

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #1

Introduction:

1. The Bible can be studied:

- a. Doctrinally. The basic fundamentals concerning God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Sin, Salvation, Sanctification, Glorification, the Resurrections, The Second Coming of Christ, etc.
- b. Dispensationally. God's progressive revelation during the ages - marking additions and changes in the progress of revelation.
- c. Devotionally. Truth is not only for the mind; it is also for the heart. We are to be comforted, strengthened and encouraged.

2. Definition:

The word "dispensation" is the English translation of the Greek word *oikonomia*. It is made up of two words: *oikos* - house, and *nema* - to dispense or manage. Hence, "house management," and administration or stewardship. It is translated "stewardship" in Luke 16:2-4; "dispensation" in I Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10; 3:2; Colossians 1:25; "fellowship" in Ephesians 3:9; and "Godly living" in I Timothy 1:4.

3. Inspiration of the Scriptures:

It is a must in any Biblical study to be absolutely sure about the inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages. This inspiration is both verbal, extending to the very words and letters, and also plenary, extending to all the books of the Bible or canon. I Timothy 3:16 is the classic passage on inspiration.

4. "Rightly dividing the Word of Truth,"

This is the second fundamental of Biblical interpretation. II Timothy 2:15 is the classic passage. What was true under the Dispensation of Law may be false under the Dispensation of Grace. Romans and Galatians reveal this. One must

distinguish between the Old and New Covenants as revealed in Hebrews and in II Corinthians 3-4. The Gospel of the Kingdom of the Heavens as seen in Matthew (4:23) is different from the Gospel of the Grace of God as seen in Ephesians. The miraculous sign gifts as recorded in the Gospels, the Acts and Paul's earlier Epistles; and the absence of all such in his Prison Epistles. The "Hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20) must be distinguished from the "hope of the Church which is His Body" (Colossians 3:4). One must also distinguish among the marital and non-marital relationships - the wife of Jehovah or restored nation; the bride of the Lamb, which constitutes a remnant, the overcomers of Israel and elect Gentiles; and the Body of Christ, God's heavenly people from both Jews and Gentiles. The twelve apostles with Peter as the head must be distinguished from the seven apostles with Paul as the head. The various ordinances of the New Covenant must be distinguished from the non-ordinances of the Covenant period.

5. Bible - a Book of Purpose:

- a. The fact of a purpose (Romans 8:28, 9:11; Ephesians 1:11; II Timothy 1:9):

The word "purpose" in these passages is *prothesis* and means "a placing before," or a well-ordered plan. God's purposes are unalterable (Ephesians 1:9; Jeremiah 51:29). This purpose of God was formed before "the age times" (II Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2). This is the way *pro chronon aionion* should be translated. Members of the Body of Christ were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). Thus the purposes of God were made before the age times and the very ages are a necessary part and platform for the unfolding of those purposes.

"According to the eternal purpose (or "purpose of the ages") which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:11).

The Bible is a book of the ages. What was before and what lies beyond is not strictly within the scope of the Bible.

- b. The Fulfillment of a Purpose:

The accomplishment of God's purpose lies with God and not with men. This is seen in Ephesians 1:11 and Isaiah 46:9-11. This was the secret of Abraham's faith as seen in Romans 4:17-21.

Christ is the center in the fulfillment of God's age purposes:

Creation is the work of the Son of God (John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:10, Colossians 1:16).

The first Adam is "a figure of Him that was to come" (Romans 5:14), and is placed in contrast with "the last Adam," Who is a life-giving Spirit, "the second Man," Who is the Lord from Heaven (I Corinthians 15:45-47).

The Seed of the Woman (Genesis 3:15) finds its fulfillment in the person and work of the Son of God. (See Galatians 3:16.)

All events and institutions, such as the Ark built by Noah, the Passover Lamb, the Tabernacle, the Offerings, the Priesthood, all find their fulfillment in Christ.

All prominent figures in the Old Testament prefigure either Christ or Antichrist - Joseph, David, Moses, Joshua, and Pharaoh, Goliath and Athaliah.

All of the Old Testament looks forward to the time "When the fullness of the time was come," etc. (Galatians 4:4-5).

And when the Son has brought the purpose of the ages to a glorious consummation, He will hand over to God a perfected kingdom, that "God may be all in all" (I Corinthians 15:24-28).

Mankind also is in some way or another agents in God's plan. They are divided into three classes: Jews, Gentiles and the Church. The first two are racial and the third is spiritual. They all draw together in some way at the Second Coming of Christ.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #2

Introduction:

1. The words "eternal," "everlasting" and "endless" are used very loosely and profusely in Christian circles. Some teachers and preachers use them constantly to emphasize the soundness of their message. We hear such expressions as "eternal life," "eternal judgment," "eternal gospel," "eternal purpose," "eternal sin" and "eternal death." Much of this comes from the translation in the Authorized Version (AV) of the Scriptures. But the Bible knows very little about eternity past and future. As we shall see, The Scriptures are set in the context of time, of the ages.
2. The words translated "eternal," "everlasting," "world," etc., are the Hebrew word "olam" or "alam," and the Greek word "aion." Both of these words indicate a beginning and an end. Aion is the word used by the translators of the Old Testament (OT) into Greek, the Septuagint (LXX) version.
3. There is a word which does mean eternal. In Hebrews 7:16, we have a reference to Christ "after the power of an endless life." So that eternal or endless life is related to Christ.
4. Uses of *olam* or *aion* in the Old and New Testaments:

The word **olam** is used seven times in Ecclesiastes and is translated "forever," "old time," "world," "long."

The word **aion** is used seven times in Ephesians, and is translated "world," "course," "ages," "eternal," "ages," "world without end."

Ecclesiastes:

1:4 - "The earth abideth forever."

1:10 - "It hath been already of old time."

2:16 - "There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever."

3:11 - "He hath set the world in their heart."

3:14 - "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever."

9:6 - "Neither have they any more a portion for ever."

12:5 - "Man goeth to his long home."

Ephesians:

1:21 - "This world."

2:2 - "The course of this world."

2:7 - "The ages to come."

3:9 - "From the beginning of the world."

3:11 - "Eternal purpose."

3:21 - "Throughout all ages world without end."

6:12 - "Rulers of the darkness of this world."

In Ecclesiastes we see that *olam* is to be translated by such words as "for ever," "old time," "world," "long." These have no real connected thought.

In Ephesians we have no better assortment. The "world" which had a beginning, but which has no end, the course of this world, and the eternal purpose.

5. Definitions:

Olam occurs some 338 times in the OT in the nominative, genitive and in combination with other words.

Alam occurs 20 times.

These words, *olam* and *alam*, have the meaning of "indefinite time." Hence an age or time span. There is no such idea as eternity in the word.

The first occurrence of ***olam*** is in Genesis 3:22 in connection with the Tree of Life.

Aion occurs some 105 times, and ***aionios*** some 71 times.

Aion means to "blow, breathe, the life that hastes away in the breathing of our breath, transitory life, immeasurable time or ages."

The first occurrence of this word is in Matthew 6:13: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." But the kingdom of Christ is not forever, for He shall some day "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father" (I Corinthians 15:24-28).

I. **THE AGES CREATED**

"...hath in these last days spoken unto us by (His) Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the ages." (Hebrews 1:1-2)

The context is important. Here we see the wondrous glory of the Son of God in the work of finished redemption - "purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high."

In John 1:3 we see that all things were made by Him (*dia autou*), and Colossians 1:16 that all things were created by Him (*dia autou*); so here the ages were a part of His creative work. They form a part of the great purpose that necessitated them.

The Greek word here is **poieo**, meaning, "to produce, construct, form, fashion in a direct sense." Christ is the Creator of the ages.

II. THE AGES CORRECTED

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For in this the elders were attested. By faith we perceive the ages to have been adjusted by a declaration of God that the things which are seen have not come to pass out of things which are apparent." (Hebrews 11:1-2)

The word translated "framed" is the word **katartizo**, and means, "to adjust or put in order; to reform, restore." It involves positive defects which have to be repaired. The word occurs some 14 times in the New Testament (NT) and is translated "mend," "restore," "make perfect," "perfected," "be perfectly joined together."

The first occurrence is at Matthew 4:21 where it is translated "mending" with reference to nets. So it has the idea of restoration, re-adjustment, make perfect.

Here too the context looks on to the cross and to Christ "set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2). The ages are therefore created for a redemptive purpose, and they are adjusted to a perfection for that purpose.

In order to understand these things faith is necessary as is illustrated in the rest of this chapter.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #3

Introduction:

1. In a survey of the Bible or any of its books, one must keep in mind the words of Paul in II Timothy 3:16-17, I Corinthians 2:12-16, and Peter in II Peter 1:21.
2. General Observations. The Bible is not a continuous narration of events, but a selection of incidents, bearing on the theme of redemption.

There is no argument for the being of God. It is everywhere assumed and asserted: "In the beginning God."

The natural sciences lead to the conclusion that behind all, there is intelligence and force.

"Truth and divinity are stamped on every line of the early chapters of Genesis, both in their simplicity and accuracy to facts, which enables them not only to stand unharmed amid the discoveries of modern science, but to display new beauties as we are able more fully to compare them with the records stored up from old in the recesses of the earth. Those who base their hope for the future on the glorious revelations of the Bible need not be ashamed of its story of the past." - Sir Wm. Dawson, Geologist & Archaeologist.

Genesis and evolution cannot stand together. Evolution is that interpretation of life which declares that man and all living things came into their present state by descent from a lower order of life. This has been called "The Darwinian Theory," because he made it popular.

We should apply to Scripture the same principle we use in investigating the other works of God. When we go into nature and study natural objects, we apply the Law of Structure. Take an orange, remove the outer covering and one discovers certain "septa" - lines or walls of division. So the Bible can only be discovered by seeing its lines of demarcation or dispensational distinctions.

3. Name of the Book

Hebrew - *Bereshith* meaning "In beginning." The first word of Genesis 1:1.

Greek - *Genesis*, meaning generations.

Latin - *Liber Genesis*, Book of Genesis.

4. OUTLINES

a. The Three Families

Adam ... Chapters 1 - 5.

