husband in the marriage is a result of the fall and not the original design - this discounts what was revealed in Genesis 2
 - c. The core idea is more in line with the woman now desiring to “have and control” the man - this is in harmony with the same phrased used in Gen. 4:7 when God is warning Cain that “sin is lying at the door and desires to have and dominate him, but that he (Cain) is to rule over it
 - d. In the same way, one of the results of the fall is the **selfish** motives (resulting from sin) that now come to play a part in a relationship which was to be one of perfect harmony and unity - rather than finding contentment in their relational “design” to their husbands, wives will have a desire to rule their husbands (at differing times, ways and circumstances)
 - e. It would be safe to speculate, that had it not been for the fall, there would not have been marital conflicts and disharmony in the union - sin, in all its aspects, is the cause of conflict in all relationships designed to be harmonious! - sin blinds, distorts, corrupts and kills relationships

Pr. 10:1; 15:20; 17:21, 25

The wife’s submission to her husband is not a “curse” though the disharmony caused by sin is

Interestingly, the Church is compared to the “Bride of Christ” and, while still under the influence of sin, will at times seek to rule itself pushing off, as it were, the Lordship (headship) of Christ

- f. "...and he will rule over you" - he will have "dominion" and this will (at times) be burdensome -
 "As a result of the fall, man no longer rules easily; he must fight for his headship. Sin has
 Boice corrupted both the willing submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband."

3. The answer to this result is dealt with in Eph. 5:22-33

- a. Wives are to "be in subjection" to their own husbands - the idea is to "subordinate" **themselves**

"Submissiveness is rendered by the wife to the husband under the eye of Christ, and so is rendered to Christ Himself. The husband stands to the wife in the relation that the Lord does to the Church, and this is to be the ground of her submission: though that submission is inferior in kind and degree to that which she owes Christ." JFB

- (1). The word for "submit" is not found in verse 22 though it is supplied (contextually) from the previous verse instructing us (believers) all to be "subject" to each other
- (2). As with all the results of sin, one of the first "counters" to each is instruction from God
- (3). The answer to sin is not an attitude of being resolved to its inevitability, but the ongoing, renewed determination to see it **conquered** at each encounter
- (4). Many, fatigued in the fight against their own sinful tendencies and inclinations, yield to their natural impulses and soon yield the "fight" altogether
- (5). It is essential for all believers to recognize where these inclinations come from and, armed with the realization of its origins and the inevitable future of sin, expect to fight it **all** their lives without taking on a defeatist attitude - see Gal. 6:6-9

- b. Husbands, now being informed as to this result of the fall, should be aware of their need to lead their wife graciously and lovingly - see the instruction from Peter in I Peter 3:1-7

Notice the "who hoped in God"

This is important in the man's struggle against his own inclination to laziness (from his work being wearisome - "the sweat of his face") - also a result of the fall

- (1). Husbands may have the tendency to either react in anger or yield to her control (both typically being the result of weariness in the ongoing struggle)
- (2). As part of bearing with one another and bearing one another's burdens, a husband should see it as his responsibility to aid his wife in this struggle
- (3). Also, his cherishing of her will greatly help her in the "pains of childbirth" - not only in being a responsible parent, but in the cherishing of the children that God graces him with through the labor of his wife - a wife will be hurt with the husbands **neglect** or even rejection of the children

- c. We must not lose sight of the purpose for knowing not only how we fell, but knowing the specific consequences given to us all

F. God pronounces the consequences to Adam's sin - vs. 17-19

1. God first clarifies the reason for the consequences about to be applied

This applies as well as "hear-kening" unto our own voice in opposition to God

Compare this (at the beginning) with the focus we are to maintain on the end - Luke 21:34-36

- a. "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife.." - this is in contrast to the voice he should have heeded, that of God - compare this with Jer. 7:23-24
- b. He heard and heeded both of which, when combined against hearing and heeding what God has spoken, carries with it inestimable consequences
- c. Whatever and whoever has our ear (attention) will be a controlling factor in our decision making - this is a good point regarding our need to always be seeking God's Word and comparing all to it when making **decisions** throughout life - see Luke 11:27-28
- d. Because he "sided" with the words of another against God, and acted upon them (in eating what God had forbidden) these results would come

2. "Cursed is the ground (earth) because of you..."

".. for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope." Rom. 8:20

- a. The word for ground is the same word for where the "dust" was taken to form both man and the animals - essentially, all the **substance** of the physical creation was cursed
- b. It would be in "toil" (wearisomeness and sorrow) that he would be sustained by it - originally all the physical creation would support his life (living) with ease - but now, it would be subject to futility and his struggle to sustain life with its "fruits" would be laborious
- c. This curse would carry with it a tiring outlook on life - it would be through his entire life that the struggle to continue to live (stay alive) would be work - when the physical world seems to be working against us.. it is! - these are ongoing **reminders** of the fall
- d. This curse on the earth (the creation) is God's curse and will not be overturned or done away with the ingenuity of man - the "green" movement may carry with it some of the good of man's stewardship over the world, but it will never take away the curse!
- e. As a result of this curse, mankind will feel as if a slave in his labor and not see an end of it (this weariness) this side of his death - part of the joy of Heaven and the new earth will be the pleasure in our labor without weariness or fatigue

It is, though, a reminder of God's goodness that the earth, even with the curse, will still be used by God to provide for us - His grace provides to the productivity of a cursed world

3. “Thorns and thistles it will grow for you” - vs. 18

It is interesting to note that when our Lord bore the curse of sin upon Him, His head bore one of the symbols of the curse - thorns - Mt. 27:29

One of sin's consequences is the reoccurring panics that come when we hear of forecasts of food shortages

- a. Whether there were these types of weeds before the fall or not, it is clear that these types of plants would now be, when trying to grow food, challenges to the work
- b. Not only would they grow, but would (as we now see) be competitive and would grow easier - if left unattended, they choke-out the “good plants for food”
- c. Man would now need to plan crops, cultivate the ground to grow food (and we also see not only competing weeds, but we also see competing insects and animals) - even “bugs” we cannot see
- d. This is further complicated with the ever-present concern of starvation (this in stark contrast to the limitless, endless bounty of the garden) - though now, as directed by Christ, we need not worry about this with a focus toward His “kingdom” - Mt. 6:25-34
- e. The “competition” seen throughout nature is a reminder of this curse - what had originally worked in harmony would now experience various forms of disharmony

4. Living by the “sweat of the brow” with the final result of “returning to dust” - vs. 19

It is not a worthwhile pursuit in life to find “rest from our labors” while still in the realm of this curse - it cannot be found here!

Rev. 22:3

- a. If ever there were a vivid picture of the futility that came as a result of sin, it is this entire concept - we will struggle to live all the days of our lives, and no matter how great a struggle we will still succumb to death - we will not win the battle against death in these bodies
- b. It is interesting to note that the word for the “pain” of the woman with bearing children is the same word in verse 17 for “toil” - they both will suffer in their God-given responsibilities
- c. “Working” to live would now be “work” - as mentioned earlier in this study, because of sin, work is now laborious and carries with it fatigue - we must eat, therefore we must work - see II Thes. 3:7-13 for an example of the need for a “work ethic”
- d. Even the lack of desire to work is a result of the fall - we look forward to the day when the curse will be removed and we will know these consequences no more - imagine a life loving all “work,” finding fulfillment in labor and having nature in full harmony with these efforts!
- e. This life-long living “by the sweat of our face” continues till we “return to the ground” - as God promised, in the day they ate of the forbidden tree (broke God's law) death would come - it was at this point that not only the physical creation would be subjected to futility, but even our bodies were now subject to entropy (degradation) - from the dirt we were taken and to the dirt we will return - see Psa. 103:6-14 and God's compassion knowing our “frame”- what we're made of

5. When we stop to calculate the results of these consequences, much is explained (why things are the way they are)

These are some of the results of these consequences though, for the believer, we are to have a different perspective - even death itself is in many ways a welcomed event

From Amy Carmichael - “One day before her death, a friend who also struggled with physical disabilities visited Amy. As the two were chatting, the friend commented, ‘My doctor has warned me not to bend over suddenly, or might die on the spot!’ ... Amy responded immediately, ‘How ever do you resist the temptation?’”

Read Php. 1:21-26

- a. Because of fatigue in work, laziness will be a constant “foe” to be conquered - it will follow us to every “job” we are given throughout life and must not be yielded to - though this, interestingly enough, brings with it a benefit in necessity making us (forcing us) to remain active and not idle sinners having total freedom to live-out the lusts of the flesh - Pr. 13:4; 21:25 - see also Pr. 26:16
 - If laziness is yielded to, dissatisfaction and depression set in (we need to be productive)
- b. Disharmony between our goals to “live” each day and the “thorns and thistles” we will face throughout life's endeavours - “competition” with the physical world will be a constant pressure
- c. All forms of “want,” sickness, disappointments and the persistent possibility of death will be our companions all the days of our life (though many strive to avoid this reality)
- d. Fear of God's creation and the potential “disasters” that surround us - and yet, as demonstrated in Acts 14:17, God's goodness is demonstrated in nature when our needs are met, times of plenty come, and we are allowed to have moments of rest from conflicts
- e. Knowing all this should help us maintain a realistic expectation - far too often we are overcome by our own disillusionment because we anticipate seeing results in ourselves, others or things without the affects of the curse - this is not to encourage a steady pessimism; on the contrary, these disappointments in life are to serve not only as reminders of the consequences of going against God, but reminders of where we are to place our expectation as we journey through a life surrounded by the affects of the curse - Psa. 62:5-8
- f. With these ever-present consequences, we also have the advantage of lessening our attachment to this world (and the age in which we live) - if anything, the longer we live in this sin-infected world, the more our longing should be to be free from it - so what keeps us focused on remaining here? - we, like Paul, need to be focused on responsibility (duty), not be taken-in with this futile world and its disappointing offerings, but on the other side, not being overtaken with despair and trying, as Adam and Eve, to dictate our own destiny - leave it to God!

G. An evidence of faith seen in a name - vs. 20

1. "The man" (Adam) called his wife "Eve" - literally he called her "life" or "life-bearer"

Her name also carries the idea of "the living one" serving as a reminder that, even though death had come upon them, they were still living and permitted to experience the original blessing of being fruitful and multiplying

- The reason for this is clarified that she "was" or would be the "mother of all living"
- We learn in chapter two that she was not, at this point, with child - Adam calls her this in harmony with the promise in 3:15 that she would have offspring, and that from it would come the One to crush the serpent's head
- It would be, by faith, that they would press on - their expectation, as evidenced here, was upon God and what He would perform - this is where our **focus** must be when confronted with the results and the consequences of our sin
- We must not lose sight that every day of life we are given from God is a reminder of His mercy - amazingly, we being under penalty of death are allowed to live - life is **borrowed** from God
 - The next ideal "step" being true life in Christ - see Gal. 2:20 ("..the life I now live..")

2. From the abundance of life that would come from her, would be the Life-Giver Himself

Each child born should be seen as from God - each represents (to us) incalculable potential of the grace of God at work - His grace is the determiner, not their circumstances

- Some state that Eve's expression when Cain was born was that she believed this was the very one that would be the "serpent-crusher" (Gen. 4:1)
- Whether or not this was the case, she knew the child was from God (Jehovah)
- "Therefore Adam called his wife's name Life, because she was to be the mother of all human beings, and because she was to be the mother of HIM who was to give life to a world dead in trespasses, and dead in sins, Eph 2:1, &c" Clarke

H. God's clothing versus man's clothing - vs. 21

1. The "Lord God" made for them "garments of skin"

The solution to shame will only be found in the Lord - all other attempts will compound our shame as our hope (confidence) in other "things" will only deliver disappointment - Rom. 5:5

- Adam and Eve had both, when first sensing the shame of nakedness that came with sin, attempted to cover themselves (the "fig leaves" of our attempts at dealing with the result of sin)
- God would provide clothing that would not only serve to cover their shame, but would serve as an ongoing **reminder** of what was required to cover their sin
- We are not told the particulars of what transpired, but realizing these were animal skins carries with it the idea of there being the death of these animals

2. It is, again speculated, that the animals used for providing these coverings were lambs

There is some indication that the idea was that God taught them what to do and they obeyed - either way it is a clear picture of what would need to be done in Christ

- This would fit the numerous pictures throughout Scripture
- Sacrifice of the "innocent" was required for the covering of sin (expiation) - As Christ is called "the lamb, slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8) - indicating God's eternal plan
- This would have been a sobering (even grim) picture of what was required, and yet it was from God - He would provide the first coverings and this would not be "the works of their hands" as the fig leaves - **God** would deal with sin seeing man could not (in the least!)

VIII. Man is Cut Off From the Tree of Life - 3:22-24

A. "Man has become like one of Us..." - vs. 22

1. The "likeness" to God was in man's living "autonomously" (living by "self-rule")

Read Rom. 6:17-18 to our condition in sin (slaves) and the transfer of ownership (in and because of Christ)

- He (man) now "knows for **himself**" good and evil (on his own terms versus God's)
- God knows evil in that by His commands and character defines it - whatever is in opposition to His commands or "righteousness" is sin (no matter how seemingly insignificant)
- Man, now, in his pursuit to be like God (choosing for himself) has his own knowledge of what is good and evil (both tainted by the sin/evil itself)

2. This likeness being "autonomy" is reflected in the next statement - "... he might stretch out his hand and take" - he will seek to live his life on his own **terms**, in his sin

- It was actually gracious of God to cast them out of the garden and to keep them from eating of the tree of life and living forever in their sin
- It is interesting to note that this is related to the concept of the "second death" - there will be those, (the conscious "dead") who will be brought before God and sent alive in to the Lake of Fire and will exist eternally in this state - read Rev. 20:11-15
- Man, if left to himself, would seek to utilize the best of God's blessings to live endlessly in sin (which, as proven even in our short lifetimes, leads to unstoppable and unavoidable despair) - not just sin, but living in the realm of sin carries with it an endless barrage of discouragements

It is because of this that we must realize our ongoing NEED to seek our encouragements in and from the Lord - see Lam. 3:24

Death is a departure from one place to another, or the loss or change of something once had (fellowship, innocence, peace)

“Men have been helped to live by remembering that they must die.” -Spurgeon

B. God drove them out of Eden and guarded the Tree of Life with Cherubim - vs. 23-24

1. Man was “sent out to cultivate the ground” - vs. 23

He would be allowed to live as he was, for a time, and was still provided by God in not only the provision from the ground but in an ongoing occupation

- d. The greatest agony of the “second death” is living eternally in sin - it is important to remember that death is not the absence of consciousness but is, essentially, separation (and in this case, separation from God’s goodness) - as promised, “dying you will die” (spiritual and physical)
- e. Mankind still seeks to find some type of this “tree of life” somehow hoping to live forever - no doubt much of the motivation is in the pursuit of avoiding standing before God (in judgment)
- f. There are those who physically “live” but are as if “dead” - Paul used such an example in I Tim. 5:6 - see also II Cor. 5:14, Eph. 2:1, Col. 2:13 and the Church at Sardis, Rev. 3:1

2. The phrase “drove them out” carries with it the sense of force - it was no doubt a painful time, and their reluctance to leave would have lent to this - vs. 24 (the experience of “Paradise lost)

Many of the religious efforts of man are aimed at the pursuit of their own way to God, and to eternal life

- a. He had originally been placed in the Garden to “cultivate it” so there seems to be not just a change in the location of his “cultivation” but, to some degree, the type
 - b. He would work with the ground itself, realizing that the substance that he would be working with (to remain alive) was the substance from which he was taken, and to which he would return - the substance of his labor would be a steady reminder of his mortality
 - c. It would still be true that they were made to work and be responsible (versus idleness)
- ##### 3. This would seem to picture that to have access to eternal life (having sin dealt with) would only be found again by literally “going through God”
- a. Based upon the statement in verse 22 (..he might stretch out his hand and take..), the forcefulness of the “driving them out,” and then the cherubim placed to guard the path to the tree of life, it was clear that they and their descendants would seek an illegitimate way to God and life - rebellion is often typified with seeking the benefits of life (that are to be associated with obedience) on its own terms (now that he was “like God” seeking self-rule/determination)
 - b. At a specific location (at the east of the garden of Eden) the cherubim and “flaming sword” were placed to guard the way to the Tree of Life - as we see later, the Cherubim were associated with the presence of God (as on the Mercy Seat (Ex. 25:22) and the Throne of God (Eze. 10:1))
 - c. The peaceful relationship with God was lost - it would be “enemies” for whom Christ would die

Rom. 5:10

- a. It is the fearful presence of the Holy God and the “flaming sword” spinning in all directions that stands, as it were, between us and eternal life
- b. The answer is not to seek to dethrone God or to enthrone ourselves, but to go through the righteousness of God, thus rightfully inheriting eternal life
- c. This was an ominous visual of the inability of man to get to “life” on his own - the word for “drove” was a Hebrew word also used of divorce (an intimate relationship severed)

see Rom. 1:16-17, 3:21-22, 10:3 and II Cor. 5:21

4. It has been speculated that it was to this location that Cain and Abel came to present their offerings

As detailed in Romans 1, it is not so much a lack of evidence that turns man against the knowledge of God as much as it is their efforts in suppressing the truth in their unrighteousness

- a. It may have been that this location was known for many generations and possibly up to the flood
- b. If this speculation is true, it would be telling of the depravity and willful rebellion of mankind - not only would this have been “evidence” of God and their beginning, but the account of all of this was passed down (and many other “religions” have a similar account) - it is also speculated that the garden and the Tree of Life were taken or destroyed in the flood
- c. Either way, the details provided in these first three chapters indicates literal people, literal locations and literal happenings - this account is not allegorical!