Noah ... Chapters 6 - 11

Abram .. Chapters 12 - 50

b. The Great Facts

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| (1) Creation (1:1) | (2) Reconstruction (1:2) |
| (3) Fall (Ch. 3) | (4) Cain and Abel (Ch. 4) |
| (5) Flood (Chs. 5-9) | (6) Nations (Ch. 10) |
| (7) Babel (Ch. 11) | (8) Abraham (12: - 25:11) |
| (9) Isaac (25:12 - 27) | (10) Jacob (Chs. 28-36) |
| (11) Joseph (Chs. 37-50) | |

c. The Eleven Generations

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) Of heavens and earth (2:4-4:26) | (2) Of Adam (5:1-6:8) |
| (3) Of Noah (6:9-9:29) | (4) Of Sons of Noah (10:1-11:9) |
| (5) Of Shem (11:10-11:26) | (6) Of Terah (11:27-25:11) |
| (7) Of Ismael (25:12-25:18) | (8) Of Isaac (25:19-35:29) |
| (9) Of Esau (36:1-36:18) | (10) Of Sons of Esau (36:9-37:1) |
| (11) Of Jacob (37:2-50:26) | |

Eleven is one short of the governmental number of 12. The next generation that will make it complete is that of Christ (Matthew 1).

d. Dispensational Outline

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| I....PRISTINE REVELATION | 1:1 |
| II...PRE-HISTORIC RUINATION | 1:2 |
| III...PHYSICAL RESTORATION | 1:3 - 2:25 |
| IV...SPIRITUAL RUINATION | 3:1-24 |
| V...SPIRITUAL REGENERATION | CHS. 4 - 50 |

(Genesis 3:5 - Hebrews 11:1-22)

(1) Godward Precepts

- (a) Two ways to Worship 4:1-18
 (1) Abel by Faith. (2) Cain by Fancy
- (b) Two Ways to Walk 4:19 - 5:32
 (1) Enoch by Faith. (2) Lamech by Fancy.
- (c) Two Ways to Work
 (1) Noah by Faith. (2) Babel Builders by
 Fancy.

(2) Manward Principles

- (a) God's Will - Revelation 12:1 - 25:8
 (1a) Abraham by Faith. (2a) Lot by Sight.
- (b) God's Word - Resignation Chs. 12 - 23
 (1b) Sarah by Faith. (2b) Hagar by the
 Flesh.
- (c) God's Way - Redemption Chs. 21 - 28
 (1c) Isaac by Faith. (2c) Ismael by Fear.
- (d) God's Work - Regeneration Chs. 25 - 50
 (1d) Jacob - New Creation (Israel).
 (2d) Esau - Old Creation (No change).
- e. God's Wisdom - Restoration Chs. 30 - 50
 (1e) Joseph Exalted (2e) His brothers
 Humbled.

SUMMARY

1. Genesis covers about 2500 years of human history, from Adam to Joseph. It is the oldest trustworthy record in the world and contains information which cannot be found elsewhere.

2. In the revelation of God we see:
 - His power in creation,
 - His sovereignty in election,
 - His holiness in punishment of sin,
 - His love in providing a sacrificial substitute, and
 - His grace in justifying man (Genesis 15:6).

3. We see also God's method with mankind in the choice of one nation through which His Son would be born and all other nations would be blest.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #4 - THE PRISTINE CREATION

TEXT: GENESIS 1:1 - "IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH."

Introduction:

"In this book of Beginnings, no beginning is ascribed to God; but to all else. Here all things material or moral, are traced to their origin; and every leading fact, truth, relation, and revelation are found in germ; the rest of Scripture being their unfolding and development. Here are the 'genesis' of creation and humanity, marriage and the family, the nation, civilization and history; of law and penalty; of sin and sacrifice and salvation; of work and worship; the Sabbath, promise and prophecy; language and literature; mechanic arts and fine arts, science, poetry, etc." - Arthur T. Pierson.

"This simple sentence denies atheism, for it assumes the being of God; it denies polytheism, for it confesses the one eternal Creator, it denies materialism, for it asserts the creation of matter; it denies pantheism, for it assumes the existence of God before and apart from all things; it denies fatalism, for it involves the freedom of the Eternal Being." - James G. Murphy.

Genesis 1:1	Genesis 1:2 - Rev. 20	Revelation 21 and 22
PAST CREATION	PRESENT CREATION	PROSPECTIVE CREATION
	The Six Days	
Perished by water (II Peter 3:6)	The Age Times. Sin and death enter. Sin and death destroyed. Will perish by fire. (II Peter 3:7, 10, 12)	"New heavens and New earth." Remain forever.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Genesis 1:1.

"We according to His promise look for a new earth." II Peter
3:13.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth." Revelation 21:1.

Between these two sets of Scripture rolls the great purpose of the ages, occupying "the heavens and the earth which are now" (II Peter 3:7). Genesis 1:1 is severed off from the rest of the bible. It is unique.

In the Hebrew, there are just seven words in this opening sentence - *Bereshith bara elohim eth hashamayim weeth haaretz*.

These seven words are composed of 28 letters of the Hebrew alphabet (4 x 7). Seven is the number of perfection, and four the number of creation. This verse also contains seven syllables. The subject and predicate have fourteen letters each (2 x 7). The two objects, "heavens and earth," have each seven letters, making 14. The words "heavens and earth" occur in the Bible 14 times: thirteen times with *eth*, a particle denoting the direct object, and once without. Thirteen is the number of rebellion and fourteen is suggestive of perfection (2 x 7).

The general forms into which the manifestation of the unknowable are re-divisible are five - TIME, FORCE, MOTION, SPACE and MATTER.

TIME: "In the beginning."

FORCE: "God."

MOTION: "Created."

SPACE: "Heavens."

MATTER: "Earth."

I. **THE PERIOD:** Time - "In the beginning."

The Hebrew word here is *Bereshith*. It has no definite article.

The time of this primal creation is not 4004 B.C., but it is in the dateless past. How much time elapsed between verses 1 and 2 and 3 we do not know. Between these verses are all the time required to produce all the formations of the earth: coal, oil, gas, etc.

This is the "world that then was" (II Peter 3:6).

The dateless past of this creation is further seen in the fact that there is no definite article. It is "in the beginning."

Science speaks of the earth being millions or billions of years old. This may be true, as there is no time indicted how long ago the earth was created.

II. **THE PERSON:** Force - "God."

The Hebrew word here is **elohim**. This word occurs some 270 times in the OT and usually occurs with reference to creative work. It is translated in the Authorized Version (AV) by such words as "angels" (1), "God" (frequently), "goddess" (2), "gods" (240), "judges" (5), "great" (1), "mighty" (2), "very great" (1) and "exceeding" (literally 'to God' - 1).

This (*elohim*) is a uni-plural noun. A noun is a name indicting personality, being. Plural involves more than one; uni, implying the union, association of those possessing this name.

The association in creation:

- A. The Architect - God, the Father (Acts 4:24; 14:15; 15:18). He planned, and purposed.
- B. The Builder - God, the Son (John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:1-3; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16-17). He performed the work.
- C. The Consummator - God, the Spirit (Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4; Psalm 104:30; Isaiah 40:12-15).

Elohim is made up of two words: "El," meaning "strength or strong one": "Alah" which means "to swear or bind ones self to an oath, a covenant."

III. **THE POWER:** Motion - "Created."

The verb here is **bara** and has the meaning of creating something out of nothing. It occurs three times in Genesis chapter 1: Material Creation (1); Animal Creation (21); Human Creation (27).

There are two other Hebrew verbs with a similar thought: **asah** and **yatsar**. They have the idea of making out of existing material. All three verbs are found in Isaiah 43:7. He "created" the spirit; "made" matter; it was created. This divine action was both great and perfect (Psalm 111:2; Revelation 15:3; Deuteronomy 32:4).

IV. **THE PRODUCT:** Space - "Heavens" and Matter - "Earth"

By the "heavens" here is probably meant the stellar heavens - the sun, moon and stars. Maybe the angels too are included here (Job 38:6-7; Colossians 1:16).

By the "earth" is meant this orb on which we live. How it originally looked or who dwelt here is more or less a subject of speculation. However, it must have been different from our present earth, both as to vegetation and animal life.

CONCLUSION

1. This verse, Genesis 1:1, denies all false isms:
 - a. The eternity of matter: "God created."
 - b. Atheism: Nature impossible without a Creator, God.
 - c. Polytheism: Not many gods, but One God in Three Persons.
 - d. Pantheism: Which teaches that God and nature are one.
 - e. Agnosticism: We can and must know there is a God.
 - f. Fatalism: The universe did not just happen. There is intelligence behind creation.

2. Why Did God Create?
 - a. As a delightful pleasure (Revelation 4:11).
 - b. As a demonstration of His power (Psalm 147:4-5).
 - c. As a display of His perfection (Job 37:16).
 - d. As a pattern of His purpose. (He created the heavens and the earth. He will have a heavenly people, the Church which is His Body; and an earthly people, Redeemed Israel.)

THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S CREATION

Compiled by: Charles F. Baker
Grace Bible College

THE SOLAR SYSTEM				
<i>Actual measure in miles</i>			<i>Model, 1 Billion times smaller</i>	
BODY	DIAMETER	DISTANCE FROM SUN	DIAMETER	DISTANCE FROM SUN
SUN	864,000		54"= 4-½ ft.	
MERCURY	3,100	36,000,000	.2 inches	190 feet
VENUS	7,700	67,000,000	.48 inches	353 feet
EARTH	8,000	93,000,000	.5 inches	491 feet
MARS	4,200	142,000,000	.26 inches	749 feet
JUPITER	88,700	483,000,000	5.5 inches	2,550 feet
SATURN	71,500	886,000,000	4.5 inches	4,678 feet
URANUS	32,000	1,783,000,000	2 inches	9,398 feet
NEPTUNE	31,000	2,794,000,000	2 inches	14,780 feet
PLUTO	7,000	3,675,000,000	.44 inches	19,377 feet

The sun is so large that if it were a hollow sphere it would hold 1,264,400 Earths. If the Earth were placed at the center of the Sun, the Moon could rotate around the Earth and still have 194,000 miles between the Moon and the surface of the Sun. The Sun is a comparatively small star. The star Betelgeuse in the constellation of Orion (cf Job 9:9, 38:31; Amos 5:8), has a volume 113,000,000 times that of our Sun.

A Light Year is 5,866,000,000,000 miles, the distance light travels in one year. (That is 5 quadrillion, 866 Trillion miles)

Using the scale model above, with the Earth 1/2 inches in diameter, the nearest star, Alpha Centauri, 4 light years away, would be 15,640 miles from Earth. Our Milky Way Galaxy has a diameter of 100,000 Light Years, which on our scale model would be 391,000,000 miles. The nearest galaxy to ours is Andromeda, 1,500,000 light years distant, which on our scale model would be 5,865,000,000,000 miles. Astronomers have photographed literally millions of such galaxies, or island universes, each containing billions of stars, and some estimated to be billions of light years distant from our galaxy.

Our astronauts have left the earth at a speed of about 20,000 miles an hour on their trips to the moon. Supposing a space ship could maintain this speed, how long would it take for trips into deep space?

To the Sun:	194 days.
To circle the Sun:	135 days.
To reach Pluto, the outermost planet:	21 years.
To reach the nearest star, Alpha Centauri:	133,920 years.
To traverse our Milky Way Galaxy:	3,348,000,000 years.

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder, consider all the worlds thy hands have made; I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder; Thy power throughout the Universe displayed. My God, How Great Thou Art.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #5 - THE PRIMEVAL CHAOS

TEXT: GENESIS 1:2 - "AND THE EARTH WAS WASTE AND VOID; AND DARKNESS WAS UPON THE FACE OF THE DEEP; AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD MOVED UPON THE FACE OF THE WATERS."
(ASV)

"NOW THE EARTH HAD BECOME WASTE AND WILD, AND DARKNESS WAS ON THE FACE OF THE ROARING DEEP, BUT THE SPIRIT OF GOD WAS BROODING ON THE FACE OF THE WATERS." - ROTHERHAM

Introduction:

- The Scriptures can be divided into three parts:
 1. The world that then was (Genesis 1:1),
 2. The world that now is (Genesis 1:2 - Revelation 30),
 3. The New Heavens and Earth (Revelation 21 and 22).

- The question that now arises, as one views this verse, is: Did God create the original earth and heavens "without form and void" or did the earth become "without form and void" by some catastrophe?

"At Genesis 1:2, we enter into a sphere of darkness and chaos, which will never be removed until the true light of righteousness shines forth in the new heavens and earth where the 'former things' have passed away." Charles H. Welch.

- Between verses one and three, there is no doubt an interval that may have been of long duration, an interval the result of a great catastrophe. The face of the earth bears the mark of a great upheaval such as only could result from Divine judgment.

I. THE PHYSICAL RUINATION

"Now the earth had become waste and wild, and darkness was on the face of the roaring deep."

"Waste, Wild, Darkness, Roaring Deep." What a description for utter chaos!

A. THE DESCRIPTION

The words "without form and void" as seen in the AV would seem to support the false idea known as the Nebular Theory, which says that a gradual evolution of the earth from a gaseous chaotic mass took place.

The words "without form and void" are in the original: tohu va vohu. This is translated by Rotherham "waste and wild" which settles whether Genesis 1:2 teaches that by a long process of evolution cosmos emerged out of chaos or that after the primal creation came an overthrow out of which, by Divine creative power, the present order was made.

The verb "was" should be rendered "became." It is so rendered in Genesis 2:7; 4:3; 9:15 and 19:26.

Other Scriptures:

Isaiah 24:10 speaks of "The city of confusion (*tohu*)."
Also note verses 1, 3, 19, 20 and 21 in this chapter.

Isaiah 34:11 speaks of "the line of confusion (*tohu*), and the plummet of emptiness (*vohu*)."

Isaiah 45:18 says that "He created it not in vain (*tohu*). He formed it to be inhabited."

Jeremiah 4:23 says, "I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void (*tohu va vohu*); and the heavens and they had no light."

It is therefore clear from the correct translation of these two words, *tohu va vohu* that Genesis 1:2 indicates a severe judgment that befell the earth after it had been created by God.

B. THE DEDUCTION

1. Scientifically - A catastrophe to the earth - destroying life and forests. Ages passed - producing coal, oil, gas, gold, precious stones, etc. The Period of the Fossils - The Geologic Ages. Here is all the time the scientist needs.
2. Scripturally - The Bible does not tell exactly how this all came about; yet, there are hints:

- a. Sin of a Pre-Adamic Race. In Genesis 1:28 God says, "replenish the earth." This would indicate that the earth had been populated before. There are also legions of demons seeking habitations, bodies. They might well be the spirits of a pre-Adamic Race (Jude 6; II Peter 2:4).
- b. Sin of the Archangel Satan. He was an exalted Being (Jude 9). Prince of this world (John 12:31). God of this age (II Corinthians 4:4).

Ezekiel 28:12-17 gives the historic view of a person: A being - not generated, but created. A Person - supernatural and upper-terrestrial. A sinless being who became a sinner.

Isaiah 14:12-14 identifies the person, Lucifer, "Son of the Morning," the glorious Angel Chief. His sin - Divine judgment upon angels and earth (I Timothy 3:6; John 8:44; I John 3:8).

B. THE SPIRIT'S REGENERATION

"But the Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters."

This is the first occurrence of the Holy Spirit in Scripture and gives us His work throughout Revelation - that of light bringer and life giver.

The Spirit brooded upon the face of the chaos as Elijah stretched himself upon the dead child (I Kings 17:17-24); as the hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and hovers over them to warm and cherish them (Matthew 23:37); as the eagle stirs up her nest and flutters over her young (Deuteronomy 32:11).

The Spirit of God: a) removes darkness, b) imparts beauty, c) gives life.

It is also so in the new spiritual creation - the Spirit moves (John 3:3-8; Romans 3:3-8; Galatians 4:29; II Corinthians 5:17-18).

CONCLUSION

When God sets forth the great doctrine of redemption, He does it in connection with creation. The two are inseparably linked together (see Psalm 19). Adam was created perfect in the beginning, a sinless being; but darkness came into his soul because of sin, and man became "waste and wild," enshrouded in darkness. A sinner is without light, life and liberty; for Satan brought darkness, death and bondage.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #6 - THE PRESENT CONSTRUCTION

TEXT: GENESIS 1:3 - 2:3.

Introduction:

The first act of God, recorded as taking place in the present order of things, is an act of restoration, an act of giving life out of death and light out of darkness. This present creation was ushered in by an act of grace, even as it will be followed by the fruit of glory.

OUTLINE

- A-1. FIRST DAY (1:3-5). LIGHT
Day and Night appointed.

- B-1. SECOND DAY (1:6-8). FIRMAMENT
Heavens and Earth appointed.

- C-1. THIRD DAY (1:9-13). EARTH - SEA
 - 1. Land and Sea appointed (9-10).
 - 2. Vegetable life created (11-13).
(Grasses, Herbs, Trees)

- A-2. FOURTH DAY (1:14-19). LIGHT-BEARERS
Sun, Moon and Stars.

- B-2. FIFTH DAY (1:20-23). ANIMALS. AIR and SEA.
 - 1. Creation of life in sea - Aquatic.
 - 2. Creation of life in air - Aerial.

- C-2. SIXTH DAY (1:24-31). LAND ANIMALS AND MAN.
Cattle (domesticated). Creeping Things.
Beasts (roving). Man (human).

- A-3. SEVENTH DAY (2:1-3). SABBATH. REST

"Day" in Genesis Chapter One:

"The word 'day' when used without any limiting words, may refer to a long or prolonged period: as 'the day of Grace,' 'The Day

of visitation,' 'The day of salvation,' 'The day of judgment,' 'The Day of the Lord,' 'Man's Day,' etc. but when the day is used with a numeral (cardinal or ordinal), as one, two, three, etc., or first, second, third, etc., 'evening and morning' (Genesis 1), or the 'seventh day' (Exodus 20:9, 11, etc.), it is defined, limited and restricted to an ordinary day of 24 hours."
- Dr. E. W. Bullinger.

Thus the reconstruction of the cosmos was accomplished by a series of Divine formative works, which extended over a period of six successive days.

These verses indicate the changed conditions in the earth that took place, not in the original creation of verse one, but subsequent thereto in the restoration.

The two agencies in this restoration are: 1) The brooding Spirit, and 2) The Spoken Word of God. In this first chapter we find that "God said," or "Let there be" or its equivalent mentioned ten times. "The Ten Commandments of Creation" (Pink).

In God's successive days of re-creation, we have a wonderful progressive revelation concerning man's redemption and restoration. The Bible, primarily, is a Book of Redemption, and therefore this record is more than historical fact; it is spiritual instruction. The work of God was progressive in creation; it is so in regeneration. In nature, we have first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn; the babe, the child, the man. So in grace we grow from Justification, through Sanctification, and on to Glorification (Philippians 1:6).

I. DAY ONE (1:3-5). LIGHT

A. What God Said (1:3)

The first of all visible things which God created was light. This light to be distinguished from the Light-holders of the fourth day. When God comes upon the scene, light also comes. (I John 1:5)

A division is made between light and darkness, creating day and night.

B. What God Saw (1:4)

God saw His goodness in this element.

Light is the very life-blood of nature; without it every material organization would fade and perish. Where the

influence of light is not, there death and silence hold supreme dominion. Light is indispensable to all life.

Light is a Divine emblem of God (I John 1:5); of Christ (John 9:5) and of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:3).

"The entrance of thy words giveth light." (Psalm 119:130).

II. DAY TWO (1:6-8) FIRMAMENT

A. What God Said (1:6)

"Let there be a firmament" - a *rakiya*, an expanse.

The work of this day consisted in the formation of that immense gaseous expanse, by which the earth is encircled, and the moon, planets and the sun are found.

B. What God Made (1:7-8)

He made a firmament to divide the waters above from waters beneath, and called this firmament "heaven."

From verse 14 we learn that this firmament stretches out to the very place of the sun and the stars; and above these then there must be water.

The word "firmament" (*rakiya*) occurs some 17 times in the Old Testament. Genesis one contains nine of them.

Note that on this second day's work, God did not say "that it was good." This firmament or heaven is no doubt the one inhabited by evil spirits and wicked powers (see Ephesians 2:2; 6:12).

Our spiritual blessings are "far above all" in the super-heavens (Ephesians 1:3).

III. DAY THREE (1:9-13). EARTH and SEA

This contains two works: (1) The formation of the material globe with its land and sea (1:9-10) and (2) The vegetable kingdom (1:11-13).

In opposition to the firmament which was named "the heights," the dry land was styled "the flats" (*aaretz*). He gathered the waters, called "seas" (*yamim*) meaning "to boil or foam"

and is applied in Scripture to any large collection of water (Genesis 14:3; Numbers 34:11; Deuteronomy 4:49; Joel 2:20).