IX. Cain and Abel - 4:1-8

A. The first birth - the standard demonstrated for all to follow - vs. 1

Sinful man would have men be women and women men, children the standard to follow, families to be structured around circumstance and societal standards rather than God’s original design

1. “And the man had relations with his wife...” - God had designed for children to be born into a marriage

- a. This may seem like a point that should be obvious, but it is sad to note how often the original “standards” of God are not only contradicted by man, but are placed as new “norms”
- b. As man strays from God’s “norms” we begin to see distortions of God’s institutions such as marriage, families and more - physical relations between the sexes is constantly distorted!
- c. The first children were born to a husband and wife just as God has established in chapter 2
- d. Some may emphasize seeming exceptions to these norms and even some of the good that came out of them but these must not be seen as legitimate arguments to reasons become the standard

2. The sexual union between the husband and wife was designed by God

“Free love” is neither free nor love - the core of love is commitment

The physical union should be a demonstration of the union of the “heart”, mind and soul resulting in a coming together physically

see Rom. 13:8-14, Eph. 4:17-24 (futility of mind being “past feeling”)

- a. The desires are natural, God-given and are not “just instinctive” as with animals - they have their rightful place in marriage (many seek some form of what they might call “free love”)
- b. The terms, “had relations with his wife” or “knew his wife” carry the idea of a relationship and not of **blind** instinct or impulse - in degenerate societies the sexual desires are little more than animal-like responses with no thought for moral accountability - which comes from God’s design
 - It is interesting to note that the use of “know” in he “knew his wife” carries the idea of experiencing - he “experienced her” (from Martin Luther’s commentary on Genesis)
- c. Currently, even in many “Christian” marriages, there is a misdirected focus on having the “goal” of the physical union and it being a determiner of the “health” of a good marriage - they see the physical union as a goal and not as it really is; a **response** or result of love and friendship - the motive is to be one of pleasing the other as Paul mentioned in I Cor. 7:1-6
- d. We see this “norm” also distorted by man in his insistence of expressing autonomy to live for “wantonness” (lack of restraint usually seen in indulgences of all types)
- e. Though, to yield to these desires as “impulses” robs the participants of true fulfillment as intended - the result of true love is without any proddings of the **conscience**

3. A child conceived from the Lord - vs. 1

Children not seen as “from the Lord” will soon be seen as burdens without purpose - and labor without purpose is exhausting

- a. As designed, the relation between the husband and wife resulted in conception then birth
- b. Eve is described as acknowledging the child as being from the Lord (His doing) as all children are to be realized as coming from the Lord - Psa. 127:3 (they are the “gift of the Lord”)
- c. As mankind seeks to distort God’s norms they ultimately re-purpose them as in their sexual relationships - no doubt they involve pleasure, but as with all other aspects of life, pleasures come with responsibilities - man seeks to have one (pleasures) without the other (responsibility) bringing further hardships and griefs associated with “the fall”
- d. His name was called “Cain” meaning “gotten,” thus her phrasing, “I have *gotten* a man-child”

B. The first two brothers and the first murder - vs. 2-8

1. Abel is mentioned next and his name carrying the idea of “nothingness,” “futility” or “vanity” - vs. 2

As with those such as Jacob, David and even Moses, God would use one not naturally looked to for significance

- a. Some speculate that they were twins because no conception is mentioned of Abel - this might lend to the significance of their names - Cain being seen as one given for a purpose (possibly the through whom would come the redeemer) while Abel seems to have been an “extra” - Cain being the eldest may have had more expectation on him
- b. It has also been speculated that the choice of Abel’s name possibly indicates the realizations of Adam and Eve of the difficulties that were now becoming apparent in a sin-infected world
- c. Each had a different occupation, Cain being a “tiller of the ground” while Abel was a “keeper of flocks” - Cain took on (or was given) the occupation of his father

2. Both brothers bring offerings to the Lord of their labor (occupations) - vs. 3-4

In Genesis 32 we read of Jacob sending ahead a present to appease Esau before they met - the word for “present” is the same word for “offering”

Many, to this day, still bring differing offerings to God - some, out of the gratitude of their heart offer of the best God has given while others seeking to stay on “good terms” with God offer of what is “common” - God loves a “cheerful giver” - II Cor. 9:7

- a. The word for “offering” is a word used for a **gift** more than for a “sacrifice” - these were not for atonement purposes as much as they would have been for gratefulness or honor
- b. Much has been made on the idea of Cain not offering a sacrifice as Abel and that was the reason for God not “regarding” Cain’s offering - though this, by use of the word “offering,” could not be the case - also, we do not know how God demonstrated “regard” for them
- c. There is no indication that they were commanded to bring and offer these gifts to God - contextually, we should first infer that they did this of their own desire, though each appeared to have a differing motive - Cain seeking to appease God while Abel being **pleasing** to God
- d. Compare the descriptions - Cain brought “of the fruit of the ground” while Abel brought “the firstlings of his flock and their fat portions”
- e. As testified in Hebrews 11:4, Abel offered a “more excellent” (better) sacrifice - it was better in quality in that it was of the best he had versus just being from what he had - Abel demonstrated, as a part of faith, his sole focus on **God** and not himself! - this is an aspect of faith
- f. There is a sense of obligation to provide the best for those we consider “the best” - it is to be an outward expression of the inner heart - compare this with Mal. 1:6-14 where God rebukes Israel for offering to Him what is blind, lame, torn and so on - this was truly an insult to His greatness
- g. Abel gave the “best of the best” while Cain just gave - the heart was the key!

see also II Sam. 24:24

3. The “regard” of God for the sacrifice of Abel - vs. 4-5

The key is more to be seen not in as much as what was given but in as much as God was pleased - our focus is to be always poised to change when shown to be displeasing to God

“Honor Jehovah with thy substance, And with the first-fruits of all thine increase” Pr. 3:9 (ASV)

So much of our unfulfilling distractions stem from the pursuit of “rights” before and with God than the pursuit of responsibility

see I Tim. 6:6, Pr. 15:16

- a. The word for “regard” carries the idea of “an approving look” - He was pleased with Abel’s
- b. Again, much speculation has been offered as to whether or not they had been instructed to bring a certain type of offering - this is not necessary though (and can be assumed by its absence) since God would respond to Cain that he could “do well” - Cain would choose otherwise
- c. It is key to note that the text reads that God not only had “regard” for Abel’s sacrifice, but for Abel also - again, focus is more on the person and his heart than on his gift
- d. The heart was also revealed, not just in the gift but in the “countenance” - Cain demonstrated his underlying lack of honor for God - he wanted God’s pleasure and approval on his (Cain’s) own terms - he knew what should be done but, instead, attacked the “competition”
- e. Cain’s first response was one of anger (stemming from his expectations being disappointed and his perceived “rights” being infringed upon) - we can all too readily identify with this type of anger directed at God when our misinformed (or uninformed) expectations are not met
- f. His anger was followed by a “fallen face” which, considering his anger was not one of remorse but of defiance (rebellion) - the first in the list of what God hates in Pr. 6:16-19 is a “proud look” (literally meaning “lofty eyes” indicating a self-elevated perspective) - his anger was one like that of “I deserve better”
- g. Disappointments lead to a downcast “look” and, if not dealt with, leads to a bitter face! The answer is not seeking ways around God or resisting Him, but submitting to Him for such and only such, is the source of contentment

4. God counsels Cain with confrontation, direction and warning - vs. 6-7

God was revealing that his discouragement was of himself and not because of God - the situation could be changed if he would “do well” (do it right - in this case, the best)

Paul personified sin in Rom. 7:8 - it, as it were, using the commandment of God stirred in him all sorts of coveting - sin, at its core, finds its “thrills” in the opposition to God

As those in Christ, we are to realize the fact that “sin will not have dominion over us” - Rom. 6:14

- a. God begins with questions (versus accusations) - God could rightly accuse but graciously uses questions to convict the conscience and to refocus the misdirected thoughts - see Isa. 66:2
- b. As is so often the case, if, when discouraged or disappointed, we determine the cause rightly we will realize it is unnecessary and that its source lies in our stubborn pride to have things our way
- c. God identifies where Cain’s attention should be in the “doing well” - if he would just do what he knows to do his face would be “lifted up” being the result of being pleasing to God - this is the source of true contentment! (it begins though with the learning and knowing of what pleases Him)
- d. The same goes for us - the answer is simple in “theory” but made difficult when we have conflicting desires (and if the source of these desires is not identified as sin at work in us, we are apt to readily consider them legitimate, giving them weight and pitting them against the will of God)
- e. God then warns Cain of the seriousness of his current (and potential) situation - if not dealt with, these bad desires will ultimately seek to control you
- f. The picture is one of a wild beast lurking at a door, waiting for it to be opened so that it can “have” you (devour your soul as it were) - it lurks right next to the “heart” always seeking entrance with the purpose to “feed” on what should be most precious to us - our desires, focus on reality, strength, aspirations and time
- g. The desire (of sin personified) is as the Devil illustrated as a roaring lion in I Peter 5:8-9 - sin desires control in our lives and to devour our resources - it is to be, as Peter instructs, to be resisted in faith (as the Devil, if “resisted” flees) - James 4:7 - “stand against” and oppose him
- h. Cain was about to be “consumed” by envy - he resented the approval that Abel received from God and rather than strive for the same he opted to kill his brother - murder was the result of anger stemming from pride and unrighteous jealousy - this is why our Lord warned in the strongest terms against anger with a “brother” - Mt. 5:22

5. Cain, disregarding God’s word, murders his brother - vs. 8

- a. It has been pointed out that the first murder was over “religion” - this motivation for murder has been prominent throughout our history where those in opposition to God and His truth (and they take on many religious forms themselves) put to death those striving to live Godly (as God in His Word reveals) - see II Timothy 3:12
- b. Abel was the first prophet according to Luke 11:45-52 - How was he a prophet? He spoke for what God wanted by his “more excellent sacrifice” and as indicated in Heb. 11:4, though he is dead, yet he still “speaks” - his example of offering, by faith, what is best to God still challenges us
- c. Cain talked with his brother, walked with his brother then killed his brother

Temptation to sin, allowed to “stew” will most certainly grow hotter!

6. Cain, filled with rage, _____ **envy** _____ and hate kills his brother - vs. 8

“Sin is a monster of such awful mein that to be hated needs but to be seen, but seen to oft familiar of face we first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

- Alexander Pope

It should be remembered that each child is born with the potential to any type and degree of sin

- a. Cain refused the counsel of God (he would not be controlled, as it were, by God) was controlled by the “sin crouching at the door” - there is no true self-rule; when God is opposed as master, sin becomes master (Cain, having opened the door to it, it springs into action)
- b. Yielding to the sin brings with it irreversible consequences that, in one way or another, affect those around us - we are not free to dictate the consequences and the scope of the effects of our sin - to disregard God is dangerous and _____ **volatile** _____ (full of explosive potential)!
- c. This act of murder was the outworking of Cain’s frustration with God - Cain could not “kill” God so he ultimately took out his frustration on what God approved (Abel)
- d. His “stewing thoughts” now become action (having handed over the reigns of his thinking to sin, these sinful passions take control) - see I John 3:11-12 (Cain, rather than submit to do what he knew should be done, opted to kill the one who did the right - sin, at its core, is defiance against God and quickly becomes a _____ **way** _____ of life)
- e. Cain “slew” his brother - as is to be indicated, it was a bloody death (all sin, one way or another, leads us to what is truly “gruesome” and “disgusting”) - sin needs to be seen for what it really is

X. The Defiance of Cain When Confronted by God - vs. 9-15

A. God, as He had done with Cain’s parents, confronts Cain with a question, “Where is your brother Abel?” - vs. 9

1. Here an opportunity is graciously given for confession, but as is so often the case, one sin begets another

Sin will lead to varying forms of self-deception and will lead us to believe all sorts of absurdities

- a. Cain directly lies to God (having taken the approach of his parents (who blamed when seeking to cover guilt) to another level) - he responds to God (Who sees all) that he does not know
- b. He may have convinced himself that either he no longer knew exactly where he was (or some other _____ **mental** _____ “trick”) or that somehow God did not actually know - read Psalm 94

2. In defiance, he throws a question back to God - vs. 9 - “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

See Psalm 73 for the true situation of the confident sinners

- a. Sin carries with it a false sense of security (even before God) - it often produces a defiant, self-willed, accusative approach toward those confronting us - an “I know better” attitude
- b. Cain seemed to believe he could argue with God - sin at work in us has a way of making us believe we can or have discovered a flaw in God or His word
- c. Beyond just the defiance of questioning God in such a fashion, this question can also be taken as a criticism of God - “I’m not his keeper (protector), You are!” - “Why ask me, don’t you know? Could You not protect him?” - the obstinacy of sin _____ **grows** _____! - see Isa. 29:15-16

This type of a response from a child to a parent should be an alarming sign of trouble!

3. In reality, Cain should have seen himself as his brother’s keeper

see Php. 2:4 and James 2:14-17

The danger in losing one’s senses is the inability to see when they are damaging themselves as one without a sense of pain may burn or injure themselves

- a. He was his brother and not only that, his older brother - he should have cared for him - “Those who are unconcerned in the affairs of their brethren, and take no care, when they have opportunity, to prevent their hurt in their bodies, goods, or good name, especially in their souls, do, in effect, speak Cain’s language.” Matthew Henry
- b. Yet, we see no sense of regret for his actions, only his consequences - sin brings with it a hardness to areas we should be sensitive - see the results of this in Mt. 24:9-12
- c. This result of yielding to sin is described as “callous” and “past _____ **feeling** _____” in Eph. 4:17-24

B. God, not distracted (or intimidated) with Cain’s response, confronts with the truth - vs. 10

1. The responsibility is now directed at Cain - “What have YOU done?”

- a. God, being the definer, revealer and “knower” of truth exposes Cain - situations are not truly dealt with unless the truth of the matter be revealed - God does not deal in excuses and extortion
- b. The sin could not be hidden from God - the blood of his brother was, as it were, crying out to God from the ground that had soaked it up

2. It was that Abel’s blood cried for justice - God is the avenger of such (crimes against another) and they cannot be hid from His eyes - see examples such as I Thes. 4:3-6 and Heb. 10:26-31

God’s dealing with sin is and always will be complete

The darkness of sin brings blindness to reality and only God’s truth reveals what sin obscures

- a. “How well is it for us that the blood of Christ speaks better things than that of Abel! Heb 12:24. Abel’s blood cried for vengeance, Christ’s blood cries for _____ **pardon** _____.” Matthew Henry
- b. One way or another, all sin must be dealt with righteously, justly either through condemnation of the sin-doers, or by the blood of Christ, He having taken the punishment in full for us
- c. God’s initial question communicates the utmost seriousness of what was done - questions such as these are meant to direct the attention/focus back to the reality of what has been done

3. Sin cannot be hid by our excuses, reasonings or denials - vs. 10

Many follow something like Cain when they seek to deny guilt by various means - one of the most dangerous responses to sin is to find a way to directly or indirectly blame God for it

see Psa. 32:1-5

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” - Pr. 28:13

- a. Ironically, when we attempt to hide our sin, we are attempting to cover it - yet this can only be done by and through Christ - His covering is the only true covering for sin
- b. Man’s attempts are typical - if there is not an attempt to hide it, then there is an attempt to justify it or, as with Adam and Eve, to shift the blame
- c. It would be true to make the claim (as far as we know) that God had not forbidden murder - so, if there is no “law” then is there no sin? - this is addressed by Paul in Romans 2:12-16 and 5:12-14
- d. The answer, as discussed with the sin of Adam, is to bring the sin to God for covering rather than seeking any other alternative (e.g. the various forms of penance mankind has invented)
- e. The core to Cain’s sin was the unending pursuit to please himself - Cain is the first in a list of those driven by self-pleasure and greed in Jude 11-13 - From Cain’s perspective, God’s non-acceptance of him and his offering was “against him,” Abel being honored over him was “against him,” and to answer God honestly and humbly when confronted by his sin was also considered against his best interests - the way of Cain is to see life as “about self”

C. The consequences of Cain’s sins - vs. 11-12

1. “Now you are cursed from the ground...” - Cain’s occupation and “talent” were part of his curse

As mentioned in Gal. 6:7-8, God is not “mocked” (literally sneered at or made fun of) seeing that what we “sow” (plant as it were by our actions) we will reap - if to the flesh, we get all the flesh can offer which leads ultimately to corruption and decay, while if “sown” to the spirit, it results in life (it is eternal... lasting)

- a. An area that might be considered a strength and a point of confidence for Cain would now become a point of weakness and frustration
- b. Cain’s denials and reasonings against God did not distract God in the least - God knew the precise curse to place on Cain and the needed, ongoing consequences
- c. An area that Cain would have thought he could always look to and “lean-on” for his needs being met, would no longer be reliable - his confidence in his situation before he acted on his sin, was a misdirected confidence - this is a reminder that we must never place our reliance on that which can be taken away, for it will either lead to a disregard of God (since He is not seen as being needed) or will lead us to some type of personal “fall”
- d. He was literally “cursed from the ground” the effects of which are explained more in verse 12
- e. The picture God describes is that this “earth” (ground) will now work against him, seeing it was ground that soaked-up the blood of his brother

2. The physical consequences of the curse would lead to unpractical results - vs. 12

The promise regarding all things “conspiring for the good” is for a select group and not all - it is for those that “love God” and who are “the called according to His purpose” - Rom. 8:28