The vegetation was primarily of three kinds: "Grass" (*deshe*), perhaps various grasses that supply food for the animals; "Herb" (*esev*), perhaps larger plants and vegetables; "Tree" (*ets*), literally "tree fruit making in which is its seed."

It appears that the seeds were in the soil, and when light, air and moisture were prepared, they sprang forth.

IV. DAY FOUR (1:14-19). LIGHT-BEARERS

The six days work are divided into two symmetrical series of three days each. Both begin with light, and in both series, the third day has two works while the others contain but one. The first series describes the arrangement of the material world - the era of matter; the second describes the creation of organized beings, animals and man - the era of life.

Having perfected the four fundamental elements - light, Air, Water and Land, He now carries each of these forward to completion. The light is permanently settled in the sun; the air and water are filled with fish and fowl; and the land by making animals and man.

These lights were given to divide the day from the night, and to give light upon the earth.

- A. For signs (*othoth*). A sign of warning and instruction (see Genesis 4:15; Luke 21:25; Acts 2:19). Important changes and occurrences in the kingdom of providence.
- B. For seasons (*moadim*). Set times. Yearly returning periods (see Genesis 17:21; 18:14). The time of the migration of birds (Jeremiah 8:7). The time of seasons and festivals (Psalm 104:19; Zechariah 8:19).
- C. For Days and Years (*yamim* and *shanim*). For calculation of time.

THE SUN. It is about 93 million miles from earth. Its diameter is about 866,000 miles, more than a million times larger than the earth. It is composed of a gaseous nature. It travels through space at about 12-1/2 miles a second. Its outer shell of luminous vapor called the photosphere is a layer of hot gases about 500 miles in depth, called the "reversing layer." Enormous red

flames, hundreds of thousands of miles, rise from the surface. They are called "prominences."

THE MOON. It is about 240,000 miles from earth with a diameter of some 2,160 miles. Its surface is of a volcanic nature, large craters and high mountains.

THE STARS. They refer to the Zodiac, the twelve constellations in which the sun has its path. They are dispensers of light, and show forth the glory of God (Job 9:9; Psalm 8:3; 19:1; 104:24).

V. DAY FIVE (1:20-23). FISH and BIRDS.

The waters and air separated on the second day are on this day filled with their respective inhabitants.

The Hebrew verb *bara* (create) occurs only three times in this narrative: 1) in the first verse at the creation of heavens and earth; 2) in verse 21 at the introduction of life on this fifth day; and 3) at the creation of man (1:27) on the sixth day. This may indicate that with the creation of animal life and man, a new order of existence begins.

A. Creation of life in the Sea - aquatic (1:20-21).

"Let the waters bring forth abundantly," literally "swarm."

"Great whales" is "great sea-monsters." The Hebrew word *tannim* is also used of serpents (Exodus 7:9) and of crocodiles (Ezekiel 29:3). "Every living creature that moveth" is literally, "all the souls of life." The word "souls" is *nephesh*.

B. Creation of life in the air - aerial (1:20-21). He also made the winged creatures to fly in the open firmament, or face of the firmament. Fish and fowl on the same day because on the second day, the firmament and the waters were separated.

God blessed even these creatures, which means to make them prosper and be abundant. To bless is to wish well (see Genesis 27:4; Numbers 6:23).

VI. DAY SIX (1:24-31). LAND ANIMALS and MAN.

Like Day Three, this is distinguished by a double creative act: the production of the higher or land animals and the creation of man.

A. The Land Animals (1:24-25).

These are divided into three groups:

1. Cattle (*behemah*), literally "the dumb animals." These are the larger grass-eating quadrupeds.
2. Creeping things (*remes*). The moving animals such as worms, insects, reptiles, etc.
3. Beasts of the earth (*chayyah*). Wild, roving, carnivorous beasts of the forest; although not at this time wild and carnivorous.

Agassiz and A. A. Gould estimate the number of vertebrate (spinal) animals at 20,000.

Another division is as follows:

- 1,500 species of mammals (nourish young with milk).
- 6,000 species of birds.
- 1,500 species of reptiles.
- 6,000 species of fish.
- 9,000 species of mollusks (invertebrates as snails, clams).
- 5,000 species of marine shells.
- 2,000 species of land and obluviatile shells.
- 60,000 species of insects.
- 10,000 species of echine (sea urchins), starfish, medusae (jellyfish) and polypi (octopus).

B. Man (1:26-31).

1. The Divine Consultation (1:26).

"And God said, Let us." God now appears in the majesty of plurality. Here is an indication of the Trinity. The word for God is *Elohim*, a uni-plural noun.

2. The Divine Association (1:26).

"Us" indicating unity of purpose as well as thought.

3. The Divine Proposition (1:26).

"Make man" or mankind. The Hebrew word is *Adam*, meaning "red." In verse 27 it says, "male and female created He them." This might indicate that the original man, Adam, was a bi-sexual being.

4. The Divine Reproduction (1:26-27).

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," or "in the likeness of our image."

Whose image? Not the image of Jehovah, the covenant or redemptive name; but Elohim, the creative name. So Adam was made in the image of His Creator, not the Redeemer. To be like the Redeemer is man's future hope.

Man was not created omnipotent, omniscient, nor omnipresent; nether was he holy or spiritual. Even after the fall, man is spoken of as being in the "image and likeness" (see Genesis 9:6; I Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9).

Was the image moral, intellectual or physical? Not a full moral image of God, for that would involve full moral likeness, the glories, perfections and attributes of Deity. Not a full intellectual likeness, for man did not know the difference between good and evil, and he certainly was not omniscient. The perfect likeness must have been physical.

Many object to any physical likeness because of John 4:24, "God is a Spirit." But we answer that the Second Person of the Godhead must have taken upon Him creature form (in the incarnation He took human form) in order to create and to manifest the Deity. (See Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 3:14; cf. Proverbs 8:22-31; I Corinthians 11:7; Numbers 12:6-8; Psalm 17:15 - Revised Version).

Christ afterwards emptied Himself and took human form in order to redeem (see John 1:1-3; 1:14; Philipians

2:6; Galatians 4:4; and cf. Revelation 4:11 with 5:9; Acts 7:56; Philippians 3:20-21).

See the "New Man" in redemption (Ephesians 4:24).

Christ imaged Elohim. Man received an outward body or form physically like the pre-incarnate Christ - Who possessed form. Man may have lost some of the form in the fall (see Psalm 104:2). Man, like Christ, may originally have had a covering of light.

Who is the image of God? - Christ (Colossians 1:15-16; II Corinthians 4:4). Adam, a type of Christ (I Corinthians 15:45-47; Romans 5:14).

The early Church Fathers were of the opinion that the words "image" and "likeness" were expressive of separate ideas: "image" of the body, which by reason of its beauty, intellectual aspect and erect stature, was an adumbration of God; "likeness" of the soul, or intellectual, moral nature.

Havernich suggests that "image" is the concrete, and "likeness" the abstract.

The Reformed theologians commonly held that it consisted of: 1) the spirituality of his being as an intelligent and free agent; 2) in the moral integrity and holiness of his nature; and 3) in his dominion over the creatures.

The Origin of Man:

- a) The Time - when the earth his home was ready for him.
- b. His rank and power - he was the highest above all else.
- c) His Nature - in the likeness and image of Elohim. The revelation precludes the foolish idea that man ascended from the lower forms of animal life up through the brute beasts. Christ confirms this (Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6).

e) The Divine Purpose (1:28-31)

(1) As Seen in Man's Mission (1:28)

God blessed Adam, and gave him work to do. There were three things which God commanded man to do: He was to be "fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth." He had a duty to creation. And finally, he was to "have dominion" over all fish, fowl and beast. A duty to the animal creation.

(2) As Seen in Man's Maintenance (1:29)

Herb-bearing seed and tree fruit were given for man's sustenance. So, original man was a strict vegetarian. Of the three classes of plants enumerated in verse 12, the two highest are given to man for food. It was not until after the Flood that man was authorized to kill animals for food (Genesis 9:3).

To the animals God gave every green herb for meat (1:30).

(3) As Seen in Man's Majesty (1:31)

Man comes as the crown of creation, and God saw that all was good. Man came forth from His Maker in innocence and perfect in body.

VII. DAY SEVEN (2:1-3) SABBATH OF CREATION

A. The Completion (2:1)

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished."
Everything - the material heavens and earth with all its creatures.

B. The Cessation (2:2)

"...rested on the seventh day."

In no case must the rest of the Creator be understood as the result of fatigue (Isaiah 40:28). It was rest of satisfaction and joy which it afforded Him.

God rested after a perfect work of creation; some day He will rest again after a perfect work of redemption.

C. The Consecration (2:3)

"...Blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it."

God blessed and sanctified the seventh day before He gave it to Moses in the Decalogue (ten commandments). It is typical of the blessed day when God shall have completed His greater work of redemption through the Cross of Christ.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #7 - THE PRIMAL RECAPITULATION

TEXT: GENESIS 2:4-25.

Introduction:

- We now come to the first of "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth." Some think that this is a superscription of what follows. What follows is without a doubt the further history of the heavens and the earth; so it could refer both to what goes before and what now follows.
- Some Bible teachers believe that the creation of man in Genesis 1:26 refers to a totally different being than the man who was made out of the dust of the ground in Genesis 2:7. But the same word *Adam* is used in both passages. I Corinthians 15:45 speaks of "the first man Adam made a living soul," and links this with Genesis 2:7 as well as Genesis 1:26.
- There is a law in Scripture called, "The Law of Recurrence." It says, "A peculiarity of the Holy Spirit as an author by which He gives first the outlines of a subject, and then recurs to it again for the purpose of adding details." The law is seen in this passage.

I. OF CREATION (4:6)

The narrator now tells us that there was a time when the earth of plants had not yet appeared; and, he proceeds to give two reasons.

A. There was no moisture on the earth (2:5).

God had not caused it to rain on the earth.

B. There was no man to till the soil (2:5).

We note that working the soil for production of vegetation was necessary before the Fall of man.

C. The God provided water in mist (2:6).

So the first condition necessary for the springing forth of plant life is not provided for.

II. OF MAN (2:7).

"The body of man was first formed of the moist dust of the ground by Divine power, and then man became an animated being through Divine breathing." - Delitzsch.

The breath, which creatively went forth from God, and entered into man, becoming the principle of his physical life, and manifesting itself in breathing and in his life in general, is called "The breath of lives" (note here the plural "lives"). Then man became "a living soul." This same expression is found in the original concerning all fish, birds and land animals (see Genesis 1:20, 21, 24, 30). "Every living creature" in Genesis 2:19 should be "every living soul."

The word translated "soul" is *nephesh*, and literally means "a breathing creature." This word *nephesh* is translated in the AV by some thirty odd different terms, such as: any (4 times), appetite (2), beast (2), body (7) breath (1), creature (9), dead body (8) desire (5), ghost (2), heart (15), life (119), lust (2), man (3), mind (15) one (1), own (1), person (30), pleasure (4), self (19), soul (428), thing (2), will (4), fish (1), hearty (1), mortal (1), will (1), etc.

As the Hebrew word *nephesh* is also used of the lower animals, it shatters the fundamental error of "the immortality of the soul" that has grown up around it. Out of the first thirteen times that *nephesh* occurs in the Book of Genesis, ten of these refer to animals.

Paul in I Corinthians 15:44 certainly knows of the natural immortality of man in his soul. There he says, "It is sown a natural body (the Greek word translated "natural" is *psuchikos* or soulical), it is raised a spiritual body. This soulical condition is also linked with "corruption" (42) "dishonor" (43), and "weakness" (43). The further contrast between "soul" and "spirit" is seen in Paul's words in verse 45, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Adam is "of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from Heaven" (v. 47).

Then the Apostle concludes his argument of the contrast between the "earthy" and the "heavenly" by adding: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (v. 50). So, Adam as created and unfallen, is unfit for the

kingdom of God. The "soul" is definitely linked to "flesh and blood" as can be seen from Leviticus 17:11. So that original man is in no sense spiritual in his nature. The soul is contrasted with the spirit (see Hebrews 4:12; I Corinthians 15:44; I Corinthians 2:14).

In James 3:15 the word *psuchikos* is translated "sensual." The whole teaching of Scripture concerning the soul points to it as the sum of the natural life. Just as man "became a living soul" at creation, so at death he becomes "a dead soul" (Numbers 19:11, margin).

The attributes of the soul are hunger, and the pleasures and functions of eating (Proverbs 6:30; 13:25; 19:15; 27:7); all the natural enjoyments of this life (Ecclesiastes 2:24; Luke 12:19).

The OT further associates the soul with the various organs of the body, which in their functions make up the living soul.

Genesis 49:6, "O my soul...mine liver" (AV "honor").
Psalm 16:9, "My heart is glad, my liver (AV "glory") rejoiceth."
Psalm 31:9, "Mine eye...yes, my soul and my belly."
Proverbs 13:25, "Satisfying of his soul; but the belly of the wicked shall want."
Psalm 16:7, "My kidneys (AV "reins, : Jeremiah 17:10)."

The figurative use of the organs of the body are based upon the fact that the combined organism is the soul.

Notice again in Genesis 2:7 that it does not say that man became the possessor of a soul, but he "became a living soul." A living man is a living soul, a dead man is a dead soul. The soul cannot be, therefore, some immaterial, independent, spiritual something. The word *nephesh* is closely related to the word *naphach*, "to breathe." This word is translated in Exodus 23:12 by "be refreshed." The Hebrew word for "nostril" is *aph*, also closely related. So there is a connection between "soul," "breath" and "nostril." So the first man became a "soul," a breather.

So this first man upon the earth was a perfect man, but only in the natural sense; he was not supernatural. He was "flesh and blood." He was innocent; but not righteous. His communion with God was that of an unfallen creature. Everything about him was in the realm of the natural, the trees for food, the garden, the dominion over all creation,

etc., but nothing for the spirit. I Corinthians 15:46 tells us "that was not first which is spiritual." So a being that is not spiritual could never have a spiritual fall.

III. OF MAN'S HABITATION (2:8-17).

It is remarkable that the three heads of the three groups of created beings are seen each in conjunction with a garden: Satan, the Garden of God (Ezekiel 28:13); Adam, The Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8); and Christ, the Garden of Gethsemane (John 18:1).

These verses are exceedingly important, and rightly understood will bring much help and blessing. These verses constitute the foundation for the tragic events of chapter three.

A. Divine Production (2:8)

..."a garden...in Eden." The word "Eden" means "pleasure or delight." It occurs fourteen times in the OT, six times in Genesis, and six times in Ezekiel, and once each in Isaiah and Joel.

The Garden in Eden was of God's special planting; by its beauty it gave the impression of being more directly of Divine origin than all the earth and the vegetable kingdom besides.

Human life requires a locality, a home for its proper expression and development. The exact locality geographically of Eden is not known. It may have been in one of three places: 1) At the head of the Persian Gulf; 2) Armenia; 3) Babylonia. From the description of the rivers, it seems to have been in the highlands which now constitute Armenia.

B. Divine Provision (2:9-14).

1. The Trees (2:9). All the trees have their mission; two of them are specially named because of their importance.

a. The beautiful for man's aesthetic nature.

"...every tree that is pleasant to the sight."
Flowers, trees and shrubs regaled his eyes with their exquisite forms and enchanting colors.

b. The beneficial for man's physical nature.

"...and good for food," "Tree of Life."

Note also, "every tree." It speaks of abundance, a bountiful provision. The most luscious fruit, nuts for man's physical well-being. berries and nuts for man's well-being.

c. The prohibitive for man's moral nature.

"The tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

Man being a moral creature must have an opportunity to express his choice. God could not have put less than one object to test man's obedience or disobedience.

2. The Rivers (2:10-14).

A river flowed through Eden and the Garden, and then parted into four rivers.

a. The Pison or "Full Flow" (2:11-12). Believed in ancient times to be an Indian river. Havilah was a land of gold, bdellium and the onyx stone.

b. The Gihon or "The Bursting" (2:13). Believed to be the Oxus or the Araxes. There was an Asiatic Cush, as well as one in Africa.

c. The Hiddekel or "The Darting" (2:14). Perhaps Tigris.

d. The Euphrates or "The Sweet" (2:14). Known also as "The Great River" (Deuteronomy 1:7; Daniel 10:4).

B. Divine Probation (2:15-17).

1. By means of Occupation (2:15).

"...put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

Man is to serve in subjection to his Creator. Work is therefore not a result of sin. But it was sin that brought in labor in the sweat of the brow amidst thorns and thistles.

There is here first the positive - "to dress it." Man was to be a gardener, a horticulturist. Then there is the negative - "to keep it." Here there is a hint that something might destroy the garden. Adam was to be on the alert of any enemy that might come to the garden. So Adam was forewarned.

2. By means of Restriction (2:16-17).

Jehovah now speaks to man, who had the ability to understand God's language.

Note that God says he may freely eat of all the trees of the Garden - but one - "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

Man was created as a free moral agent, with the possibility of character. Alternate choice makes character possible.

Someone has said that all creatures lower than man are held, but that the man alone is held accountable.

The Divine government of Genesis 1:3-25 is set forth as absolute: "He spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast (Psalm 33:9). So that in the realm of creation, we are in a sphere of mechanical movement where everything is determined, where there is no option, no alternative, no choice.

But when we pass from the realm of creation to the realm of human activity, we leave the sphere of mechanical determinism and enter the sphere of moral agency, accountability and contingency.

There were three ways in which God could have prevented evil:

- a. God could have created a being who was incapable of sinning. Had He done so, the creature would have remained on the level of a brute beast.
- b. God could have created a being capable of sinning, and yet have kept him from all possible internal and external temptation. Man would then forever remain innocent.

- c. God could have created a man, and allowed temptation, and yet prevented him from yielding to it. But this very act would have destroyed the moral nature that God formed. Enforced goodness, coerced love and compulsory worship are contradictions. God cannot create character or ready-made righteousness.

The difference between that which is mechanical and that which is moral is seen in the following:

I am determined to walk against the wind.
Dust is determined to go with the wind.

In the first, there is choice; in the second, there is none.
So the problem of evil is the problem of a moral person.

In all creation outside of man, we have mechanical determinism. But in the creation of man, we have moral accountability. Man alone is morally responsible to his Creator. In man alone there-fore sin is possible.

IV. OF MAN'S HELPMATE (2:18-25).

In the record of creation (Genesis 1:27), it is simply stated that God created man, "male and female created He them." There is complete absence of details as to the manner of their creation. We now get the details of the woman's creation.

How long Adam lived in Paradise before Eve was created we do not know. It must have been long enough for him to know that he was a lonely creature.

While the animals were produced either in swarms (as the fishes) or in pairs (as the birds and beasts), man was created as an individual.

A. The Divine Revelation (2:18).

"It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helpmate for him."

Two things are said here: First, that man was not happy alone; and secondly, that God would give him a companion.

The word translated "help meet" or "helper" is the Hebrew word *ezer*, to help, assist, aid; in war, an ally. The word does not necessarily denote any sex connection.

The woman is described as a "help answering to him," that is, man needed the assistance of one who should be his equal, or as Delitzsch says: "who by relative difference and essential equality should be his fitting complement."

B. The Divine Reason (2:19-20).

"...there was not found an help meet for him."

The purpose of the bringing together of the animals and of naming them was that the desire for a being who should complement him might be aroused. He found, however, among the animals no creature fitted to be his helper, no counterpart of himself, capable of answering his thoughts and of holding with him rational discourse.

Specimens of the animals are now assembled round the inmate of Eden:

1. To see what Adam would call them - his power of speech.
2. The opportunity for him to use the gift of language.
3. To manifest his sovereignty or lordship over creation.

The portrait here given of the first man is something widely different from that of an infantile savage slowly groping his way towards the possession of an articulate speech and intelligent language by imitating the sounds of animals.

"But for Adam there was not found an help meet."
This is the reason for assembling the animals. No fellowship was found among them. There was no one that he could call *isha* or woman.

C. The Human Result (2:21-23)

In these verses God now becomes a surgeon and operates much as a doctor would today:

1. The induction stage of anaesthesia - "The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam."
2. The confirmation of the anaesthesia - "and he slept."
3. The operation performed - "and He took one from his side."
4. The operation perfected - "closed up the flesh."

So God puts Adam to sleep and then in this state of supernatural slumber the operation is performed. Eve is "tailored" to match the very tissues and form of her husband. She is both physically and psychologically matched.

Our AV says, "and he took one of his ribs." The original has *ahat mizaltan*. The root word is *tsela*. It is translated "rib" (2 times), "side" (19) and "side chamber" (9). The translation "side" is mostly related to the Tabernacle in Exodus chapters 25, 26, 27, 36, 37 and 38. The word "side chamber" is entirely related to the Temple of Ezekiel in Ezekiel chapter 41. This brings to mind the reference to the church, the Body of Christ as "an holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21).