- a. As He would (from now on) “cultivate” the ground and it would not be productive
- b. It would no longer “yield its strength to you” - this was over and above (exceptional) the original curse placed on the ground with Adam and Eve - with the original curse, much work would be required to get the produce of the ground, but in this case, no matter how much labor was invested, it would be profitless
- c. The actual result of this would partly contribute to his being a “vagrant and wanderer” - since he could not live off the land he would need to keep on the move - he would need to be dependent on others for his food sources — We would far rather be dependent on the unchangeable, faithful and gracious God than to be dependent on wavering, fickle, and self-loving people

3. He would be a man “on the move” - vs. 12

As in Pro. 28:1, “The wicked flees when no man pursues”

One of the causes of a false sense of security in our contemplation and acting on sin, is our belief that we can anticipate the consequences of our sin and either avoid them, or calculate that we can live with them

- a. Part of his wandering the earth would be his fear of being killed - this is discussed in the following verses - His fear, as identified, would be those seeking to kill him
- b. As discussed in other passages, even if no one is “pursing” at the moment, the guilty conscience maintains an ongoing level of fear that cannot be escaped
- c. There was a similar result in Lev. 26:34-39 where, as a result of their disobedience, they would be made “faint of heart” and would run at the sound of a rustling leaf
- d. This is always one of the unforeseen results of sin - we may plan and anticipate ways to escape the consequences of sin (or to hide our sin effectively), but we cannot hide from our conscience - this will follow us all of our lives and will affect us in ways we cannot imagine
- e. He would now always be a man who could never feel “settled” (at home) wherever he would go
- f. One of the other unanticipated results that accompanies sin is discontent and an unsettled, unsatisfied feeling about life and circumstances - it is a true form of being “haunted”

D. Cain grieves over his punishment - vs. 13-15

1. His is not a response of repentance but more of a complaint of the severity of it - vs. 13

- a. He deserved to die but seems to only focus on the verdicts being unbearable

Even if it could be taken as “sin” it would still reflect the wrong conclusion of Cain that sin could not be forgiven - but, since he did not ask or seek it, he would know no different

- b. There is some discussion regarding the word translated “punishment” and how Cain meant it - the word can be used not just of punishment, but is also a word used for “iniquity” and evil
- c. It is translated “punishment” because it is in harmony with verse 14 and Cain’s bemoaning the consequences of his sin - there is no indication of repentance
- d. In a not so indirect way, Cain is communicating that the punishment is too severe, and in a sense questioning God (His rightness) again - there are many who will consistently “answer back to God” this way trying to sway, as it were, public opinion against the authority of God
- e. There is a repentant grief and then there is a grief over “getting caught” - Cain was the latter

2. Cain realizes the consequences of his actions - vs. 14

see Heb. 12:17

Sin brings with it change, thus what was, no longer is... what was had is gone

Imagine where we would turn if not for the awareness of His presence - see Psa. 142:4-5

As pictured in Psalm 27:9

He treated cruelly one vulnerable and now feared being vulnerable - the sin we commit against another, we will, in one way or another, fear being done to us

- a. Though as would be seen also in Esau, there would be a tearful regret without repentance
- b. “You have driven me from the face of the ground...” - he would, first of all, leave the ground near Eden (leaving home), the ground he had known and worked: he would no longer be at his occupation of working the ground, thus leaving what he had known
- c. “... and from your face I will be hidden...” - in the most literal sense, Cain did not realize the omnipresence of God, but he also would go away from what was most likely seen as the “presence of God,” the area just outside of Eden (the outskirts of Eden being where they may have come to offer their sacrifices) - this would carry with it fears and dreads of their own (in a more figurative sense it would have been an acknowledgment of being away from God’s blessing)
 - Contrast and compare this with Psalm 94:12-23
- d. Realizing his upcoming “vagrancy” and “wandering,” he senses his first fears of vindication - feeling driven from his home, no longer able to rely on his occupation, and sensing how others might think of the murder of Abel, he fears for his life
 - He now fears the very sin he committed being done to him - this is the antithesis to what is commonly known as the “golden rule”
- e. His fear seems to be that anyone at all that “finds” him will want to kill him - again, this is the inescapable “haunting” of a guilty conscience
 - Another unexpected side affect of sin is a suspicion that those around us are doing the same things or are motivated the same as we are - like some in politics who develop underhanded ways of doing things will often believe and accuse others of the same - they are their own most reliable perspective setters and “people readers”

3. God provides a sign to Cain for special protection - vs. 15

Many try to stress that this was not “outward” as has been believed, though it must have been obvious to others somehow, else how would it act as a deterrent?

- a. It might be quickly asked why God did not kill Cain or have him killed - first, we must remember it is God doing this and He has prerogative to do as He pleases (seeing He knows all, thus knows what is best) - God would give all mankind the mandate of “Capital Punishment” in chapter nine, shortly following the flood
- b. It may be that God would keep Cain living as an ongoing example of the consequences of not only the results of a guilty conscience, but a warning of going against God - even the most wicked of this earth cannot escape being used in this fashion themselves - their confidence, gloating and self-serving will end in either slow ruin, or swift destruction and ultimately death
- c. To answer Cain’s fear, God gives him a “sign” to assure him of the dire consequences that others would face in killing him (his murder would be avenged seven times)
- d. No matter how this is viewed, it is clear that as long as God has a purpose for someone, even the wicked, they will remain alive to fulfill it - we must not seek to “judge” God by our standards of justice and the timing of it

XI. Cain and His Descendents - vs. 16-24

A. Cain “departs from the presence of the Lord” - vs. 16

1. We do not see that Cain was commanded to leave this are, yet he did

As is characteristic of a non-repentant person, they will not seek a path back to God, but will seek to continue away from God, possibly hoping to “beat” the consequences and find God wrong

- a. “Hypocritical professors, that have dissembled and trifled with God Almighty, are justly left to themselves, to do something that is grossly scandalous, and so to throw off that form of godliness to which they have been a reproach, and under colour of which they have denied the power of it.” Matthew Henry
- b. He left, as it were, the place of meeting with God - it may be taken that he left God altogether

Much if not all the consequences of our sin, though decreed by God, will be done of our own doing (we will bring it on ourselves)

There was no law against such at this time and it was necessary

If one is looking for a flaw they are apt to spot one though personal prejudice can cloud vision

Cain's self-will and self-promotion led to murder - this was followed by paranoia - all of this is seen on a rampant scale considering the number of people in the world living in awareness of the reality of sin and the potential results of it

Paranoia can lead to wars also see James 4:1-4

By now Enoch's family would be quite large in number considering all the unmentioned births - Josephus makes the number of children Lamech had by his two wives to be seventy seven.

He may have been motivated not just by lusts, but a desire to have more children and outnumber others - greater numbers were considered an advantage

Animal husbandry

Music

Metalsmiths

- c. He lived in an area called "Nod" probably named so because of Cain - "Nod" meaning "wandering" - he left what was the "known world" to an area unexplored
- d. He lived (at least for a time) in this area and by the name of this area, it may be that he wandered about in it as a "vagrant and a wanderer"

2. Cain has a child and names him "Enoch" meaning "initiated" or "consecrated" - vs. 17

- a. By the name of his first son, it appears that he saw this as a new beginning of sorts
- b. This fits also with the fact that he named his "city" Enoch as well - it was a "first," a beginning
- c. To answer one of the most popular questions regarding the Bible, "Where did Cain get his wife?" he married his sister (or a close relative) sometime before he murdered Abel - as stated in Genesis 5:4, Adam and Eve had more children - Josephus records that tradition stated that they had 33 sons and 23 daughters - Adam lived to be 930 years old
- d. This question of where Cain got his wife was used in the "Scopes" trial and has been used by many to trip-up believers in their faith in the accuracy of the Bible

3. Cain builds a city - vs. 17 (though the verb is present tense carrying the idea of "building")

- a. The literal rendering would be "...and he building a city..." so there is no need to take this as a contradiction to God's curse upon him - it actually supports it
- b. One of the core concepts of a city (especially long ago) was a fortified (walled) place - walls being constructed around cities for protection from enemy attacks - this fits with the ongoing fears that Cain would have and the reason for such a project
- c. Now, the ongoing proofs of sin at work in mankind have made security, defenses, weapons and other defensive devices a normal part of life - precautions are reasonable considerations in a depraved world - we can barely consider a world or society where locks are not needed, where walks in dark alleys are to be avoided, and where there is not at least some thought given to general protection (e.g. locks on doors)

- d. With the consequences of Cain's sin began factions (which are not necessarily bad except when they become aggressive in forcing their wills on others which ultimately necessitates opposition to them - thus the beginning concepts of war) - war is made up of the battle of ideas (ideologies)

B. The descendants of Cain to Lamech - vs. 18-24

1. The bulk of the focus of the genealogies follows the line of Seth, though there is a diversion to the line of Cain to Lamech apparently because his sons played a key role in human history

- a. The list of descendents usually lists the firstborn males and their firstborn sons
- b. To Enoch was born Irad, and his son was Mehujael, and his son was Methushael, and his son was Lamech and more is said of his life than the others (The father of Noah was named Lamech as well but was not this Lamech)

2. Lamech was significant in a couple key ways both demonstrating the degenerating character

- a. Nothing is said of the character of Lamech's predecessors
- b. Lamech has the distinction of being the first credited with polygamy - he had two wives (this was a clear distortion of God's design in Gen. 2)
- c. Three of his sons became distinctive in their beginning characteristics of mankind that last to this day - these are not bad and demonstrate God's working even in those from "bad families"
- d. Jabel was the "father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock" - he would be the "founder" of those who live like what we would call "nomads" today
- e. Jubal was the "father of all those that play the lyre and the pipe" - stringed instruments and wind instruments - he was musical and credited for being the father of musical instruments
- f. Tubal-cain was "the forger of of all implements of bronze and iron" - Metal works and cutting instruments (most likely weapons also) - he is believed to be the one whom the Greeks and Romans derived their "god" Vulcan (his name appearing to be derived from Tubal-cain)

3. This is a key point to note that these accounts give no indication of man increasing over thousands or millions of years in their intelligence (these are just eight generations from Adam)

- a. As mentioned earlier, there is more devolution than evolution in man - not just physically (because of entropy) but because of sin - sinful inventions seem endless
- b. As will be discussed in Gen. 6:5, mankind devolved to a point that "every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"

XII. From Adam to Noah - the Line of the Promise - 4:25-5:32

A. Seth, the “substitute” given by God - vs. 25-26

1. At age 130, Adam and Eve have a son whom they name “Seth” who, by declaration of Eve, was to be in the stead (the place) of Abel who was killed by Cain

- Whether or not, at this point in history, Satan knew the line of the Promised one of Gen. 3:15, God provided another heir in which our Lord would ultimately come
- As Biblical history and other sources of history demonstrate, there would be ongoing attempts at destroying from off the earth a Godly line and the line of our Lord - yet God would be proven time after time to be unstoppable, even with the most seemingly contradictory evidence!
- Eve’s words were “God has appointed me another ‘seed’” - not just to replace Abel, but a line to replace the line that would have come from Abel - there is a key lesson for us to learn in her thinking - she was thinking more along the lines of “connections” (from present to an indefinite future) in which God would work and fulfill His promises - it’s not just the people I see or the “here and now,” but we are to look through the eyes of faith to the potential of what God will do with the “here and now” in the “up and coming”

There are many examples and texts that demonstrate the power and plan of God in the face of what we may see as the “impossible” - yet God is not threatened by these in the least - see Gen. 18:14, Num. 11:23, Jer. 32:17

2. To Seth was given a son, Enosh - vs. 26

Two distinct factions began to form between the line of Cain and the line of Seth and it seems that when these lines began to intermingle (in chapter 6) that trouble also began - this will be discussed further in chapter 6

- “Enosh” carries with it the idea of weakness and frailty - this is in contrast to the names being given in the line of Cain as this communicates more the reality of man’s condition versus his (man’s) perceived greatness
- It is with the coming of Enosh that “men began to call upon the name of the Lord” and also, “men began to call themselves by the name of the Lord” - there was, again in contrast to the line of Cain, an identifying again with God - it would be, in a sense, these people being called “God’s people,” identifying themselves as such with the Lord - there have been some that take this to be the beginning of idolatry in that men began to elevate themselves (call themselves gods) though this would be unlikely since the same phrase is used of others and always in a good context) e.g. Gen 12:8, 13:4; 26:25
- There will always be a popular and seemingly easier way to identify with “the world” and its naturally depraved tendencies, but it will be most important to be identified more with that which is truly not “of the world” - as in I John 2:15, John 17:14-16

B. The “book of the generations of Adam” - 5:1-32

1. This was a written account and not just oral history - the purpose was to account for the “key persons” between Adam and Noah, both being pivotal points in human history

2. Now, a clear connection is made between all that had been discussed in the first four chapters and, as before, the focus will once again be narrowed more - in this case, to a single line of people - vs. 1

The other aspects of the “likeness of God” would also be transferred to each one born leading to the reasoning given in capital punishment in Gen. 9:6

- Again, God made man in “the day,” and man was made in God’s likeness - this is restated because it is now about to be contrasted to Adam having a son in “his own likeness”
- Some of the aspects of this likeness were lost, which will explain much of the depravity that will be exhibited, leading finally to the extermination of mankind, save Noah’s family
- The full restoration of this likeness being in Christ as in I John 3:2

3. When God created “Man” He created them male and female - vs. 2

“Adam” is the same word as “man”

- Again, this is a reiteration of what has already been covered - men and women are “man” (mankind) both having been given God-given responsibilities in His designed structure
- There also seems to be an allusion to the idea that together, as husband and wife, they are one - this recounting is not redundant, but an example of the need for these original designs and purposes to be stressed constantly, realizing it is easy to drift from them as societal norms drift from them - compare with Deut. 32:15-18

Forgetfulness is also dealt with in II Pet. 1:9

4. At 130, Adam had Seth, and in this verse it is stressed that Seth was “a son in his own likeness, according to his image”

Thus the reference in “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”, “Adam’s likeness now efface, stamp thine image in its place”

- The image and likeness of Adam would not be as “great” as the image of God seeing Adam’s image (as it is with all parents) carries with it sin
- No child is born without sin, seeing they are born in the image of their parents who were ultimately (at the very beginning) in the likeness of God - so, it’s not so much the loss of the image of God as it is the inclusion of the image of Adam - this is referenced in Romans 5

The 'warring' between body and spirit in the life of the Christian is described in Gal. 5:13-26 and is evidenced in our dealings and treatment of each other

As we have heard so often, "To be forewarned is to be forearmed" - we must not trust our natural instincts when it comes to moral accountability and knowing this arms us for the conflict

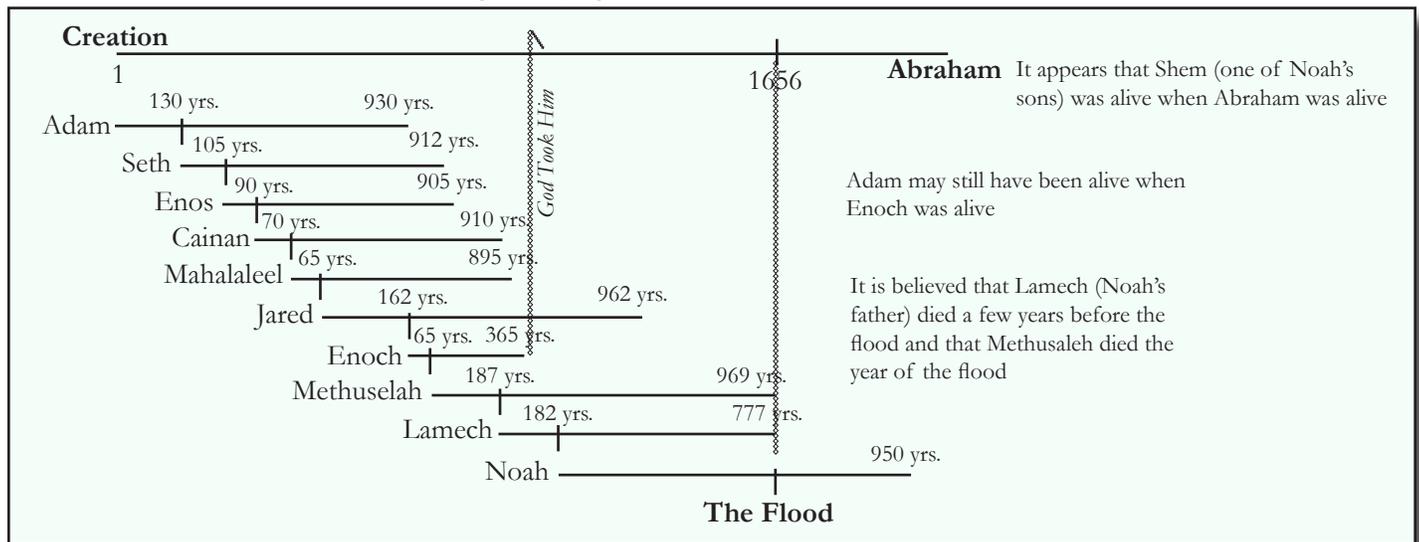
- c. As clarified by Paul to the Ephesian church, their original state was one of being 'by nature the children of wrath' - this was exemplified by living for the flesh - the essence of sin is self
- d. As our Lord explained to Nicodemus in John 3:6, "That which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of spirit is spirit" - before the fall there was harmony between the spirit and the body (flesh) and now, with a "dead" spirit, the flesh (as in the image of Adam) seeks to live for itself - this is further explained in I Cor. 15:45-49 - through Christ we "bear the image of the heavenly" - for the one in Christ there will be a life-long conflict between flesh and spirit
- e. This contrast was acknowledged by David in his confession in Psa. 51:5-6 - his beginning (conception) was in the "state" of iniquity, but God's focus/emphasis was on the "inner most being"
- f. These foundational realities are essential to realize to properly understand what we are at birth and the real remedy for it - remedy is not in denial or explaining it away - understanding the contrast between the pure "image of God" versus the "image of Adam" prepares us for the reality of our condition as described in Psa. 14:1-3 and Rom. 3:9-18