So it was a "side chamber" that God took from Adam. Some have pointed out that the structure of the respiratory system has a set of three lobes on the right side, and only two on the left. There may have been an equality here that was disturbed at some time.

Adam could originally then have been a bi-sexual creation. God thus removes the "side chamber" or chambers, and forms what is called in the Anglo-Saxon a "womb-man" or woman.

This woman is then presented to Adam, and he called her "woman" or *isha*, because she was taken out of "man" or *ish* (I Corinthians 11:8, 12).

Matthew Henry says: "The woman was not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be

trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, and under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him."

D. The Human Relationship (2:24-25).

"They shall be one flesh."

It is difficult to decide whether these are the words of Adam or the narrator. The words of Christ (Matthew 19:4-6) do not decide the matter.

Marriage is a relationship in which all filial relation recedes, a relationship most intimate, personal, corporeal and spiritual in the Lord. This designates monogamy as the God-designed form. There is here a unity of purpose, conjunction of bodies, community of interests and a reciprocity of affection.

Verse 25 says, "they were both naked...and were not ashamed." Not because they were uncultured, but because they may have partaken of God's covering of light (see Psalm 104:2). Shame implies a sense of guilt because of sin. This they knew nothing about.

CONCLUSION

It is Paul who brings this first marriage scene into its greatest spiritual focus - Ephesians 5:21-33. So that Genesis 2:24 becomes the foundation of the greatest spiritual relations - that of Christ and His church. Here it is true as Paul said in I Corinthians 15:46 - "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural (or better soulical); and afterwards that which is spiritual."

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #8 - THE PRIMEVAL REBELLION

TEXT: GENESIS 3:1-24.

Introduction:

This third chapter of Genesis is without a doubt the most important chapter in the Bible, for without it the rest of Scripture would be meaningless.

Valerius Herberger said: "The third chapter of Genesis, the third of John and the third of Romans are the chapters that tells us where sin came from, and also where righteousness and blessing too come."

Like the Creation chapter, this chapter has had its various interpretations, such as:

- Mythical. That which is unreal, untrue, impossible.
- Allegory. Teaching the truth about one thing by substituting another for it which is unlike it (Hagar and Sarah represent two covenants - Law and Promise - Galatians 4:22-26). An allegory is a symbolic fictional figure.
- Legend. An ancient story narrated down through the centuries without historical fact. Regarded historical.
- Fable. An entirely fictitious story conceived in human imagination only.

We believe that here is a presentation of a literal fact based upon a true historical record. However, in the Bible the literal may be modified with figures of speech. While a figure of speech may not be so true to the letter it certainly enhances the truth conveyed. For example, we read:

Satan is called a serpent (Revelation 12:9; 20:2).
Satan transforms into an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14).
Dan called a serpent (Genesis 49:17).
Nero called a lion (II Timothy 4:17).
Herod called a fox (Luke 13:32).

Judah called a lion's whelp (Genesis 49:9).
Doctrine called leaven (Matthew 16:6).
"Thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).
"He shall crush thy head" (Genesis 3:15).
"Dust shalt thou eat" (Genesis 3:14).
"If ye bite and devour one another" (Galatians 5:15).
"His enemies shall lick the dust" (Psalm 72:9).

The literal truth of this chapter is attested by Christ and the apostles (John 8:44); Romans 16:20; II Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9; 20:2).

The word translated "serpent" in 3:1 is *nahash*, which means "shining one." We read that Satan transforms into an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14).

In reading Genesis 2:8-25 one is not impressed with a sense of a long period. The description of the Garden is limited to the trees and the rivers that watered the garden and ran from it. Only two trees are mentioned by name. A Rabbinical interpretation of Psalm 49:12 refers it to Adam, who "abode not a night," but who on the tenth day from the commencement of the creation week fell, hence the Day of Atonement to be observed on the tenth day of the month.

Redemption is older than creation, for it was planned before man was created. Christ was foreordained as The Lamb of God before the overthrow of the world (I Peter 1:19-20). The great outstanding feature of the command to Adam is its simplicity. All that Adam is told to do is to abstain from eating of the forbidden fruit. There seems to be no law of positive precepts, the keeping of which involved great care, labor and watchfulness. He was under the easiest of conditions, surrounded by everything that was good and pleasant. It was a passive obedience. There is no promise attached to obedience.

Adam is given no alternative promise. Some think if he had continued obedient, he would some day be transferred to heaven and have eternal life. But this is pure speculation.

I. A SUBTILE TEMPTATION (3:1-6a).

Two beings now enter the stage of this great drama of the ages - The Serpent and Eve. It is Satan who now comes in the form of the serpent. According to Rabbinic legend, the serpent in its original state had the power of speech, its intellectual powers exceeding those of other animals. It is this being who is the cause of all sin, sorrow, suffering in this world.

The origin of Satan, the Serpent must be included in that act of Christ when all things were created by Him (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16). His original glory and perfection are described in Ezekiel 28:11-15; and his fall in Isaiah 14:9-17; Ezekiel 28:16-19. His ultimate habitation is seen in Revelation 20:10, from which as far as we know there will be no resurrection.

The names of this being: Beelzebub (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15). The Devil (Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:2, 6; Revelation 12:9; 20:2). Belial or ungodliness (II Corinthians 6:15). Satan (I Chronicles 21:1; Job 1:6; Luke 22:31; John 13:27; Acts 5:3; 26:18; Romans 16:20; Revelation 12:9). Dragon (Revelation 12:3-4; ch. 13). Old Serpent (II Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9; 20:2).

The nature of this being: Sinned from the beginning (I John 3:8). Tempter (Matthew 4:3; I Corinthians 7:5; I Thessalonians 3:5; I Timothy 5:15). Accuser (Job 1:6, 7, 9-12; 2:3-7). Adversary (Luke 22:31; I Peter 5:8). Murderer and liar (John 8:44; Acts 5:3). An angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14). Enemy (Matthew 13:39). Father of lies (John 8:44). Power of darkness (Colossians 1:13). Prince of this world (John 12:31). The god of this age (II Corinthians 4:4). Wicked one (Matthew 13:19, 38).

From all of this we get the *summum bonum* of his character as the one who is the enemy of God's person, His promises, and His program. He becomes the enemy of man as man is in harmony with God. God's truth, His holiness and righteousness come under his attack.

From his names and nature we learn that his activities are mainly in the moral and religious realms. He may sit in the professor's chair and the preacher's seat.

This serpent is greatly interested in the acceptance of the lie, the hiding or neutralizing of God's truth, the support of tradition, the jeers of the infidel, the opposition of critics and the failures of the believers.

Definition: Temptation is the incitement of the natural desires to go beyond the limit or bound set by God. A desire to enjoy things, get things, do things. It works in the realm of appetite, acquisition and achievement.

We need to study this first temptation that we may be able to say with Paul: "We are not ignorant of his devices" (II Corinthians 2:11).

A. SATAN'S METHOD

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" (3:1a).

The word translated "subtil" is the Hebrew word *arum*. The word translated "naked" in 2:25 is the Hebrew word *arumim*. Both come from the same root. It is also translated "crafty" and "prudent."

It is likely that the serpent was an upright animal, and a very beautiful one. Satan is here using the serpent as his tool, his mouthpiece to speak to Eve. It was intelligent speech.

Satan now uses a threefold method to entrap Eve. He speaks both truth and error. Herein is seen Satan's subtilty.

1. Interrogation (3:1b).

"Can it be that God hath said?"

Here is not a question for information in an answer from Eve. It is a figure of speech called "Erotesis." It is a question in wonder and disparagement. His purpose was DOUBT, to instill opposition to God's Word. It was interrogation with the idea of insinuation. Finding the woman more easily persuaded, he brings doubt into her mind concerning God's goodness and love. Satan is a betrayer of God's love.

2. Contradiction (3:4).

"Ye shall not surely die." But God had definitely said that they would die (2:17).

Here we have plain denial, instilling contradiction to God's Word. Satan is a liar (John 8:44) and his words are here a direct contradiction to God's Word.

3. Information (3:5).

"...as gods, knowing good and evil."

Here Satan is telling the truth again. This truth that Satan now spoke is held up later as a mark of spiritual maturity (see Hebrews 5:14).

Man would, however, later learn that true goodness is only found in Jesus Christ, and evil in Satan and his works. To be able to discern between good and evil, and then WANT to do the good is the highest attainment. This is the grace way.

However, there may be a bit of deception in this statement for Satan may have intended to appeal to Eve's pride. In this sense, Satan's truth can become an evil. Any appeal to curiosity, vanity and pride can lead to evil ways. So even truth with a wrong motive may lead to destruction.

The serpent first of all excites Eve's curiosity by speaking to her. Then he raises a suspicion of God's Word, and injects a threefold doubt:

- a. Of God's goodness - by reason of the restriction (3:1).
- b. Of God's righteousness - by reason of the statement that they would not die (3:4).
- c. Of God's holiness - in the assurance that they would be as God (3:5).

Satan takes the path of doubt, denial and disbelief.

The woman was truly deceived, "the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty" (II Corinthians 11:3). "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

B. EVE'S MISTAKE.

1. In what she said (3:2, 3).

It is a serious thing how we handle the Word of God.

- a. Omission. She omitted "freely" (3:2, cf. 2:16).
- b. Addition. She added "touch it" (3:3, cf. 2:17; Proverbs 30:5-6).

c. Alteration. She said, "lest ye die" (3:3) for "thou shalt surely die" (2:17). She changed a certainty to a contingency; a chance event, liable but not certain, probable but not possible.

2. In what she saw (3:6a).

"For all that is the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (I John 2:16).

a. Lust of the flesh. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food." Cf. Matthew 4:3 - Jesus and bread.

b. Lust of the eyes. "And it was pleasant to the eyes." Cf. Matthew 4:5 - Jesus and the Temple.

c. Pride of life. "And a tree to be desired to make thee wise." Cf. Matthew 4:8 - Jesus and the Mount.

Man fell in the Garden of Eden, but Christ won a victory in a wilderness.

II. A SERIOUS TRANSGRESSION (3:6b).

"She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Eve takes first and tastes; then she gave her husband and he ate; and the Fall ensued. See I Timothy 2:14.

A. Eve sinned through deception.

She was deceived by Satan. Note the steps in her temptation and transgression: SAW, DESIRED, TOOK, ATE, GAVE. This is the way of temptation and transgression. Satan has not changed his method.

B. Adam sinned through acceptance.

He was given the fruit of the forbidden tree by his wife, of whom he was to be the head. In a sense therefore his sin was the greater, although they both share in the disaster.

The will of God was resisted; the word of God was rejected; the way of God was renounced.

III. A SUDDEN TRANSFORMATION (3:7-8).

The consequent result of sin is now manifest, the great tragedy is done, and man is now to begin his long weary road of toil, hardship, suffering, sorrow, sickness and death.

A. Its Reality (3:7a).

They recognized physical nakedness. They had lost their state of innocency - a covering with light as with a garment (Psalm 104:2). They now know "good and evil," but by paying a terrible price for it. Disobedience lies at the root of all evil. So the fatal deed is committed, the promised results ensued; but not the anticipated blessings. They would now know evil, but without the power to free themselves from it.

B. Its Responsibility (3:7b-8).

The possibility of sin lies in the fact of personality. Unless man was to be an automaton, with no opportunity for character, there must be granted the possibility of sin.

Environment and heredity cannot blot out the distinction between right and wrong or rob a man of his responsibility. Sin is not an inherent tendency in Adam.

Adam and Eve recognized their responsibility, as every man does, by two outstanding acts:

1. They "sewed fig leaves...made aprons."

They immediately tried to cover their nakedness with fig leaves, a type of man's righteousness which is inadequate for sin. There is no crying to God or prostration before Him in contrition. They no doubt lost at least a part of Elohim's glorious likeness.

2. "Hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God."

Here trees are used in which to hide; in Revelation, rocks will be used (6:16). Sin brings dread of God; holiness brings delight in God.

"They heard the voice of the Lord God." This may well spell both horror and hope.

- a. The noise of his footsteps (Leviticus 26:33; Numbers 16:34; II Samuel 5:24).
- b. The thunder that accompanied His approach (Exodus 9:23; Job 37:4-5).
- c. The sound of His voice (3:8a).

No unforgiven sinner can be at ease in the presence of a Holy God.

"In the cool of the day." The word translated "cool" is the Hebrew word *ruach*. It means "wind" and is also translated by "spirit." God was there in the symbol of His Holy Spirit.

IV. A SEVERE TRIBULATION (3:9-19).

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" (3:9).

Here we have the first direct question in the Bible. The first question in the NT is, "Where is He?" (Matthew 2:2).

It is God's nature to pursue sinners. Here He pursued Adam and Eve by His voice; He pursued Jonah by a wind (Jonah 1:4); He pursued David by a prophet (II Samuel 12:1). He also pursues by providences, by His Word and His Spirit. God's purpose is to apprehend them (Philippians 3:12); to forgive and save them (Luke 19:10); and if they will not accept, to judge and condemn them (II Thessalonians 1:8).

It becomes the certain fate of all fugitives to eventually find themselves face to face with God - Adam and Eve (3:9); Cain (Genesis 4:9); David (II Samuel 12:1); Ahab (I Kings 21:20); Jonah (Jonah 1:6). In God's pursuit after man: Distance will not prevent (Psalm 139:7); Darkness will not hinder (Psalm 139:11); Deception will not avail (Hebrews 4:13); Defenses will not help (Amos 9:2-3).

A. Examination of the Sinners (3:10-13).

1. God's interrogations are simple and searching.

"Adam, where art thou?" "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" "Hast thou eaten of the tree?" "What hast thou done?"

a. He knows the sinner's circumstances.

The fact of his guilt, the nature, time, manner and reason of the sinner's transgression.

b. He aims at the sinner's conviction.

c. He wishes the sinner's confession (Proverbs 28:13; I John 1:9).

2. Man's informations are sober and shifting.

"I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." (3:10).

"The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." (3:12).

"And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." (3:13)

It seems so difficult for the sinner to say, "I have sinned." But such is the way of the sinner. He seeks to transfer the responsibility of his guilt upon someone else. The statements as such were true; but every man stands responsible before God.

B. Execution of the sentences (3:14-15).

Confessions having been made by both delinquents, and the arch-enemy of the whole mischief discovered, the Divine Judge proceeds to deliver the sentences.

1. Upon the serpent (3:14-15).

a. The animal (3:14).

Animal creatures can only be cursed according to their natures. "Upon thy belly shalt thou go." This would indicate that the serpent was at first an upright animal. But now as the worm steals over the earth with its length of body, so the serpent would become as a mean and despised crawler in the dust. No animal is more despised than the snake. "Dust shalt thou eat." To lick

or eat the dust is equivalent to being reduced to a condition of meanness, shame and contempt.

b. The Arch-enemy (3:15).

Here we have judgment without mercy. There is to be an abiding hostility between the serpent's brood and the "seed" of the woman, until the serpent's head is finally bruised. The incarnation and death of the woman's Seed will bring ultimate destruction of this tempter.

Here we have the great conflict of the ages. The serpent will have a seed, as will the woman. Her seed coming forth in Christ, and Satan's finally in the Antichrist. There will be a long dual between good and evil - Cain and Abel, Enoch and Lamech, Abraham and the wicked kings, Moses with Pharaoh and kings of Amalek, Sihon, and Og, David and his enemies, Christ and His contemporaries.

The Lord Jesus Christ is, in particular, "the Seed" (Galatians 3:16, 19; 4:4), Who came "that He might destroy the works of the Devil" (I John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14).

2. Upon the woman (3:16).

God now passes judgment upon her first because she had sinned first. The sentence is twofold:

➤ Sorrow. Sorrow is a word that is most emphasized both for the woman and the man. The womanly and wifely sorrow of Eve was to be intensified, and the pains of parturition or childbirth were to be multiplied. The pains of childbirth are, in Scripture, emblematic of the severest anguish both of mind and body (Micah 4:9-10; Revelation 12:2). But the Gospel gives a special promise to mothers (I Timothy 2:15).

➤ Subjection. "He shall rule over thee." Christianity, while placing woman on the same platform with man spiritually (Galatians 3:28), explicitly inculcates her subordination to man in relation to marriage (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; I Peter 3:1).

3. Upon the man (3:17-19).

Upon the man there is now a twofold pronouncement of judgment:

- a. Sorrowful labor. "...in sorrow shalt thou eat."
"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."
The earth will naturally produce "thorns and thistles" and if you want anything else, you must labor for it. The Hebrew words translated "thorns and thistles" are *gots* and *dardar*. The words may include pests such as insects. Man's lot would now be one of physical hardship in painful toil. He would be constantly vexed by noxious weeds and ruinous pests. Man's order of work is now changed from dressing a garden (2:15) to tilling a cursed soil (3:23). So Adam will no longer eat the fruit of Paradise, but the "herb of the field."
- b. Sure Death. "...return unto the ground...unto dust shalt thou return." This is now a fulfillment of the promise in 2:17. In 2:17 the Hebrew actually says, "dying thou shalt die." When Adam sinned, he became under the dominion of death, receiving into his nature the germ of death, which ultimately would reduce him to the ground out of which his body was formed.

4. Upon Creation (3:17-18).

"...cursed is the ground...thorns also thistles shall it bring forth."

The natural earth has also been subjected to the curse because of man's sin. It too awaits a future restoration (Romans 8:18-22).

V. A SAVING TRANSACTION (3:20-21).

A. An Act of Faith (3:20).

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve." The Hebrew word *havvah* means living or life-giving. The name Eve occurs four times in the Bible - Genesis 3:20; 4:1; II Corinthians 11:3; I Timothy 2:13.

Adam had heard the promise God made concerning "the seed of the woman" (3:15), and he now acts upon that promise

in true faith. In spite of sin and death he calls her *Havvah* or "living."

Eve now becomes the mother of: 1) Adam's children; 2) of the whole human race; and 3) of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:23-38).

B. An Act of Favor (3:21).

God now makes coats of skins and puts them on Adam and Eve as garments. God is revealing His grace to fallen humanity. He alone will provide the clothing.

It doesn't say in so many words that God killed an animal or animals to make this clothing; but this is assumed. Animal sacrifice is now to become a part of man's worship and access to God.

An animal must now suffer the violence of death in order to furnish fallen man with proper garments. Here is the work of salvation prefigured in favor of The Lamb of God whose death alone can furnish man with garments of righteousness (John 1:29; I Peter 1:19; Revelation 7:14).

Adam and Eve accepted God's favor by casting away the inadequate fig leaves, and taking God's garments instead. Acceptance must follow an act of faith, so it is here. God does not cease to care for mankind even though they have rebelled against Him (Matthew 5:45).

VI. A SECURING TRANSITION (3:22-24).

"So He drove out the man." Man had used his power of free-will to disobey God, and become alienated from Him. If he now would eat of the Tree of Life and perpetuate his life in sin, it would become a curse rather than a blessing.

The blessing forfeited by one man's offence would be restored by the obedience of One (Romans 5:12-21). Adam is a figure of Him that was to come. So Adam and Christ are the originators of two streams of humanity. In Adam all die; but only in Christ can all be made alive.

Genesis chapter three is a complete section of the Bible. The chapter opens with the serpent, and closes with the Cherubim. The serpent is connected with the Tree of Life.

It could be that the place forfeited by Satan according to Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:12-19 has now been taken by the Cherubim. One of the functions of the Cherubim is "to

cover" (see Hebrews 9:5; I Kings 8:7). They occur in the symbolism of the Tabernacle and the Temple (Exodus 25:18; 36:35; I Kings 6:23-29). They are connected with God's dwelling place (I Samuel 4:4; II Kings 19:15; I Chronicles 13:6; Psalm 80:1; 99:1; Isaiah 37:16); and also with the throne (Ezekiel chs. 1 and 10).

These cherubim are now set to preserve the way to the Tree of Life. So the Divine redemptive purpose is seen in the cherubim from the Garden of Eden to the Tabernacle, thence to the Temple of Solomon, and from the desecrated temple of the Captivity to the yet future temple.

The word translated "placed" in verse 24 is the Hebrew word *shakan*. It means literally "to dwell as in a tabernacle." The "flaming sword" that turned every way is the same word used in Ezekiel 1:4, "infolding itself." This verse can be translated as follows:

"And He tabernacled between the cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a fierce fire infolding itself to preserve the way of the Tree of Life."

The dark ending of this First Dispensation is illuminated by promise and hope.

So Adam and Eve are now turned out into a world of sorrow, suffering and death to worship, to walk and to work by faith until the "Seed of the woman" has brought complete restoration.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #9 - CAIN AND ABEL: THE TWO SEEDS

TEXT: GENESIS CHAPTER 4.