5. The line of promise continues - vs. 6-32

Heb. 1:3, Php. 2:6

God's purposes are never limited to our lifetimes

- a. It is interesting to note, that in this particular line would come the one Who would be the image-bearer of God (the "express image") and by Him we would regain this image lost in Adam. As is the ongoing theme that strings throughout Scripture, the key purpose is to demonstrate God's plan at work - as it was then through the life spans of so many individuals, so it still is today - His purpose is above us to fully see, but is most assuredly happening
- b. Below is a diagram laying out the descendents from Adam to Noah



6. Enoch "walked with God" - vs. 21-24

Living to please self is the antithesis to living by faith - faith is evidenced in a drive to live pleasing to God and the living out such a "drive" is, in itself, pleasing to God - this is virtue

These were compared to "hidden reefs" amongst the Christians potentially bringing damage - they were also "grumblers, finding fault, following after lusts, arrogant and flatterers"

- a. He was singled out (as was Noah) in his relationship with God - both were distinguished in their generations as being "close" to God in contrast to the "norm" around them
- b. Both had some type of Godly influence (and upbringing) in their lives - each generation was progressing more and more Godless but the promised line was preserved - this is the goal of any believing parent that they can and will be used to carry on a Godly line
- c. Enoch is referenced in Hebrews 11 as being one, who by faith, was pleasing to God (this is at the core of "walking with God")
- d. One of the most significant verses in all of Scripture proceeds from Enoch's example - Heb. 11:6 clearly declares that without faith it is impossible to please God - this is generally evidenced in first "believing that He is" (confidence not just in a god, but in the God as revealed in His Word), and that it is truly worth the while to "seek Him" - we pursue what we value most
- e. Some of what Enoch openly declared is referenced by Jude in Jude 1:14-15 that the Lord would come to execute judgment (and this judgment would be on those living for themselves (their flesh))
- f. Both Enoch and Noah were used in their "walking with God" to declare and bring judgment on the earth - neither were characterized by conformity to their generation, but in their "keeping to" the Godly line of promise (and then being used to physically carry on on this line)

We “walk with” those with whom we have agreement - many have an acquaintance with God but do not truly walk with Him

Calvin

This “walk” is a walk of faith - this is one of the requirements listed in Micah 6:8

So there are examples (at least two) of those who did not die and were taken up to be with God

Also, what would an objective epitaph state of our life?

Again, significance is found in God’s usage of us

There was still a hope and focus that God’s promise of the “serpent crusher” and the one Who would deal with the curse would come

As will soon be discussed, the “days of Noah” on the earth were characterized by the pursuits of self

This was the fundamental point Paul was making to the Corinthians in II Cor. 6:7:1

Having a family should be less about carrying on the family name and more upon carrying on a “Godly line”

- g. Walking with God indicates a few characteristics of his life - to walk with God there had to have been “communion” (we are characterized by those we “walk with,” (fellowship with)); it demonstrates also who he did not “walk with” standing out from his generation
- h. Enoch was not one characterized as living to “fit in,” but was more taken with God than man, society and his age - “For public custom is a violent tempest; both because we easily suffer ourselves to be led hither and thither by the multitude, and because everyone thinks what is commonly received must be right and lawful; just as swine contract an itching from each other...”
- i. He was characterized as “walking with God” from the time he had Methuselah (at age 65) for 300 years - this was not a passing “fad” or an experiential moment - it was his “walk” - our “walk” could be descriptive of what characterizes our life overall
- j. As a result, “... and he was not, for God took him” - vs. 24 - and as clarified in Heb. 11:5, Enoch “obtained a witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God” - he was “translated” or taken away to be with God and did not “see death” - Elijah was another (II Ki. 2:11)
 - This “witness” of Enoch is still with us - it is lasting (as with Abel)

7. It should be noted, that this section (chapter 5) demonstrates the life and death process - there would be a typical life of being born, living and having a family and then dying - and it would become more apparent, that apart from the working of God in a life, that this is all a life would be - true lasting significance and purpose is found in God’s use and purpose for us, and without this, there is no eternal value

- a. Such lists should serve as a sobering reminder that our “blip” on the eternal time line will end with “... and he died...” - it has been often mentioned that on our tombstones we will be responsible for only one item: our names are given by our parents, our date of birth and death God determines, which leaves us only with the dash in between the dates - what will that dash represent?
- b. Though, to live eternally as we are, would be to live eternally with the plagues of sin!

8. The coming of Noah - vs. 28-32

- a. The wording of Noah’s birth is similar to the wording in verse 3 (the birth of Seth) and seems to be so to give it distinction - something significant was about to happen
- b. Lamech is 182 years old when Noah is born (we are not sure that Noah was the firstborn, just that he would be in the “line of promise”)
- c. Lamech gives him a name indicating “comfort” or “rest” believing that somehow God would use him to bring rest (also literally “to breathe again”) - his focus on this hope for his son is related to the weariness there was related to the struggle to survive with the cursed earth/ground - it’s one thing for us to grow weary in labors for 60-70 years; imagine the weariness of this laboring to live over several hundred years!
- d. Ironically, there would be an opportunity coming to “catch one’s breath” when God would use Noah to spare humanity and wipe out the rampant depravity on display (and growing) in their time - so often, humanity is characterized by the pursuits of pleasing self in trying to cope with the weariness of the never ending daily labors - see James 4:1-4; II Tim. 3:1-5

(1). Such sinful pursuits ultimately add to the weariness - life with unattainable contentment produces a growing weariness and fatigue - with growing sin comes sickness, death, calamities, strife, fears, depression, disillusionment, and despair

(2). Some of this sentiment is discussed in Ecc. 2:17-23 - even with much work and seeming success, there is no true, lasting contentment in it and ultimately no rest

e. At 500, Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth - vs. 32

9. Since chapter 4, there has been a distinction between the line of Cain and the line (or part of the line) of Seth - this distinction will soon be narrowed down to one man and his family

- a. God clearly demonstrates that He would work through a line of people and there was to be some emphasis here and in later passages in the Old Testament to keep the distinction clear - this was not so much for physical reasons as it was for spiritual reasons (focus/purpose)
- b. The living for this life would result in an “earthly” life focus and would culminate into what we see in chapter 6 with all the thoughts being evil continually
- c. Concepts such as marriage were to be founded on more than what we see or feel - the pursuit of Godly “offspring” was key then and should be so now - and much more than birth into a particular family would be needed to keep this “path”

XIII. The Great Flood - 6:1- 8:22

A. The event of the flood is a specific occurrence that Peter references in II Peter 3:3-7 to demonstrate the actuality of the judgment of God upon sin and the incorrect thinking mankind has had regarding it

1. As will be discussed further, mankind had come to a point of comfort in their sinful living, calculating that since things remained the same for so long that they would continue to do so indefinitely

Today this is called “uniformitarianism” which essentially states that all that has happened has been by natural (uniform) processes while discounting the miraculous intervening of God at times in our history such as in the flood

- a. There is a natural tendency for any of us to make the mercy and patience of God synonymous with permissive allowance of sin, lulling ourselves in to a false sense of security
- b. This is one of the detriments of the affects of sin - in a sense, to deal with the conscience (our built-in awareness of God and our accountability to Him) we often “reason” ourselves to comfortable security in our sinning/rebelling against God - the Lord dealt with this in Mt. 24:37-39 where they counted on life going on as it always had, not being prepared
- c. Many, in attempts to be in apparent agreement with scientific conclusions, reinterpret the Biblical account of the flood trying to allegorize it as a non-literal happening - yet, in doing so, they remove one of the greatest evidences of God’s judgement and an end to His patience (“striving with men”) as well as a sobering evidence of the judgment yet to come
- d. It has been noted that many of the “liberal” mishandlings of Scripture have stemmed from attempts to somehow defend and protect God and/or the integrity of Scripture; only in their methods, they compromise the very integrity they sought to defend!

Good intentions do not automatically equate to rightness - being right is better than just intending to be right

2. It is by the same “word” that the earth was destroyed and that the “present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire” (II Pet. 3:7) - and this for “ungodly men”

An event of such magnitude with such consequences demands to attention of every generation since

- a. It is important for us to get this first demonstration of God’s judgment on this earth and not just the physical facts, but why the flood happened in the first place
- b. As we take note of all the details regarding the flood (many being very specific), we need to understand they are there to make it clear this was a real event - real people, real consequences!

B. The conditions and circumstances that led up to the flood - 6:1-7

1. As mankind was being blessed with children and the population began to grow significantly, sin also began to become more prevalent throughout society - the depravity of man was about to exhibit itself in an unrestrained manner (this is typical with the assumption of long life (lots of time to spare and death appearing to be far off) and is compounded with the numbers advocating and practicing sin more openly)

see Prov. 29:16

2. There was a particular group that became enamoured with the “daughters of men” - vs. 1-2 - there has been a great deal of debate over several centuries as to who exactly the “sons of God” are here in 6:2

This is a widely accepted view and does have some textual and historical significance
There is an oft referenced translation of “angels” in this text in the Septuagint but it is in only one of the underlying manuscripts and not found in the older manuscripts

a. Some put forward that these were angelic beings (as this term was used as such in Job 1:6, 2:1 and 38:7) either actually marrying and having children with these women or possessing them and having children by them - it is believed that these are the angels reference in I Peter 3:19-20, II Peter 2:4 and Jude 1:6 who received special judgement for these actions -- the problems with this position are (1). This presumes angels can procreate and would seem to be in contradiction with Mt. 22:30 (“...neither marry nor are given in marriage as the angels in Heaven.”) (2). In all other uses of the term “Sons of God” (as it is in Hebrew) are always referring to those that are good and this would be the only exception

Though this position may go against some basic normal tenants of exegesis, it does follow these tenants regarding context - to believe that the “sons of God” must be angels here is to make this text the only text that indicates angels can procreate which is shaky exegesis

b. Some believe (as I am more inclined to also) that this is in reference to the “Godly men” in mankind (possible more in the line of Seth and Enosh - see Gen. 4:26) and that they intermarried indiscriminately with any of the “daughters of men” simply driven by their physical attraction and this all leading to degeneracy in the Godly lines - this fits with the overall context of Gen. 4-5 and the special attention given to the lines of Seth in contrast to that of Cain -- the problems with this position are (1). The reference “sons of God” is never used of people anywhere else in the Old Testament (though there are similar phrases used of Israel) (2). The line of Seth is never called the “sons of God” and typical exegesis would look to word and phrase usages to establish proper meaning and interpretation

c. Fortunately, this debate has no bearing on the subject of the text at large and that being the reasons leading up to the “deluge” - there will continue to be honest debate as to who the “sons of God” really are, but there is no debate as to the degeneracy of mankind to such a low level that evil and debase thoughts had become the overriding topic of the thoughts of their society

d. It is important that we realize, without the intervention of God., all societies will head this direction

3. It is significant to consider the initial “conduit” of this downward process - indiscriminate marrying by those who are generally considered Godly set aside for God’s purposes (e.g. Solomon) leads to a distracted life no longer focused on God but more focused on the “flesh” (versus the spirit)

see the counsel of Prov. 6:24-26 and the danger of being lured to an evil woman by her “beauty” and her flattering

This practice of intermarriage was clearly against God based upon the next verse that He would no longer “strive with man” - our earthly purposes must be in conjunction with God’s revealed purposes/will

- a. The first “draw” for these “sons of God” was the beauty of these women - it is natural to be taken with what is beautiful and attractive, but our sense and thoughtfulness is supposed to help us see beyond just the surface - and this “sense” should be motivated with purpose founded upon being taught the truth of who and what we are primarily before God and not just in our own instinctive, estimation
- b. Once a generation begins to treat the institution of marriage flippantly and without great caution, and they begin to develop excuses for being “unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (II Cor. 6:14) the compounded affects build quickly over the subsequent generations to follow - many have warned that we can be one generation away from Godlessness
- c. As demonstrated in Deuteronomy 6, God’s natural method of passing on Godliness is through the family (this does not discount other means but it should still be considered fundamental) - this is to be a joint-effort between the parents, but if they are not in harmony, the results are likely to be children growing into adulthood with either an apathetic view of God or with a rebellious posture against Him (conflicting parents often become competitive parents with the children)

4. The patience of the Lord is evidenced in His warning, though it had reached its end - vs. 3

As our Lord clarified in John 16:8 the Spirit will “convict” the world of sin, righteousness and judgment

They would not continue to live, and as seen later, not continue to live long - long life had come to be more and more brazen sinfulness

This is the “if it feels go do it” mentality lived out to its fullest over lifetimes that were nearly 10 times our life spans

These first verses of chapter six demonstrate humanism in full display making life about the pursuit of the “self’s” ambitions

- a. It appears that mankind had become confident in their sin and skeptical of God’s judgement
- b. Either by Moses sharing what God said in the Godhead or what may have been stated through Noah or other prophets at the time, God’s spirit would not “strive” with man forever - this striving carries the ideas of remaining with (as if to change them) or to continue to warn - it may also carry the idea of protecting him (holding back all that could end their lives)
- c. In false confidence, man will often allow themselves to believe they have “gotten away” with their sin and that there will be no consequence to their disobedience - as seen in Psalm 94, Psalm 10:3-4; 11-13 and other texts such as Rom. 2:4-5, judgment surely comes
- d. The reason given is that “he is flesh” carrying the idea that mankind was living like he was just flesh and not also spirit - the result of this being man living like animals - purely by “instinct” (terms such as “animal passions” are used of this) - the battle is described in Gal. 5:16-24
- e. Even though mankind was worthy of destruction at this point, still the Lord showed patience giving another 120 years for repentance - this is described in I Peter 3:18-20 in that not just warning but also a “proclamation” of a gospel was presented - God was patient and gracious
- f. No doubt, many would have attempted to stand in judgement of God (and His messengers) just as they do today - their premise being something like “Who does He think He is?” and “Why would He judge us? We’re good people and do good things” - all these based on their ideas and terms in which they see God obliged to submit Himself to - all this leading to a disbelief in God (or actually a disregard for God) altogether and structuring their lives so as to keep God out of their thoughts - see Rom. 1:28 and the downward trek towards a depraved (reprobate) mind resulting in Gen. 6:5 (impacting the intent of their thought processes)

5. The prestigious people at that time were Godless - vs. 4

These were on the scene before the “daughters of men” bore children to the “sons of God” so they are not the offspring

It is ultimately in the sinful intellects and longings of man (in rebellion against his creator) to have man (one of their own) ruling over them with the end to have them become their gods

- a. There has been much discussion over the centuries as to who and what these “Nephalim” were though the basic idea behind the meaning of the word carries with it the idea of “bullies” and “tyrants” who may have been “giants” either physically or in their influence
- b. These could have been “giants” in the physical sense, but there is nothing immoral about that so this should not be tied to the idea that these were supernatural in any way (demigods) - these types of people are mentioned in Num. 13:33 who were extremely intimidating to 10 of the spies of Israel sent in to search out the land of Canaan (people often overemphasize stature)
- c. When people push off God as their “controller” it naturally follows those among them will become their dictators (either for what is considered good or bad by those under them or affected by them) - mankind, by nature, desires “heroes” to replace God and will often resort to embellishing (exaggerating) the facts to get them to that apparent status - this is the ultimate end of Godless politics
- d. Along with these another group arose from the intermarrying of these “sons of God” and daughters of men who became the “men of renown”

It might be wise to reconsider the entire “hero” concept altogether - if we are to have a “hero” it really should be God - the etymology of the word “hero” had the idea of a demigod

Our society has become more open in the naming of some as “idols” - we will certainly admire courage, bravery and character, but these that demonstrate them should not, in themselves, be too elevated in our eyes

Paul had to deal with some of this in I Cor. 1:10-17 when identifying one’s self with and by people became a distraction

Sinful thinking is dangerous, but when left unchecked, undisciplined, unstoppable, it becomes deadly like a contagion - sin begets more sin like the growing of a virus or the duplication of cells into a “monster”

There are a few societal restraints - God’s spirit of conviction, conscience, societal ethics and government - as each is eroded and infected by Godlessness, general protections normally anticipated erode away

Only God’s external perspective (above this world) will be able to reveal depravity for what it is - even the analytical mind is infected and will soon come to call good evil and evil good

It is easy to wonder how a whole society (an entire world) could know themselves to be so bad, but this verse clarifies they were evil before the Lord not necessarily before themselves - they had probably reasoned themselves to self-rightness

It is easy for self-focused “man” to look upon God (especially in the Old Testament) as full of wrath and vengeful, yet phrases like this demonstrate His “heart” and that also being a driving factor - even sinful man can usually see the “sense” in carrying out judgment on those that are hurtful

- e. These children born along with these Nephalim became the “mighty men who were of old, men of renown” - they were prestigious (popular) while alive and legends afterward - some speculate that many of the legends of “demigods” and other legendary stories find their roots in this time with some of these people - in their day, though, these were the “heroes”
- f. The people considered famous among any society will tell much of that society and its people - not only demonstrating what they value but what is or will be setup as a standard to follow - people (especially young people) will be prone to seek to emulate the character, priorities and overall life focus of those whom society, the majority and those that influence them, to value and pursue - many “heroes” excel at seemingly admirable things, but if they direct focus to living for self-glory, in the moment, and for self-pleasure, they should not be exalted by the “Godly”
- g. When admiring someone that is considered “good” we should be careful to keep our admiration on the “good” and not necessarily on the person - there are truths and concepts that we highly admire but should not confuse these and equate them to people - thus our Lord when He asked, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone” (Luke 18:19)
- h. So, in summary, people became the focus of glory and admiration which fundamentally contradicted the purpose of creation (as it would still do today) - we are still prone to take the admiration of people to an unhealthy level - even those that strive to be Godly should be careful not to seek to ever divert glory from God to themselves!

6. From God’s vantage point (which sees all) the “wickedness of man was great” - vs. 5 - 6

- a. This verse provides some of the most extreme terms to describe how bad it was - it illustrates the result of sin not only affecting thoroughly because of the long life-spans, but what becomes of a people when it is left unchecked by society at large - it is unavoidable!
- b. This evil “of man” was abundant on the earth to the point that every thought was evil - actually, every formation of every thought was evil (as if every imagination of their imagination was evil all day, every day!) - it was passion, hatred, greed and pride unrestrained and “on parade”
- c. It is likely that there was no government(s) but that these Nephalim and other “men of renown” controlled factions - as indicated later in verses 11-13, the earth was “filled with violence” - this is the natural, unavoidable consequence to sin where it becomes a “my will versus your will” setting - government would be established in Genesis 9 with the intent (responsibility) to govern its people toward what is “right” and for the protection and encouragement of those doing what is right and the punishment of those doing wrong - if a government though confuses the two (what is right and what is wrong) the consequences will be similar to what we read in these verses (violence, evil thinking coming from evil imaginations, and then God’s judgement in some form or another) - see Psalm 75:6-8 and Pr. 14:34
- d. As described in Romans 1, as man’s morals degrade and they are given over to their sins (to do as they please) the consequence is a “reprobate mind” (a “mind” that thinks it’s thinking correctly but can no longer reach the right conclusions) - man will reach points of unrestrained depravity when he cannot see it for what it is and reforms (deforms) to a new “morality” of varying types of hedonism (the pursuit of pleasure - purpose is defined by self-gratification)
- e. These evil thoughts, purposes were also “principles” as we have seen in societies of the past as well as the evidence of it occurring again in our society will become the new “morals” (righteousness) - those given over to sin most often do not look on themselves as “evil” but have surrounded themselves with self-justification - when enough subscribe to these new and “out-of-the-box” ideas they become popular and the new “standard” of conduct (how people should think and behave) - this thinking has often been seen as “enlightenment” and even new
- f. This grieved the Lord “to His heart” - here we have His heart revealed in response to sin - vs. 6 - When this text indicates “sorry” or, as in KJV, “repented” it is not as we sorrow and repent though it is illustrative - descriptions like we seen in this verse are often referenced in theological language as “anthropomorphisms” - these are phrases and concepts that we can identify with that are used to describe something of God but are never intended to be considered comprehensive - God does not change nor repent as we do (see Mal. 3:6 and **I Sam. 15:11,29** (used in the same text)) - this type of language is used to present concepts we can better identify with such a grief so great that we regret what has happened because it does not fit who we are and what we are looking to see

see Mat. 15:1-20 where the Lord clarifies the true “defilement” of a man in contrast to outward practices of “cleanliness”

Sin must not be seen or personified as though it can outwit God or in any way overpower Him - this leads to a “vulnerable God” concept which is one of the life-altering lies the enemy would have us believe to have us in fear/awe of Him over against God

Even with the limitations (and even futile) of our efforts to explain God’s “regret”, its intent is to make it clear to us that God can and is grieved with sin and should be the major reason we seek to avoid it

When we sin as infectious as it really is and its corruption, it makes perfect sense that it must be wiped out as a filthy room or home may need to be “guttered” and start again

This is analogous to Paul’s instruction of the headship of Adam over us and our need to be placed under the headship of Christ - Rom. 5

God hates sin and this fact must never be belittled by a misuse or misunderstanding of God’s mercy and grace

Heb. 11:7 is key in understanding this correctly - Noah “revered” God (knowing God’s authority and holiness far exceeding his own) and became an “heir of righteousness which is according to faith” not works

- g. And, lest we think we’re (or our generation) above this, the idea of “human depravity” demonstrates that man is totally infected and not necessarily as bad as he can be - Boice, in his commentary on Genesis wrote, “In one of his writings, Donald Grey Barnhouse imagines a thirsty person, who is in a doctor’s office, picking up a glass and going over to a cooler containing sterilized water and filling the glass in order to take a drink. The glass begins to foam a bit, so he asks the doctor if something has been in the glass. “Yes,” the doctor says, “diphtheria solution!” Our thirsty patient puts the glass back down in a hurry. Why? Wasn’t the water pure? Yes, the water was pure, but the glass was dirty. Everything that came in contact with the glass was contaminated. It is the same with the sin that comes out of the human heart. It contaminates everything.”
- h. It is key to note also that at creation “God saw” that it was good and now, with the infection of sin, He saw what man was doing (verse 2) and what man was thinking (verse 5) - the evidence is often not seen in the actions but, more so, in the thoughts (the heart) which only God sees - He must be the revealer and identifier of sin since man, in his tainted perception, cannot see it for what it really is and where it really is (man will seek to identify sin anywhere but his own heart)
- i. So, one of the best ways to demonstrate God’s “feelings” regarding what He saw was to compare it to how we would “feel” - He “regretted” what was happening (and this does not contradict His plan and control just as an author might write in a character or situation that he/she does not like, only with the purpose to have the end of the story glorify the right over the wrong)
- j. It should be noted, also, that in the Septuagint (many manuscripts), that the words for “repent” (or “regret”) have Him “considering” and “becoming angry” - plus, the underlying Hebrew word (נחם *nacham*) is also used as “avenge,” rue over (sigh or groan) something and to comfort one’s self
7. With all this before God, He decreed (said) He would destroy man, beast and birds - vs. 7
- a. When God speaks of what He will do, it is a decree since nothing can correct or effectively oppose Him - God is saying this within the Godhead and gives His reason (He was “grieved” (same word as “sorry” in verse 6) that He had made them)
- b. All mankind (save one family) would be “blotted out” (erased, washed away) from “the face of the land” (from off the earth) - they would not be destroyed altogether from existence, but would cease to live on the earth - this is God’s ultimate handling of sin and its infection; He wipes it out just as He will do again, only the next time with fire (II Pet. 3:7)
- c. God also decreed to wipe out the animals and birds (except for a small sample of each species) - this is important to know since animals are under the rule of man, since their “head” is destroyed, so they also would be - even now, all creation “groans” having been made “subject to futility, not willingly...” - Rom. 8:18-23
- d. All of this massive death and destruction would need to happen since, as revealed as God’s “heart” in the matter, the Lord was grieved with His creation (man) and would change things on a drastic scale - “God never changes in His attributes, but He does will a change in His attitudes. He does not change His mind, but He does change His methods. He does not change His will, but does will change.” Robert Harbach (“Studies in the Book of Genesis”)

C. God’s man for the times - 6:8-10

1. The phrase, “found favor” must not be underestimated or overlooked - it is mentioned first and gives us the key to the usage of Noah - it is easy to focus more on the descriptions of the “righteousness” of Noah to the neglect of the grace of God - because of God’s grace we are alive today as descendents
- a. The primary point is God’s given “favor” (grace) which Noah “found” (not earned or “deserved”)
- b. Noah is described in very good terms (which are in stark contrast to the age in which he lived) but this must not be taken as the source of God’s favor, though God’s favor is reflected in righteous thinking, priorities and ultimately behavior (obedience)
- c. It is also important to recognize that this favor was “in the eyes of the Lord” (no doubt in contrast to all else God “saw” as well as in contrast to the eyes of men) - it was by faith (Heb. 11:7) that Noah was used to “condemn the world”
2. As had come before (in the previous chapters), another section is starting with the focus on another “character” of God’s using - the preview of what was coming and the main “character” (God) was described, and now the lesser character (God’s instrument) Noah comes into focus - vs. 9
- a. Before his sons are mentioned, we are first told of his character (God’s “man” in contrast to “men”)

It is common to use societies "norms" to trump or to define what and who we are to be - God's law is most often seen as out-of-date and in need of correction

God's standards are timeless and are not to be subject to redefinition based upon societies self-proclaimed enlightenment against them

A corrupt generation needs no more hypocritical (pseudo) righteous people - they are in need of genuine followers of God as God defines it!

Noah's integrity and "walk" was not only seen in what he did, but how thoroughly he did it - He was blameless not because he pursued some of God's way but because he pursued ALL of them

God had all His people in place and now the plan was about to be initiated to narrow down the population of the earth to eight

As is mentioned in the immediate verses, violence (thorough and unrestrained) and ultimately God's judgment follow

Sin makes attractive and alluring what destroys us and blinds us to the pains and griefs which would normally cause us to desire to be free of it

As with any, our ruining for what we've been entrusted, ruins us

Grace is exceptionally seen when we are give the truth in a time of widespread blindness to it

The earth was full of corruption so it was fully flooded - there is nothing in these texts that would give us any idea of a "localized" flood

- b. Noah is described as "righteous" and "blameless in his time" - he was one following after God's ways (rightness) and was "perfect" (the idea being complete, one of integrity and the opposite being a hypocrite) - this was truly exceptional considering the condition of society in his time
- c. Many, even today, base "righteousness" off of being so many steps removed (above (morally)) society, or will allow society at large to define righteousness - morality is collectively defined)
- d. Noah did not drift from the "anchor" of his "walking with God" - we need to be constantly aware of mankind's inclination to leave-off God and not be so inclined!
- e. "Scarcely is there one in a hundred who has not in his mouth that diabolical proverb, 'We must howl when we are among the wolves;' and the greater part - framing a rule for themselves from the common practice - judge everything to be lawful which is generally received." Calvin
- f. Noah was also one who did not, in any way, pretend to walk with God (again, in his integrity) - in contrast, many generations have had their "false prophets" rising up and encouraging/justifying opposition to what God clearly reveals and though there may be some Godly among them, it will not spare them - see Eze. 14:1-20 for an example that names Noah
- g. In spite of his generation (as with Enoch), Noah was characterized as "walking with God" - primarily, as seen in Heb. 11, Noah was a man of faith (his life focus, grounding and aspirations) were focused on God's ways and God's promises and not on man's ways and promises (faith and our "walk" are often seen not just in its content, but may also be evidenced in their distinctions from its surroundings) - the darker it is the more bright a light shines

3. During all this, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth - vs. 10

- a. As discussed earlier in this study, some may think having children in a "bad generation" something to be avoided, yet as seen here and in other places, God protects and then uses them
- b. It is interesting to consider that not only are we all related to Noah and his wife, but we all come from one of these three families

D. The ruined condition of the earth, the "ruining" plan of God for the earth with the earth, and the ark - vs. 11-22

1. The corruption, as it were, in the face of God - vs. 11-12

- a. This carries several ideas and not just that God, again, saw how bad things had become
- b. Moral decay had progressed (digressed) to a point where there was no visible fear of God amongst man - this is a particularly dangerous sign - it is "normal" for one to sin and try to keep it concealed (in the "closet") but when sin (corruption) becomes so prevalent that it becomes openly embraced and endorsed what comes next is always devastating
- c. This describes sinning as though having impunity (freedom from punishment/consequences)
- d. The earth itself was "filled with violence" - there was nowhere where it was not - this would include all forms of cruelty, mercilessness, injustices and with it all, fear and misery - but as is so often the case, mankind becomes addicted to what makes them miserable
- e. The usage of the words used is striking - literally, the earth was "ruined" before the eyes of God, because all flesh had "ruined" their way on the earth so God declares in verse 13 He will "ruin" them by means of the earth
- f. And, lest any environmentalist ascribe the "sin" of man to "ruining" the earth by their external pollutions, all these terms deal with morals which have ultimately, an impact on actions - It is probable that many had come to worship the creation more than creator and this was part of that "corruption" that was "in the face of God"

2. God's grace to Noah is seen in His "counsel" (purpose) revealed - vs. 13

- a. God's favor/grace shown to us is not necessarily seen in just "nice" happenings to us, but are more seen in His revealed truth, and often this in the form of warnings
- b. As God reveals to Noah, the "end of all flesh has come before Me" since the earth has been filled with the violence "because of them" - they have brought it upon themselves (as all under God's judgement will come to realize) and the result of it is the "end" of their activities - one of the most sobering and maturing thoughts that we can keep before us is the end of anything - where will it lead and what will I have and be at the end of it?
- c. It is here God tells Noah He will destroy (ruin) them by the earth (not ruin the earth) - the earth, the entire earth, would be flooded and thus changed (as we have it today)
- d. As to be discussed, God's grace was also seen in the protection God provide Noah, though it would involve much work

e. The phrase “has come before me” carries the idea that what He has purposed in His plan is now, as it were, before His eyes to be implemented - as He purposed back in verse 7

E. The command to build the Ark as God instructed - vs. 14-22

1. Nowhere in these revelations and instructions do we read of Noah speaking anything - the first words of Noah in Scripture are, “Cursed be Canaan” (9:25)

If the ark were to be found today, it is likely it would be worshiped as though it had supernatural power and yet as is so often the case the supernatural working of God is worked out and evidenced in sacrificial, difficult work

We are not sure how long it took for Noah to build the ark - it may not have been too long - it is speculated to be 20-40 years based on his sons involvement

As we might use money to “seal” the deal

A word picture that when the usages for “atoning” are compared to this usage in the flood it was of a covering to protect from God’s watery judgement

The word “ark” just means a container or “vessel” and would have essentially been a seaworthy box without rudder to direct it - its purpose was to sustain life and it’s landing would be totally by God’s hand in God’s timing
Part of worshipping the creation more than the Creator is placing our security in it

This is important to know so it is realized it can (and will) happen (the judgement) again - God brings “calamity for His purposes - Isa. 45:7; Job 2:10, Am. 3:6

a. God says, “Make for yourself an ark...” - this is the “work of faith” - God graciously told Noah what was coming and, by faith Noah obeyed (worked from his faith not for it) - faith most often is not “let go and let God” as much as it is “trust and obey”!

b. This is a common theme throughout the Bible: Abraham would be specially instructed by God and would have leave home and journey to a land and live as a stranger; Lot would be supernaturally rescued but would have to get-up and leave all behind; Israel would be miraculously delivered from Egypt but would then have to journey through the wilderness (as today, many might have preferred Egypt just be the promised land since so much of what they desired was there and it was already right where they were living)

c. This is not a picture (type) of “synergistic salvation” - Noah was cooperating to the saving of his earthly life (and that of his family) but not of his soul

2. God specifically instructs (commands) that it be made of a specific wood (gopher wood) and that it have “rooms” (literally “nests”) and the whole construction is to be covered with “pitch” within and without

a. It cannot be said with certainty what wood this was (many speculate cedar, cypress or pine)

b. The “pitch” is a “covering” and is often also translated (interestingly enough) as “ransom” and the verb form is used of “atoning” (a covering of sin) in Exodus and Leviticus

c. There is also speculation that this “pitch” was not only to seal it water-tight but to also counteract the smells that would accumulate

d. The dimensions were length - 300 cubits (about 450 feet), width 50 cubits (about 75 feet) and the height 30 cubits (about 45 feet) - all based on the belief that a cubit was 18 inches

e. Verse 16 has much diversity in how it is handled - the word for “window” carries the core idea of “noontday” or “light” but this may also have an allusion to a type of “pitched roof” and should be considered since a different word is used for “window” in Gen. 8:6 - still, many believe it may have been a window-like opening all around the top of the ark for light and ventilation and that it was within one cubit from the very top (and maybe the top of each deck)

f. Referring to “... finish it to a cubit from the top...” JFB states, “...a direction to raise the roof in the middle, seemingly to form a gentle slope for letting the water run off.” And it was to be built with three “decks” or levels each most likely for a specific purpose

g. Not too many details are given, so (possibly) we would not be apt to put too much stock in the design thus less emphasis on the special protection God provides - though we are given enough details to make it clear this was a literal (real) event and not an allegory

- Noah was no caveman who was illiterate and “primitive” - he clearly had intelligence, reasoning and construction skills - the “primitive” are usually characterized by worshipping the creation by means of a disregard for God and His purposes

3. God clarifies the true cause of the flood - vs. 17

a. When stating “I even I” God was stressing the cause - “...to signify that this flood did not proceed from natural causes, but from the immediate hand and judgment of God...” Poole

b. Attention is brought back to the control and purpose of God in the matter, lest any would consider this just a “chance happening” and “just” how things happened

c. The flood is referenced with the definite article and is always written this way except in 9:11, 15 indicating this was not just any flood, it was the singular, once for all time flood

d. This is the first time God tells Noah how He will destroy all “flesh” that breathes (“which is the breath of life”) - as with us all, it was God who breathed into man this “breath of life” and it is by God that it is taken away from any of us - our lives are completely in His hands!

4. And now, carrying on a theme from the beginning God tells Noah that He will “establish my covenant with you” by means of him (Noah) entering the ark - vs. 18

a. This was not a mutual covenant but unconditional - God gave the promise and would be the sole guarantee of it - it would benefit his wife, sons and their wives

b. Ultimately, it would continue (carry on through Noah) the promise made in Gen. 3:15 and we would see this again in the covenant with Abraham in which “all the nations of the world will be blessed”

Noah is referenced in Hebrews 11 as demonstrating faith which is in its most basic form, having as the "footing of our expectations" (substance of our hope) what has not been seen but what has been promised and revealed to us by God's Word

5. The command/instruction to bring the animals into the ark - vs. 19-21
"Since no one can prove anything on this question either pro or con, the question may be well put to rest... Why question the possibility or the consistency of this matter in an account where everything else is so simple and consistent. Had we actually seen how this matter was adjusted, we might marvel at the stupidity of our question." H. C. Leupold

Many, over the centuries, have tried to use the account of Noah and the flood as a basis to store-up resources for coming judgment yet most of the Biblical examples were of God meeting the daily needs

True "righteousness" is doing what God says to do, loving what He says to love all with careful attention to the details He supplies

F. The Lord begins the "boarding processes" - 7:1-5

1. Calvin, in his commentary on these opening verses of chapter 7 makes a point that Noah was about to face his greatest struggle in bidding "farewell to the world, to renounce society..." though I propose he had done this and faced this inwardly long before

Those living presumptuously against God's Word (warnings) will feel a false sense of security in their decisions until it is too late as in Mt. 24:39, "and did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be."

Formally, these believe that no miraculous interventions made things the way they are today

If ever it were clear that the "generation of the upright will be blessed" (Psa. 112:2) it was here with Noah's family, the family from which we all come

- c. So, before Noah is about to take on the work of building the Ark He is give the promise of God of protection from the destruction to come and a future significance - as Calvin writes, "For then do we freely embrace the commands of God, when a promise is attached to them, which teaches us that we shall not spend our strength for naught."
- d. This promise would lend strength and fortitude to fulfilling his responsibilities - our faith is not a blind-following of God but is based upon His revelation of not just His commands, but most often He reveals His purposes and their end/goal

5. The command/instruction to bring the animals into the ark - vs. 19-21

- a. There has been much discussion and speculation regarding how the animals came to be in the ark yet both sides are given in these verses - Noah was to bring them on, but he was told in verse 20 they, "...will come to you to keep them alive." - what God commands He will "work-out"
- b. It may be that these particular animals were given the sense of what was coming and were led to the ark (even the "dangerous" animals being more docile because of fear or a God-given reverence for Noah) - we must not discount the miraculous (God surpassing "natural laws")
- c. Of all "living things" God would have Noah bring in the ark and though there has been much debate over the number "two" in these verses, sometimes the simplest answer is the best and that being that the "two" references the distinction of male and female not the number of each "kind"
- d. We will not cover the skeptics issues with how all the animals could have fit on the ark accept to say they would have been a sampling of species and did not necessarily have to have been full size
- e. There must come a time in the life of every believer where he/she trusts the validity of what we have before us as "God's Word" or we will waste too much time trying to settle it looking back on a life of little to no progress because we were unfounded, ungrounded, thus unfocused!
- f. And, as would be seen later in the Old Testament, God instructs them to store-up enough food for themselves and the animals (with Joseph in Egypt) but He would also later supply the need, daily, as with Israel in the wilderness for 40 years

6. Noah did all he was instructed - vs. 22

- a. Nowhere in these verses are we give the "feelings" of Noah, simply his submissive obedience - if ever a simplistic view of faith at work was to be seen it is here; God commands and then there is instant, unquestioned and detailed obedience - partial obedience is not obedience!
- b. Notice the phrasing; "Thus Noah did... so he did" not hesitation or questioning making him an "...heir of righteousness which is according to faith" (Heb. 11:7)

- a. Most of the struggles we face with upcoming challenges to our faith have been long fought out well before the moment itself comes - this is partly why keeping our thoughts/thinking under control, feeding them with the faith-building truths of Scripture is so important
- b. This would be seven days before the flood would begin that he entered the ark - it is interesting to consider that they would have been waiting, in the ark, while all of life continued on outside just as normal - as our Lord mentioned in. Mat. 24:38, the society of Noah's day continued on as normal (eating, drinking, having marriages, all as if life would continue on as this way) all the way even when Noah entered the ark

- c. As discussed in II Pet. 3:4, uniformitarians live life with the belief that things will always be the same (some philosophically and scientifically while most practically (daily))

2. It is the name "LORD" (*Yaveh*) that is used for who was instructing Noah to enter the ark - vs. 1

- a. There is an emphasis on the idea of "you" in this verse in reference to seeing Noah righteous before Him - it should be noted that the impact and results of his righteous living (typically worked out of righteous (right) choices) profoundly impacted his family
- b. As stressed previously, the key was seen in what God saw, not what man/society saw and God sees beyond the external and sees the heart as it really is
- c. Not in the same way as Noah, but in a broader sense, we may also be a "saving factor" with our families and those around us by our conduct (finding its source in our hearts)

see Psa. 56:8-13

d. And, as clearly demonstrated in all that happened, the Lord was the one to whom one would desire to be seen as “righteous” (in “this time”) than before all else - all negative thoughts and opinions of all naysayers soon would not matter anymore!

3. All types of animals are to be taken with the distinction of “clean” and “not clean” - vs. 2-3

There is a clearer distinction of the differences in the “clean” versus the “unclean” animals in the Law which apparently, to some degree, existed before the Law though we will not cover these in this study

Though “nature” was not intended to be the primary example we follow seeing there have been some natural examples used to attempt to disqualify the revealed “norms” of God

All other people and animals would die - we see much of the animal remains “preserved” in fossils - it has been often said that fossils remind us that God judges sin

a. There has been much discussion over the years regarding this term “sevens” some taking it to be seven pairs (male and female) and others taking it to be seven animals altogether (three pairs and one extra presumably for a sacrifice to God) - this was the number of the “clean” animals

b. Of the “not clean” animals only two were brought (a male and female)

c. It should be noticed the norm that is stressed in this verse and several others - God’s design in the “carrying on of life” is through a male and female (a pair), seen not just in His laws and initial instruction at the beginning of Genesis (and reiterated by our Lord in Mt. 19) so it should not be purposely/intentionally redefined by us because of our distorted desires or use of circumstances to try to put forward a “new norm” to be accepted by all

d. Much has been “read into” regarding the preserving of the animals grouped as “not clean” but the basic idea of God preserving them for His purposes in His creation should be enough - this “cleanness” is not a moral cleanness but seems to be more a distinction in how man is to use them

Just because I don't see the purpose doesn't mean there isn't one • We must not see even “evil” as out from under the jurisdiction or purposes of God -

God has other uses for them apart from our uses of them as is true with so much else

e. Of the bird population, there would also be “sevens”

f. The purpose is reiterated at the end of verse 3, “...to keep offspring alive...” and that God was about to “un-create the earth” by bringing it back (as it were) to the condition of Gen. 1:2

4. This was now exactly a week before the rain would start - vs. 4-5

In regards to their provisions, they were dependent on God also for the duration that the flood would last and how long their provisions would last

a. We are not told if a warning of the “last week” was given to others, just that Noah entered the ark (or began to boarding process with all the animals and his family) with remaining provisions for the journey - only this would be a journey above the earth, lifted-up by the very form of judgment God was sending (water)

b. God would bring the flood by using a few differing means and the first, as clarified here, would be a steady rain for 40 complete days, the judgment beginning slow and steady and not being a sudden judgement (as so many of God’s dealings with sin and rebellion are - even when the judgement begins, many are often dismissive of it, explaining it away or becoming used to it)

Notice the “I wills of God” - “I will send rain” and “I will blot out”

c. God would “blot out” every living thing “that I have made” - the word for “blot out” picturing the washing away of something (for cleansing) - a “local” flood would not have done this

d. Again, Noah did all he was instructed to do - it has also been noted that not only did Noah do all of God’s word, but God also did all according to His word - it is important for us to remember that our faithfulness is utterly dependent on God’s faithfulness

G. The flood begins - 7:6-24

1. The specific day of the flood (the beginning) is given precisely along with the age of Noah - vs. 6, 11

Noah would live 350 years after the flood - interestingly, he literally faced “the end of the world” and it truly could have been said that it wasn’t the end of the world!

a. As is consistent throughout this account, details are give which demonstrate a real event and not a figurative story - this began on a specific calendar date and was during a specific year of a real man

b. The specific day that the flood began (when the “fountains of the deep burst opened and the floodgates of the sky were opened”) was on the seventeenth day of the second month of the sixth hundredth year of Noah’s life - at least one of Noah’s sons was a hundred years old

2. In these verses we’re seeing, in detail, that things happened as planned/instructed - as we’ve seen in other texts, passages such as these are not just repetitious but demonstrate (as we saw in the creation account) that what was planned happened as planned - a constant reminder that our lives are not made up of (or to be considered so) “just coincidents” or “happenings” but as mapped-out

So much of life purpose is robbed when life is mostly seen as happenstances - not just life overall, but the day-by-day occurrences become purposeless in our eyes thus become devalued and mostly unimportant

a. All events leading up to the actual day of entering the ark were significant - we must not be guilty of judging life by the “big events” as we deem them - each big event had numerous small events leading to them and making them what they are

b. This is being stressed because much has been made by the sceptics regarding the seeming repetition, making more a case for this being “pieced together” from a few sources rather than assuming that it was intended to be this way - we must beware not to superimpose our “it should have been done this way” ideas on any text, lest we limit to our limited frame of reference

3. So, as planned, Noah and his family entered the ark (most likely moved-in) (vs. 7) and then the animals (clean and not clean) the animals “went into the ark to Noah by twos,” clearly by divine work - vs. 7-9, 13-16

This would be the 144,000 that were “sealed” as special witnesses of God (12,000 from twelve tribes of Israel) - those who interpret this as historical cannot account for this special protection in any historical account

It is true that His mercy endures forever, but the “offer” and opportunity of mercy does not

- a. It should not be overlooked that in verse 16 it is the Lord that closes the door behind them - Clearly, He would be, as it were, on the outside protecting the ark and all its contents from His judgment on the rest that were outside the ark - compare with I Pet. 1:5 where we also are “kept by the power of God” and that “keeping” by means of faith (just as Noah was saved from the flood by means of faith)
- b. Something similar will be seen in the final judgements of Revelation where God protects His own from His own judgements (Rev. 9:2 where those “sealed by God” (Rev. 7) are protected from the unique locusts) - God protects for His purposes, for even Noah later died (Gen. 9:29)
- c. One more note regarding the closing of the door - clearly it was primarily protective of Noah and his family, but it is also clear it demonstrated an end to God’s mercy - up till that point (we might deduce) there was still opportunity (time) for repentance but now there was none - even though the rains had not started, their doom was sure - this demonstrates the danger of putting off the moments of the readily available mercy and grace of God

4. As God said, after the seven days (most of which probably involved getting things situated), “the water of the flood came upon the earth” - vs. 10-12; 17-24

see Rom. 1:18-25

We can only imagine the varying reasons why some desire the flood to not have been world-wide and possibly one may be the desire to entertain the thought that there might always be some way of escaping the judgment of God

To one God’s working is dread judgement and to the other, it is an impressive display of God’s righteous power (and power to save) both, at the same time!

To those in Christ, this is a respectable “fear” and for those who are not, this is to be dread

- a. Precisely, after the seven days were finished, the flood began - several things occurred to flood the earth (water coming from above and below as in the original creation where it referenced the two “firmaments”) - The very things God used to sustain and even protect mankind were used to destroy them, which is why we must never worship and serve the creation over the creator
- b. As the “fountains of the deep” burst open and were broken up (by God’s hand), it also rained 40 straight days so that the waters kept increasing (from above and below) until “all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered” vs. 19 - again, this does not describe a “local” flood (and it is likely these mountains were formed by the flood itself)
- c. “..twenty-two and a half feet above the summits of the highest hills. The language is not consistent with the theory of a partial deluge.” JFB on Gen. 7:20
- d. As described in verses 17 and 18, as the waters increased, the ark stayed afloat on top of them - as the judgement of God was carried out, God’s protection was always about them - to some degree, this can be picturesque of how God protects - we may not be free from the presence of His judgement at work (while in this world), but are “above them” in so many ways (primarily in our knowing their purpose and knowing, personally, the “Causer” of it and His love of us)
- e. And, as God said, so it happened - all that was “on dry land” and that had “the breath of life” died - on the significance of the phrasing, Victor Hamilton in his commentary of Genesis writes, “..‘they died’, instead of.. ‘they drowned,’ reinforces the idea that the loss of life is a divine penalty.. rather than death due to natural catastrophe.” - this is key for us to understand so that when death comes, however it comes, we do not confuse the means of death with the One who controls it (we “fear the Lord” over all other possible fears) and that it is the “wages of sin”

5. It must have seemed eerily silent at times, realizing that then entire earth was covered with water - all other human and animal life were now dead, and it was just the occupants of the ark that were alive

It is also at these moments of sobriety that we must work to keep our focus consistent on our God, the God of true hope - see Psa. 42

- a. It is moments like this in our lives, either when we face the death of those we love or those close to us and the reality of sin and its consequences is vivid, that we must remember sin for what it is and God, in His true holiness, for who He is and live the life we have now in light of it
- b. It has been often said that the fossil record we see today should first of all be an ongoing reminder that God judges sin (which may be one reason why many try to explain them another way)

H. The flood waters subside - 8:1-12

1. The first phrase of verse 1, “But God remembered Noah...” is not a phrase that communicates that He had forgotten him, but was an expression often used to communicate mercy or pity on someone

This demonstrates God thinking graciously on someone, often, someone He has made a promise to - it is a way to demonstrate He does not forget, He is ever faithful!

- a. The idea expressed is God’s goodness in saving him (in a sense) yet again
- b. Noah, his family and the animals had been saved from the onslaught of the flood but now needed to be saved from the result
- c. In His graciousness, He caused a wind to “pass over” the waters and this led to the waters subsiding - this is a very similar picture to Gen. 1:2 (once again to bring about the land) - this seems to counter the idea of a “gap” as well in Genesis 1 where some believe God had to destroy the earth and its inhabitants before Adam (How many times would it need to be destroyed?)

As Noah would use the birds for indications of what was happening in relation to the waters and the land

d. It is important to note that God had not talked to Noah since the week before the flood and would not talk to Him again (directly) until 8:15 when He tells him to leave the ark - We need to remember that much of faith at work in us will be the patient waiting on God while simultaneously using, responsibly, the resources He has given us - waiting on God is not necessarily sitting around and waiting, but is seen in a responsible busyness, doing what we ought

• No doubt, many have used “waiting on God” as a cover for laziness (irresponsibility)

2. Speaking of the verbs in verse two, Hamilton writes, “This fourfold use of a passive form of the verb says as strongly as possible that the Flood is not a freak of nature. Both its commencement and completion are divinely ordained and divinely controlled.” - vs. 2

3. The waters continue to recede at a steady pace between verses 3-5 and were returning to their God-given boundaries, and that on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark scraped against some ground

The Hebrew is plural for mountains (as in the mountain range of Ararat)

a. As indicated in verse 5, the tops of the mountains did not become visible until the first day of the tenth month - apparently, the ark “came to rest” on the “mountains” of Ararat

b. It would remain in this area and finally settle on dry ground and then God would send them out

Even when it was said there was physical proof of the ark, it was still misused as even today, with miracles and other seeming “proofs”, they do not save - faith is still required!

c. Many have written of the ark’s location (two of which were Josephus (1st century) and Chrysostom (4th century)) and that the remains were still accessible in their day - Josephus wrote of some groups and how they used pieces of the ark - “It is said, there is still some part of this ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyaeans; and that some people carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they take away, and use chiefly as amulets, for the averting of mischiefs.” - it

“bitumen” being the “pitch” used in the ark for sealing it

should be considered that anything God might use does not mean it will always have inherent value/use of itself and need not be clung to as an object of hope, seeing that must always be a position reserved for God (we must not confuse “means” for “cause”)

d. So Noah and his family and all the animals remained in the ark for about another two and a half months before they see the mountain tops and could consider leaving - they were still dependent on God to land the ark, and all its precious cargo, safely on dry land

4. Noah “tests the conditions” - vs. 6-12

Noah was patient and cautious in his actions, not presuming on the timing of God, demonstrating that waiting on God is more of faith that acting blindly without instruction (presumption)

a. Forty days after coming to rest on ground, Noah opens the window he had made (and this seems to indicate this is the first time he had done it)

—b. He first sends out a raven and it is described as flying “here and there” (back and forth) until the time that the water had dried up - so, forty days had elapsed and Noah sent out this raven and it did not find a place to rest - the language is such that it is likely the raven did not fly back to Noah or into the window, but back to the ark (and was possibly heard rather than seen)

In contrast to the raven, he reaches out for “her” and takes her to himself

c. He then sends out a dove (and we’re not sure how long after the raven) - the wording indicates a “friendlier” relationship with the dove in how he sends it out, and that when the dove could not rest anywhere (being most likely pickier than the raven) it returned to Noah

The need for patient waiting is not just to develop character in us, but is also one of God’s choice means to properly prepare what He has for us

d. Seven days later he sends out a dove again and she does not return until the evening, and this time with a “freshly picked olive leaf” in her beak - this is significant in at least a couple ways” - first, it indicated growing plants and this particular plant typically one not growing in higher elevations (possibly indicating the presence of valleys) - second, this would demonstrate that while Noah and the rest were waiting on God, God was not inactive - plants were growing and the earth was being readied (as it were) for them to come out - see Psa. 27:11-14; I Pet. 5:6-7

e. Then, still with caution, he sent out the dove again and this time it did not return - all now looked ready for them, but Noah would still not act until he had clear instruction from God

I. Noah and all with him are instructed to finally leave the ark - vs. 13-19

1. In both verses 13 and 14 we are told that the land was dry (though two different words are used) - it may seem odd that Noah would have “removed the covering of the ark” on the first day of the year (the 601st of his life) and then just waits until the 27th day of the second month unless we consider Noah’s waiting on God’s instruction (which comes in verses 15-16)

a. “If one compares this last date given in the Flood event with first date given (7:11), and interesting point appears: flood begins (7:11): 17th day/2nd month/600th year of Noah - flood has gone (8:14: 27th day/2nd month/601st year of Noah - The Flood “lasted twelve months and eleven days, the exact period required to equate the year of twelve lunar months, 354 days, with the solar year of 365 days.” The Flood lasted one solar year.” Hamilton also quoting de Vaux

“... in ALL your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.” Pr. 3:6

- b. Just because things seem safe to us doesn't mean they are - take for instance the account of Israel with Ai - they **presumed** upon the will of God because circumstances seemed to be for them but when God is discounted (not acknowledged), we are in “risky territory”
- c. Noah waited on God because he knew himself to be dependent on God - we often become impatient with God's direction or our perception of His working because we see ourselves as capable of moving ahead, definitively, without God's direct oversight

2. “Then God spoke...” God gives instructions and life begins again - vs. 15-19

We are not just to live in expectation of God's working but are wisest when we are looking for God working

- a. “Those that steadily adhere to God's word as their rule, and are guided by his grace as their principle, and take hints from his providence to assist them in their application of general directions to particular cases, may in faith see him guiding their motions in their march through this wilderness.” Matthew Henry

We will discover that much of life is coming to various ends and starting over again until we finally finish this journey and start once more though then to endlessness!

- b. Noah was instructed to have all leave the ark - none were to remain (not that it is mentioned, but we could entertain the idea of **staying** in a place that had been used to provided such shelter from such a storm, but now it was time to move on and start over again)

As God was protector so He was still their provider - God is not “hands-off” with His creation and must not be seen as only dealing with this world in generalities

- c. They were to bring out all the “living creatures” with them and the purpose given was for them to “breed abundantly... be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” - just as was originally designed in the beginning (as in Gen. 1:22) - all animals we see today were form this remnant

- d. Some have tried to question this entire account, wondering what the animals would have eaten - they miss the significance of the olive leaf and, as many professing believers sometimes fall prey to, limit all of this to just **natural** means

- e. “...each of them went out by their families” - no only was it orderly (still supernatural), but some suppose that when it says “by families” that some of the animals had reproduced while on the ark and their “families” had grown

J. Noah sacrifices to the Lord (Jehovah) and the Lord “purposes” a covenant - vs. 20-22

- 1. This sacrifice would have been one of thanksgiving and not for sin - this is the first instance of the word or concept for an “altar” we have in the Bible - there had been other sacrifices, but not clarified as being on an altar (and from here on out, the altar would be a regular, solemn place of worship) - vs. 20

It is a significant part of (if not the most important part) of worshipping - sacrifice of any kind is given not because God needs anything, but as acknowledging all we are and have (and can be) are from and by Him

- a. “Religion or the proper mode of worshipping the Divine Being, is the invention or institution of God himself; and sacrifice, in the act and design, is the essence of religion. Without sacrifice, actually offered or implied, there never was, there never can be, any religion.” Adam Clarke

- b. Noah offered to God “of every clean animal” - this was no small or insignificant offering! - clearly there was not an abundance of animals now alive on the earth, so these would have been some of the most precious “items” that could have been offered and since they were consumed, it was done in faith - woe to anyone that sees something given to or for God as a **waste**!

2. God's response is key to note - vs. 21

- a. There is an anthropomorphism used of God to demonstrate His pleasure with this offering

- b. First, God said to Himself (the Godhead) “I will never again curse the ground on account of man” mainly pointing to the covenant to never destroy the earth this way again - some try to apply this verse to the curse of Gen. 3:17 but that curse still remains

This is referenced in Gen. 9:11 compare also with Isa 54:4-10

- c. The reason given, at first glance, may seem contradictory with Gen. 6:5-7 - God identifies that “the intent on Man's heart is evil from his youth...” and that that is why He would never again destroy all living things this way - how is this reconciled?

Yet in chapter 6, God would destroy man because his thoughts were “evil continually”

- d. First (and most basic), if mankind was to be destroyed for the continuity of sin, there would need to be ongoing world catastrophes - second, God profoundly, now, demonstrates His mercy -in His not punishing those **deserving** punishment as He did in the flood

As in Rom. 9:15, God has mercy when and on whom He chooses - we are not and never will be in a position to “judge” God on what, when and on whom He does anything

- e. This act (spoken by God Himself) has become unappreciated because we come, in our over estimation of our own value and merit, to question that our hearts are evil “from his youth” - God identifies the reality of our condition in sin (it is a part of our nature from the start) - this is a clear working definition of total depravity, thus our **total** need for God's intervention

3. This promise is seen not only in the signs of chapter 9, but the signs of the seasons - vs. 22

Along with the rainbow, the seasons are a steady reminder of God's goodness and faithfulness

- a. “While the earth remains...” - as long as the earth exists (also indicating it won't be forever), there will be (remains) seasons and times - consistency, normality returns in creation!

- b. Even though man will be inconsistent because of his sin, God will be consistent

As the passing of the seasons reminds us of God's faithfulness, so we should be reminded to be faithful with the time (consistent, measurable time) that God has given us. Notice also Ecc. 3:11 where, God has, "also set eternity in their heart" (literally He has established in the hearts of us all the "vanishing point" (what lies beyond what we can see) so that in eternity we will see how God did do all things in their time

- c. Consistency in general provides security, allowing us some predictability - and with this comes, again, the reminders and measurements of time passing - all this also adding to what should be an obvious observation that the Flood was not consistent with normal nature
- d. The Lord uses this concept again to guarantee the continuation of the Davidic line and the continuation and growth of the Levites in Jer. 33:19-26 (seeing how God sets up the first, His word can be trusted for all else He says and the continuation of these passing "times" stands as a regular reminder of the trustworthiness of God) - His past faithfulness should cause us to trust in His future faithfulness - see also I Pet. 4:19 - we strive to do right because He "does right"
- e. It can also be considered that God has setup order and that there are appropriate times for certain things as seen in Ecc. 3:1-8 - with these also comes constant limitations to what we can do and when we can do them
- f. Predictability in the sciences and mathematics comes from God - He established all order and our various tools of measurings and figurings exist only because He exists (and, since He is God, there are limits to what we can measure and figure!) - see Isa. 55:7-9

XIV. God's Blessing, Instruction and Covenant with Noah and All His Descendents - 9:1-17

A. As in the Creation, God blesses Noah and his sons - vs. 1

There have been and will continue to be numerous often overwhelming counteractions and replacements that mankind will connive to distort, forbid or try to dismantle this blessing of God

No doubt, many have sought to avoid children, believing the sin problem only compounded by their "offspring" but this is presumptive thinking

1. The blessing of God is essentially God speaking well to someone (and this can be in various ways)

- a. Here, God "blesses" them with an instruction filled (pregnant) with purpose
- b. This blessing is one of having children and the propagation of the earth which is a blessing since only God can grant this - yet, man also has a duty in the process (cooperating with the procreation processes, and then onto rearing children who will continue the process as well)

2. In their multiplying they are to "fill the earth" - as saying make it "teem" with your offspring

- a. In one of the many ancient "epics" of the flood, one of them (Atrahasis) ends with overpopulation being "...earth's primary problem, hence the need for population control which can be accomplished either by nature or by the gods" (Hamilton)
- b. No mention is made here of the "sin issue" affecting this instruction - God will deal with sin as He had originally promised/planned, so even though the "intent of man's heart is evil from his youth" God does not instruct them to avoid this by not having children

B. An apparent change in man's relationship to the animals is declared - vs. 2-4

1. There may have been some "fear" of man before the flood, but it is apparent that now the animal kingdom in general will live in significant fear and intimidation of mankind

The original state of the relationship between the animals and man will be restored in the Kingdom as seen in - see Isa. 11:6-9

- a. Originally, man and the animals were given all sorts of vegetation for food (Gen. 1:29-30)
- b. The sense is that they will "dread" man's presence and all this a result of the Fall - before the Fall, man was give dominion and once again his dominion over the animals is declared by God but with a couple alterations - the first being this fearful relationship

2. "...into your hand they are given" - there seems to be a difference in man's responsibility also (from Gen. 1:28) where he had originally "dominion" now he has "freedom" to do with them as he wishes

This would appear to include "unclean" animals as well - it would be in the Law to Israel that the restriction of only "clean" animals would be made

This restriction has not been listed and it should still be considered by all of us to be wrong - this was a "law" given to all mankind, not just Israel

- a. This would seem good in all accounts if it were not for the sinfulness of man (from which springs cruelty to the animals and merciless/vicious exploitation of them)
- b. Mankind is now given "every moving thing that is alive" as food and this to the same degree as "...I gave the green plant - The one restriction given was that they not eat the "flesh with its life... its blood" - much has been written speculating the reasons for this (health issues) but the reason given is singular - the blood is and represents the "life" (aliveness of the flesh) and is to be treated special by not being consumed (this is reiterated throughout the Law)
- c. It has been noted that blood is the only physical substance to be allowed so close to the presence of God (in the sacrifices of the tabernacle and the blood brought into the Holy of Holies)

C. God "requires" a reckoning when mankind's blood is shed (he is murdered) - vs. 5-6

"require" being a term picturing searching for something urgently because of its importance to the pursuer - in this case, God is the pursuer!

1. Having just dealt with blood being the life, God now institutes an overriding law dealing with murder

- a. It is important to recognize first of all, this is required by God - verse 6 is most often associated with the institution of "capital punishment" (and rightfully so), but before we deal with the rights of governments we recognize the source of this command
- b. Many will argue unending "reasons" against it but the greatest offense is against God

These verses are not in contradiction to the sixth commandment - that is a list of personal commands while these verses are formal/public (governmental) - this is the case as well in war where killing is essentially governmental (though many war crimes are associated with unsanctioned killing)

Under the Law for Israel, there were public executions as well as “avengers” who could take the life of a murderer as seen in Deut. 19:11-13

This “capital punishment” is not primarily a “crime deterrent” (though that is usually the case) but is more to not disregard God - it is done by His command, He “requires” it

It does not say populate the earth with “quality” life

As God with Abraham when He passed through the pieces of the covenant Himself and not Abraham in Gen. 15

God is not obligated to us so when He obligates Himself it is a special demonstration of His condescension

Whenever a storm or storm clouds would arise and storms pass, this would serve as an ongoing comfort of God’s promise and protection - for the creation would destroy us all were it not for God

- c. “The more frequent killing of beasts is not to beget a general indifference to the shedding of any and every blood, including man’s.” Leupold - there should be purpose in killing an animal beyond some deviant pleasure, and man’s blood is to be considered “higher” than animals’
- d. So, God requires a “reckoning” (as in an accounting term where a debt demands a payment to “**balance**” the books”) if a person’s is killed by an animal or by another person - and the clarification as to the significance of a person killing another person - it is a “brother killing a brother” reiterating our actual relationship

2. These verses are also considered to be the beginning of civil government - vs. 6

- a. In one the most basic ideas of human government, we see that it is supposed to be carrying out “justice” as acting in line with God’s commands, and the first law deals with the execution of one who has been proven to have taken the life of another person
- b. Clearly, to follow this correctly, the crime of murder must be **certain**, for if it is not it would be as if sanctioning capital murder (putting to death one not guilty of the crime) - capital punishment is only lawful because of God and those who fight the concept fight against Him and not man - it is more than vengeance and even more than human justice
- c. The reason for this punishment is not as much for justice as it is the crime against the “image of God” - the core and most important reason we do not murder is its defiling God’s image (essentially personhood) - *this is discussed more on page 15 of these notes*
- d. So, all killing of people deserves the highest of scrutiny, and when murder is overlooked or unpunished, it is not only a detriment to a society, but is **defiant** of God - there is a fairly clear allusion to God Himself putting to death the person also in **His** “requiring” it (in verse 5)

D. Instead, man is to be focused on the opposite of murder in all aspects - vs. 7

1. This verse is not just a mere repetition of verse 1, but “wraps-up” as it were the entire concept - He instructs them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and then, when commanding punishment for murder, He drives home the point that our focus is to be on filling the earth with human life
2. So, this is the antithesis to murder - the valuing, promoting and preservation of human life - this concept then lends itself to medical and scientific pursuits to “save” life - so that the earth may “swarm” with life

- This entire concept of “populating the earth abundantly” stands in the face of abortion and even euthanasia and suicide (we should not see our own “right” to take our own lives made in His image)

E. The covenant and covenant sign of the rainbow - vs. 8-17

1. God declares this covenant, not just with Noah, but with he and his sons - this may be the formal conclusion to the promise made in 6:16 for protection from the flood - vs. 8-10

- a. God had given them their instructions and now declares what He will do - many deities and royalties will make it clear what they expect, but it is God who deigns to, in a sense, obligate Himself
- b. This was a covenant with all their descendants and “all living creatures” (with the inclusion of animals, it is a demonstration of this covenant not **requiring** anything of the recipients)
- c. Another case for a “universal” flood can be seen here, for if it were not, then this covenant was only with the animals that came “out of the ark” and therefore would not have applied to any other animals - as with any covenant God makes, it is at His pleasure and to His own extent

2. Verse 11 is not redundant - the difference is seen the in presence and then absence of the definite article - He will not again “cut off” all flesh by THE flood (the one that had just happened and was receding) and neither would He do the same with “a flood” - the first, more for Noah, the second, for all else
3. God places His covenant sign in the sky - most covenants had some physical sign to serve as ongoing reminders - in this case God establishes the rainbow

- a. God identifies this sign as something He will see and will “remember” the covenant - it is more for our sakes this is done since He does not forget and, as discussed previously, this usage of the term “remember” is a term of endearment or **pity**
- b. This should also serve as an ongoing reminder of why it is there - God DID judge the earth and He will again (and for the same reasons)
- c. It’s key to note also that a rainbow (“in the cloud”) is only seen when there is rain (most often a storm) - as is so often the case, some of the best reminders and proofs of God’s protection and faithfulness are seen in the “storms” of life

4. We will often have signs of covenants (such as a wedding ring) to not only remind us, but to serve as an open symbol of a promise made

This is one of the thrilling aspects of studying Scripture - we get to discover God's faithfulness that have been at work without our knowing them - we discover His greatness, not ours!

- a. As a husband or a wife not only thinks of their covenant vows when they see the ring on their own finger but also when they see it on the finger of the other
- b. God still references His seeing it and remembering more than their seeing - even if some do not see or understand (the blind not seeing it or an animal not understanding it) it does not make what God has said less true - this also reminds us that God is faithful to all His Word

XV. The Indiscretion of Noah, the Sin of Ham, the Curse on Canaan - 9:18-29

- A. These first two verses note a change in topic and provide a general overview of the origins of the present ethnicities
 1. Now, attention is about to be focused upon the three sons and their offspring - As focus is about to be narrowed more
 2. Chapter 10 will detail this more, but this lays out a distinct division in the peoples of the world in the statement, "from these the whole earth was populated"

B. Noah gets himself intoxicated and all associated with it demonstrating sin's affect - vs. 20-23

1. Noah takes up farming (either he had done it before or learned it now) - in this case he chose to plant a vineyard and produce wine from it - he continued to work after the flood (he had about 350 years left)
 - a. Much has been written of this account to make a case against intoxicating beverages (fermented) though this would not necessarily be the best text - clearly, though, Noah's lack of control (some say he was ignorant of what would happen) caused him shame and resulted in a curse
 - b. Much has also been written to make a case for this to not prohibit wine and other such beverages though, again, this would not be the best text for that case either - this is a good example of what can happen when we partake and indulge in that which "clouds the senses"
2. As a result of his drinking to intoxication, he uncovered himself in his tent - vs. 21-22

This account does illustrate how our sin, negligence and lack of discretion can lead to the failings of other

Though, in defense of Noah, he was in his tent

Ham apparently thought his brothers might appreciate knowing this the same way he did - it is not uncommon for those under authority to enjoy the shame of those over them - this is just another result of sin

- a. This was the result of Noah losing his good sense, and was not aware of what he had done - this is also illustrative of the results of a lack of control in any area; it most often leads to varying forms of shame for us, and that before others
- b. Ham sees his father's nakedness - some have tried to to lessen this as accidental or "innocent," but it must be considered that first of all, Noah was in his tent and second the wording "saw" carries with it more than just an accidental glance; then he tells his brothers (which is easily taken as mocking or irreverent: this is also seen in the opposite response of his two brothers, Shem and Japheth response)
- c. It would be good to consider the concept of "nakedness" and it being kept private, even though societies may loosen their views on it (in families, in institutions also) - if it was inappropriate for Ham to see his father like this, when and why would there be an exception for us?
- d. It does appear to be "in derision" that Ham tells his brothers - we see examples of this in our day where others will use the failings and indiscretions of the seeming "reputable" as reasons to mock or as an attempt to excuse some of their own behavior

3. In proper respect, Shem and Japheth go in backward to cover their father - vs. 23 - true love and respect does not see the weakness of another as opportunity to gloat or to belittle This was a proper response to weakness

C. Noah curses Canaan - vs. 24-25 (this is the first recorded words of Noah)

1. This is often seen as one of the most difficult passages in Scripture to work through - the biggest question being, "If Ham sinned against Noah, why did Noah curse Ham's youngest son and not Ham?"
 - a. The reasons give seem endless, all the way from the original text having been altered to making this be a reference to Ham having a child (Canaan) by his mother
 - b. The safest answer is that we just don't know why, just that he did - It is apparent that the curse happened and we are in no position to say Noah (or God) was wrong in the matter
 - c. I believe the curse was not so much making what happened to Canaan and his descendents as it was revealing (declaring) what would happen - this "sin" of Ham revealed a "character flaw" that would be found in his descendents and especially in the line of Caanan - see Ex. 20:5
 - d. The results of which would lead to Canaan's descendants being literally "the lowest of servants" to their brothers (slaves of slaves)
 - e. It is also important to recognize the fundamental truth, that nothing "unjust" happens to the truly "innocent" (there are, in reality, no innocent people - this is a concept of man's making that he has superimposed on all of life's circumstances and then seeks to use it as some type of leverage or authority to question what God does)

It is far too easy to see our sin as just personal and not having an effect on others, especially our children - parents should be wary of their weaknesses because they will become evident in their children

It is easy to struggle with certain texts because we start with wrong presuppositions (e.g. presupposing true innocence)

As seen throughout the Bible, some “slaves” enjoyed their positions and they were not grievous

f. Some have tried to make this a reference to the “black” race in light of the enslavement that occurred in the previous centuries, but this discounts the innumerable “slaves” that have come before in other races and other different circumstances

2. Noah blesses - vs. 26-26 (God and Noah’s sons are ultimately blessed in these verses)

It seems significant that he would bless Shem’s God - as if indicating God’s special use of his offspring

- a. “Blessed be ‘Yawahh’” - this personal name of God is used in conjunction with Shem - and, to bless Shem as it were, Noah blesses his God - some say this should be translated, “Blessed of Jehovah, my God, be Shem” indicating the special plan through his descendents
- b. Canaan is then mentioned, “...let Canaan be his servant” - this would not necessarily mean that they would be a weak people, but as would be seen, through their wicked, sinful lifestyles they would be conquered - this is vividly seen in Jos. 9:25 with the Gibeonites (residents of Canaan)
- c. Japheth is to be blessed with being “enlarged” and “Accordingly his descendants have been the most active and enterprising, spread over the best and largest portion of the world, all Europe and a considerable part of Asia.” JFB - there were apparently many explorers in this line
- d. The phrase, “...and let him dwell in the tents of Shem” indicates a friendship (being welcome)

Some use this verse to indicate the Gospel coming through Shem’s line and Japheth then being the Gentiles brought in - the problem with this is that it excludes any from Canaan

D. Noah lives a total of 350 years more after the flood and there are no more children recorded - vs. 28-29

Our lives here should not be measured so much as by time as it should be by God’s usage of us

- 1. Based upon what has been recorded Noah and his wife did not have more children - again, wild speculation has come out of these texts and some has been based upon Noah having more children
- 2. In all his 950 years of life, Noah had been profoundly used to save humanity from destruction and though he lived so long, only a very small portion of his life is shared - we should remember that long life is not required to be used of God, and though we use the idea of “significant usage” from our vantage point, God’s usage of us is always significant because it is God using us!
- 3. “Noah lived to see two worlds, but, being an heir of the righteousness which is by faith, when he died he went to see a better than either.” MH

XVI. The Beginning of the “Peoples” of the World - chapter 10

A. There are a couple items to consider as we look over the information in this chapter - first this is not an exhaustive list and is given from the vantage point of the Jewish people (we are reading from the Scriptures given to them by God) - this is not to say that it is inaccurate (it is accurate), but that its purpose was more than documenting where everyone came from (there were other lists, but most of them were lists of people/nations conquered and are also not exhaustive)

B. Second, it is good to note that we are about to quickly see how the nations of the world were formed from Noah’s family - apart from learning these origins, it’s key for us to remember this is ultimately the outworking of God’s plan, and special focus will be given to the line of Shem (as it was in the first chapters of Genesis to the line of Seth) as they are used to work out His plan - Canaan will also be a point of focus

see Acts 17:22-31 and Isa. 45:1-21 (speaking of Cyrus who would come 200+ years later)

- 1. Consider also that there were “good” and “bad” people and families that came from them - these people ultimately led to groups of people (communities) and ultimately, nations - it is texts like these (that give us a high-level look over time) that should cause us to think of the value of the influences we have on those in our families and those in our generations - the “waves of impact” that can be made by simple acts and words are only known by God as to their extent - so this should reinforce why obeying what He says is so significant - He sees the lasting impact of even what we consider simple, little things!
- 2. Consider also that life is ultimately (transcendently above) about God - history is replete with varying types of people and God’s varying uses of them - we may not be able to explain how or why some children, family, friends and others go the directions they do, but the retreat to “I know God has a purpose” is not illegitimate, and is often the best mainstay for our emotions and thoughts

C. The breakdown of the nations and regions from Noah’s sons

- 1. Japheth is mentioned first, not because he was oldest but most likely because they were most scattered throughout the world and would have been less known by Moses and Israel (plus, they would not be central to where the message of Genesis is heading) - these are described as going to and inhabiting the “coastlands of the nations” and are often associated with “maritime” nations - vs. 2-5
- 2. The next list deals with the descendents of Ham and before we are given the descendents of Canaan we are briefly told of Nimrod, “a mighty hunter before the Lord” - he was a man of significance - vs. 6-14

He was the first, most likely, one to try to unify the world, without God

- a. He is first described as “a mighty one on the earth” - one of the Jewish Targums on I Ch. 1:10 said of him, “Nimrod began to be a mighty man in sin, a murderer of innocent men, and a rebel before the Lord.” (As quoted by Adam Clarke)

Nimrod is also, historically associated with being the leader and motivator of the city and tower of Babel - motivated to "make a name for ourselves"

This "philosophy" has been common throughout history - a man seeks to lead by intimidation and the idea of God is strongly opposed

As indicated in this text, Nimrod was the leader of several cities including Babylon (Babel) as well as Nineveh (where Jonah would be called to go)

We should take note that including all this background information demonstrates that Abraham, and ultimately Israel, came from the same origins and that it was by the special grace of God that any significance was to be found

XVII. The Division of the Languages - 11:1-9

A. The order of chapters 10 and 11 - it may seem confusing to read in verse 1 that "the whole earth used the same language" when we read in chapter 10 that each group had its own language - chapter 10 describes how each group was formed and where they ended up and the beginning of chapter 11 tells us how they were made to divide

Communication would have been very efficient

1. So, about 100 A.F. (after the flood) all the people of the earth were literally of "one lip and one vocabulary (word)" meaning not only did that have the same language, but they essentially spoke it the same (apparently there were not essentially distinct dialects)

In opposition to obeying God and living to bring glory to Him, their goal was to unite and create a lasting reputation to make their name great

Even with great monuments to moral concepts, these must not become replacements for directing glory to God

Not that this is conclusive evidence, but we typically see now and in history that the largest cities, because they are a large concentration of people they are a concentration of sin

b. There is much discussion in throughout many sources that debate the exact meaning and idea of the description, "a mighty hunter before the Lord" - as to exactly what he hunted, most seem to agree he was most likely a "hunter of men" and the first description of him being "a mighty one upon the earth" in reference to him being a tyrant - the historian Josephus goes on to explain the reason for his being so forceful was to essentially distract them from fearing God by having them fear him - "He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to reach. And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers."

c. All this being done "before the Lord" does not mean the Lord approved but indicates more that he did it openly, brazen and blatantly - it would appear from these verses that up to this point, there were no others who had been like this (as well as like those in Gen. 6, the "mighty men, men of renown" (and in that context, those were "tyrannical" men) - a common phrased was coined to describe other such men, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord" - I Chr. 1:10

3. The descendents of Canaan are then listed and their territory included the realms of Sodom and Gomorrah - not only would these be enemies of Israel but would be a people of significant moral decadence - as seen, by the time of Abraham, Sodom and Gomorrah were into lives of perversion - sin is not satisfied to stay stagnate but increases, as it were, its appetites for more and "new" - vs. 15-20

4. The last group to be covered are the descendants of Shem (not because he was youngest (he was actually oldest), but because his line is the one about to come more into focus - vs. 21-31

a. Shem is described as the older brother of Japheth as well as "the father of the children of Eber" again, drawing special attention to this line and, ultimately to one of Eber's children, Peleg

b. The line of Peleg is not covered until chapter 11 since it is the line of Abraham

c. The phrase associated with Peleg in verse 25, "in his days the earth was divided" - it is estimated that he "came on the scene" about 100 years after the flood and that this was the time of Babel and the division that came as a result of the languages being "confounded"

a. As they all (apparently) journeyed and congregated in "the land of Shinar" (area now known as Iraq) historically known for being very fertile and productive (though there would prove to be other fertile areas, this one was convenient and there was no desire to "push-on" on "filling the Earth" as God had instructed immediately after the flood (Gen. 9:1)

b. Using this one language (we must remember that language was created by God) they agreed to make for themselves "a name" - they planned to accomplish this by building a city, and in particular, a tower like no other that would "reach unto heaven" - this is typical of humanity and our history in the pursuit of setting up monuments to our greatnesses - this has become an acceptable "nobility" throughout history and is expected in each generation (as each seeks to be the "greatest generation" with all notability leaving out God) - history is full of examples where mankind has sought to rally the world around its own greatness - it should be obvious that these are all short-lived as evidenced in the ruins of these "great societies" compare this to Isa. 40:15

c. Their underlying reason for doing this was so that, "...we will not be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth" - they wanted to stay unified and would seek their safety in it - this, they figured, would be best done by creating a magnificent city and that around a "skyscraper" (no doubt so that it could be seen from far away in any direction)

d. It is interesting to note, also, that so many pursuits of unity throughout our past have resulted in varying forms of Godlessness and evil - obviously there are many exceptions, but often God is at the heart of personal, family and societal divisions (what we unify around is essential to its value)

Mankind will essentially seek the same thing at the end of the world - one, world, one God (Anti-Christ)

There seemed to be no fear of God with them and they seemed confident in their combined efforts - "Though hand join in hand, the evil man shall not be unpunished;" Pr. 11:21

Interestingly, there are some forms and times of disunity that we will want to see

As history has demonstrated, mankind is capable of incredible feats and inventions (especially when unified) and these achievements have become the source of much "man-worship" and the affirming for many the establishment of faith in man

Note also that man will purpose what he considers the "impossible" knowing it is possible thus seeking some form of deity for himself

And only God truly knows what is best and what actually should happen

As we saw in chapter 10, each "family" grouping ended up with its own language so God divided them up by family groups

Though it would still smell as sweet

Words and language is something we have "over" all other creatures on earth

see Mt. 12:33-37

- e. "This is the perpetual infatuation of the world; to neglect heaven, and to seek immortality on earth, where every thing is **fading** and transient. Therefore, their cares and pursuits tend to no other end than that of acquiring for themselves a name on the earth." Calvin
2. Motivated by all this, they make bricks (the strongest they possibly could) and bitumen (tar) to build this city and tower, and God is then pictured as "coming down" to see what they were doing - vs. 5
- a. "It is difficult to miss the irony in this verse. The builders' intention is to erect a tower whose top will be "in the heavens," that is, among the gods. But even though they build the tower, it is so far from the heavens that God must *come down* to see it." Hamilton
- b. By use of the phrase, "...the tower which the sons of men had built..." seems to indicate they had completed most of it or had made substantial progress - they either did not think God saw, cared, or that He could do nothing about their **combined** efforts - see also Jer. 23:23-24
- This is often the response of man when he does not see God "judge" quickly

B. God "confuses" (mixes by making new ones) their language - vs. 6-9

1. The Lord clearly assesses the situation and the danger of their purposes - vs. 6

- a. "They are one people" - they are unified - there is nothing essentially wrong with unity unless what they are unified about is wrong (so often unity must first be judged as to its merit based upon *who* is unified and around *what* are they unified)
- b. Their unified project practically pivoted on their "one language," and being so unified that "nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them" - this does not mean that "nothing will be impossible for them" (seeing man is limited in so many ways), but that the purpose they had set for themselves in making a name for themselves (making the world center on them and their unification **against** God) and to keep themselves from "scattering" throughout the earth, would not be impossible
- c. Much of what man is capable of accomplishing is admirable and serves humanitarian ends, but when these are to the exclusion and **replacement** of God, they become evils
- d. Special note is made that "this is what they began to do" (this is just the start of what they would continue to do) - if this is the beginning of their unity, what they set their heart to do in the future will also be possible - here we see God's graciousness in not letting mankind do what it would think best to do! - this is true on an **individual** basis also
- e. Man can do what is possible for man to do, but this is a far cry from God doing all that is possible for God to do! - God is often called the "God of the impossible" because He can do what is impossible for man to do - **this essential distinction must not be lost to us**

2. "Come, let Us go down and confuse their language..." - vs. 7

- a. The Godhead (triune God) does what is best to make what must be done, happen
- b. Once again, as we saw earlier in this study, what God purposes to do happens - we see in this verse what God purposed to do and then in the next verse we see the results of it happening
- c. With the use of the word "confuse," the idea isn't that their thinking and understanding was confused as much as that's what it would have seemed from their perspectives - again, the underlying word for "confuse" has the idea of "mixing" (or mixing-up), and this occurred by having each group have its own language
- d. We can only begin to imagine the magnitude of such a work realizing how integral language is to our thinking and how complex language and thought really are - each grouping would have to be essentially changed in how they think (formulate thoughts, concepts and ideas, the tangible and intangible) - in one instance each knew a "rose" to be called a "rose" and in an instant later it was now **known** verbally and mentally as, something different with each group)
- There is a difference between communication and language - animals can and do communicate but true language is more than the communication of intentions and desires, it can even dabble with the abstract, the theoretical and ultimately (as was its core intent), commune with the Creator Himself!
- e. This is another vivid reminder that language (thus words) are from God and whether we realize it any given moment, they still mean something and we are held accountable for them
- f. Ultimately, God dealt with how this started; "They *said* to one another..." - afterward, each could still think but they could not uniformly communicate what they were thinking

3. The LORD scattered them “abroad from there” - vs. 8-9

The message/truth of the Gospel is ultimately understandable in any language - its concepts in the use of language (this is how it is presented), its understanding (believing/trusting it) by means of the Holy Spirit

As with the thought in the mind of Eve, so these city-builders sought to be independent from God defining good and evil for themselves

- a. This is then how what was described in chapter 10 occurred - God divided them by families/nations by giving to each their own language - it is interesting to consider that God once again performed the miraculous (only in the opposite manner) at Pentecost - there He gave the ability to communicate in differing languages - the first (Babel) was to separate them from their disobedience and unified resistance to God; the second (Pentecost), God used it to present the Gospel (the ultimate unifier of nations/ethnicities in obedience and harmony with God)
- b. Thus, in the process, they stopped the building of the city (at least as a combined effort)
- c. Language (words) are powerful in that they convey ideas, thoughts - as infections, they can spread once there is comprehension of the ideas - if these are good, then its influence is beneficial though if they are bad, they can be mentally sickening and debilitating and then deadly in one's life (and such infections can be remarkably contagious as was seen here in the combined unity against God and for themselves) - the gate of the mind must be well guarded!
- d. They did make a name for themselves (though not as they planned) as seen in our still reading and knowing of them to this day - it is not surprising to read that historically this location was not called “Babel” but instead took on a name that meant “gate of god” - even when clearly defeated by God, mankind will resist to the death to defy and deny Him

XVIII. The Continuing Line of God's People By Means of God's Plan - 11:10-31

A. From here, the focus is placed upon the line of Shem, all with the intent to get “us” to Abram

1. As we had the three sons of Adam (Cain, Abel and Seth) at a key “juncture” and we had the three sons of Noah (Ham, Shem and Japheth), now we have Terah and his three sons (Abram, Nahor and Haran)

Even in light of this, man still is defiant to try to limit life to this earth and man's purposes, or to develop alternatives to life after this life (reincarnation being a way to keep man here)

- a. It was in lines such as these that we see the lifespan getting shorter 11:28
- b. It is here also that we see the occurrence of a son dying before his father (Haran) - it was becoming more evident that life was to be less and less focused on the earth (man being made to live forever having to face a definitive end here, should be looking to there being “more than this”)

2. Nahor takes Milcah (his niece, the daughter of his deceased brother Haran), and Abram takes Sarai

This is another reason (among so many) to not hesitate to explain the creation and the flood more by supernatural means (God's working) over physical (natural) means

- a. It is quickly noted in 11:30 that Sarai had no child, being barren (God would intervene)
- b. This all leading to God's plan being seen as God's plan and power at work over “just happening” — circumstances or the ingenuity of man - as noted earlier in this study, it is crucial that we see God at work since the very beginning, so our focus will stay on Him and His plan over our own or over the historical figures or natural means He will use
- c. James referenced this line of thought when trying to help the early church conclude the best course of action in dealing with the incoming Gentiles - Acts 15:13-18 - Many manuscripts as well as the OT version from Amos 9:11-12 of the LXX and MT include the phrase “the Lord Who does all these things”
- d. God will now, from here, bring full attention to Abraham and his line leading to the nation of Israel with all its promises from God (including, especially, Christ!)
- e. And, from all this we see why things are the way they are - man's influence on the creation being sin while God working all throughout history to accomplish His perfect will perfectly

“Says the Lord, as he does these things, foreknown from of old.” (TCNT) Acts 15:18

B. Terah leaves with Abraham, his family and Lot to head to Canaan - vs. 31-32

1. They stop in Haran (the city) for unknown reasons and there Terah dies and from there Abram would then leave for Canaan at the age of 75 (by the instruction of God)
2. It was told by Joshua that Terah used to worship “other gods” in Jos. 24:2 and there is some writings that say he left the land of the Chaldeans to be rid of these idols and went with Abram to follow God

Note: it appears that Shem outlived even Abraham

- C. “We see at this point, too, how very few links there actually were in the chain of tradition from Adam to Abraham. For since Adam lived to the time of Methuselah (or Lamech), and Methuselah lived to the time of Shem and Shem lived to the time of Jacob, the original truth which Adam possessed was transmitted through but three links of the chain till it came into Jacob's possession.” Leupold