Introduction:

- Adam and Eve are now exiled from the Garden of Eden, but over-canopied by the Cherubim as a symbol that there would be a redeemed creation. They are clothed and assured of Divine forgiveness. But they enter upon a life of sin, sorrow, suffering and death.
- The Bible is primarily a Book of Redemption. With sin in the world, and also in man, God begins His program of regeneration.

In this Book of Genesis there are many individuals who typify God's purpose in redemption. There are seven men and one woman as representatives of faith: Abel - acceptance; Enoch - communion; Noah - testimony; Abraham - obedience; Isaac - sonship; Jacob - discipline; Joseph - victory; and Sarah - princess. (See Hebrews ch. 11.)

There are also in the book six other men who represent some form of sin, such as self-righteousness, unbelief, disobedience and intemperance: Cain, Lamech, Canaan, Lot, Ismael and Esau.

- In the historical order in Genesis 4:3-4, Cain is mentioned first, but in the experiential order in Hebrews 11:4, Abel is mentioned first.

I. THE SONS (4:1-2)

Two sons, Cain and Abel, are now born to the first pair. Not only would Adam and Even know good and evil, they will bring forth good and evil.

We will see here at the very outset of human history a fundamental of dispensational truth - the recognition of the two seeds and their destinies.

A. CAIN.

- a. His Name. The names now recorded of the two sons give a fair insight into the frame of mind of the first pair. CAIN means "acquisition." In its verbal form, it is translated "purchase" (Genesis 25:10; Exodus 15:16); "buy" (Genesis 33:19; 39:1); "redeem" (Nehemiah 5:8); "recover" (Isaiah 11:11); and "get" (Genesis 4:1; Proverbs 4:5). Had not God said that the woman's seed would bruise the serpent's head? Did He not set before them the wonderful symbol of a restored and redeemed creation in the Cherubim? Thus we can understand the hope that possessed Even when this son was born. "A man from the Lord" - literally, *ish eth jawah* - "a man even Jehovah."
- b. His Nature. Besides the sixteen times that the name Cain occurs in this chapter, he is mentioned three times in the NT. In the NT Scriptures, we get a further commentary upon this man's character. "By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Hebrews 11:4). "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother...because his own works were evil" (I John 3:12). "They have gone in the way of Cain" (Jude 11). Here we are plainly told that Cain was of that evil one - the seed of the serpent. Here is the beginning of the evil seed.

We do not understand the mystery of the divine begetting, but we know it to be a reality, and we see its manifestation. We do not understand the mystery of satanic begetting, but Scripture certainly speaks of the sonship of the devil's children as plainly as it does the children of God.

Types of good and righteous do not come first, but second. Cain before Abel, Ismael before Isaac, Esau before Jacob, Reuben and his brothers before Joseph. (See I Corinthians 15:46.) The nature of Cain is further depicted in the Lord's parable of The Tares and the Wheat - "the tares are children of the wicked one" (Matthew 13:38).

Cain is here a foreshadowing and type of the "seed of the serpent" down through the ages. The NT speaks of a "generation of vipers" (Matthew 3:7; 12:34; 23:33; Luke 3:7); "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8:44); "thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness" (Acts 13:10); "children of the devil"

(I John 3:10). Language could not be more specific than this.

B. ABEL.

- a. His Name. Abel means "breath or vanity." By the time this son is born, experience had taught the lesson of the age, at least its elements - that the creature had been made subject to vanity" (Romans 8:20). "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 1:2).
- b. His Nature. In Matthew 23:35 he is called "righteous Abel," in Hebrews 11:4, "he was righteous" and in I John 3:12, his works were "righteous."

This does not mean that he kept sheep in a right way, nor that any of his own works were particularly righteous as such. Hebrews 11:4 tells us that it was "by faith." God accepted his sacrifice thus attesting to his faith and righteousness. So when Cain slew his brother and shed his blood, it was "righteous blood" (Matthew 23:35).

It was not the offering that he made that made him righteous; he was righteous and therefore made the right offering (Hebrews 11:4).

II. THE SANCTUARIES (4:3-8).

The setting is very simple. Here are two altars. On the one is a smoking sacrifice, a lamb with its blood flowing down upon the altar. On the other there is an oblation from the fields, a sheaf of barley, a basket of pomegranates, a cluster of grapes, olives and nuts, a bloodless sacrifice. Abel's offering is accepted; Cain's is not, and the result is that Abel is lying dead in his own blood, a victim of his brother's anger and murderous heart.

A. Two Offerings (4:3-5).

The two brothers build each an altar, presumably as their father had taught them. Cain was a "tiller of the ground," and Abel "a keeper of sheep." One might at first expect them to bring an offering from their respective vocations and be accepted; but such is not the case. The offerings were therefore but a revelation of their natures.

1. Cain's Offering (4:3).

It was by fancy, human imagination or inclination. Cain offered according to his nature, in unbelief. John tells us that spiritual things come not by "the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man" (John 1:13). It was also by fruit. God can never accept an offering that we have cultivated with our hands from the cursed earth as a sin offering. It was a sustainer of life and not life itself. Cain was religious, but it was a self-righteous religion. Religion is always man's attempt to work out his redemption. Cain is the progenitor of all false religion.

2. Abel's Offering (4:4).

He brought "the firstlings of his flock" as an offering unto the Lord. True worship must be first in our lives. That is the reason why worship comes before a walk and work. Abel precedes Enoch and Noah. The Lord said to His people: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). He brought also "the fat thereof." He brings not only the first but also the best. He also came with faith. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice" (Hebrews 11:4). "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17).

Both sons must have heard. If Abel heard, then Cain too must have heard. In Genesis 3:21, God gave them an example of how to approach God in appropriate garments. A sacrifice had to be of an animal to procure the proper covering. Faith always presupposes a divine revelation to which it is the response. Abel recognized the fact of sin, the penalty of which is death; and, when he came to His Creator, he placed the shed blood of a substitutionary victim between himself and God. He seems to say: "Death is what I deserve and I confess it; but I come to Thee depending entirely on the merits of another." "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). Abel's lamb pre-figured "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

These two men are representative men. Two NT Scriptures bring before us the respective systems

they represent. One is called "the way of Cain" (Jude 11); the other "the new and living way" (Hebrews 10:19-20). Two altars have been erected, and at one or the other all men are worshipping. The altar of Cain is piled high with the most luscious fruit, choicest grain and most delicately perfumed flower - the modern equivalents of these being ornate ritual, enchanting music, imposing and elaborate ceremonies. It is all bloodless. The other is an altar on which there rests a slain lamb lying in substitutionary death for the worshippers.

Abel is mentioned four times in the NT: Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51; Hebrews 11:4; 12:24.

The word translated "offering" in our text is the Hebrew word *minchah*. It is translated by such words as gift, meat-offering, oblation, present and sacrifice. This offering was in the nature of a gift.

B. The Objections (4:5-8).

God has now "respect" or looks at Abel's offering; but He does not look at Cain's (see Judges 6:21).

1. Cain's Intervention (4:5, 8).

It begins with anger. "And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell" (4:5). When Cain's bloodless and faithless offering was made, God did not look at it, and it filled Cain's heart with malice against his brother. Anger and malice can often be the precursor of something more dreadful.

It ends in murder. "Cain rose up against his brother Abel and slew him" (4:8). Here it is true as James says: "When lust (desire or passion) hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

Here we see the first clash between the two seeds. Behind Cain's jealousy lay the enmity predicted in Genesis 3:15. Self-centered life, Godlessness, and a Devil-mastered life lead to death. Murder is a satanic method for he was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44).

Cain's religion was too refined to slay a lamb; but not too cultured to murder his brother!

2. God's Interrogation (4:6-7).

"Why art thou wroth?" "Why is thou countenance fallen?"

God knew why, but He wanted Cain to become cognizant of his condition; and if possible, repent and learn to worship in God's way.

"If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? And if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door; and unto thee shall be its desire; but do thou rule over it" (4:7, ASRV).

"...shall it not be lifted up" alludes to the countenance of Cain which had fallen.

The words "sin" and "sin offering" is the word *chata* in Hebrew. So it could here be translated "sin offering." Dr. Bullinger in the Companion Bible points out that the word "lieth" is masculine, and so a male is lying at the entrance.

If the word means simply sin, then the thought is that of a ravenous beast lying in wait for its prey. It couches at the door ready to spring upon its victim as soon as the door is opened. Cain opened his heart to envy, the anger and finally, murder.

God wants to teach a lesson early that a sin offering is never far removed from sin. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). Sin would have its desire to him, but he should rule over it.

III. THE SENTENCE (4:9-15).

Adam sinned directly against God, and Cain now sins against his brother or man. In their united conduct we have sin in all its forms.

God's way of salvation in Christ fills the heart with love; man's way of salvation inflames it with hatred, anger and murder.

A. THE MARTYR (4:9-10).

"And the Lord said unto Cain, where is Abel thy brother?"

"And He said, what hast thou done?"

These are questions to go straight to the murderer's conscience. Genesis 3:15 clearly indicates that there were to be two seeds in deadly antagonism to each other - "the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent." In I John 3:12, it plainly states, "Cain, who was of that wicked one." He was a murderer (Genesis 4:8), and now he is a liar (4:9). These two also characterize the Devil (John 8:44).

We see here the sad truth that sin which ruined the first man, prompted the second man to kill the third man.

Abel was the first martyr to the truth of justification by faith, and Stephen was the first martyr to the truth of resurrection life in Christ (Acts 7:56-60).

Cain answers the Lord: "Am I my brother's keeper?" This answer is both false and insolent. Only a murderer altogether renounces his obligations of brotherhood. (See Acts 17:26.)

"The voice of thy brother's bloods crieth unto me from the ground." The word "blood" should be plural. In slaying Abel, Cain also slew Abel's unborn descendants. The Talmud says, "He who destroys a single human life is as if he destroyed a whole world." The soul is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11), and so Abel's soul cries to God for vengeance (see Job 16:18). This is a common expression concerning crimes (see Genesis 18:20-21; James 5:4).

B. THE MURDERER (4:11-15).

"...a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth."

Convicted, if not humbled, Cain now must listen in consternation to the judgments of God pronounced upon him.

1. The Curse upon Cain (4:11-12).

"And now art thou cursed from the earth." This is the first curse pronounced against a human being. Adam and Eve were not cursed through the ground and the serpent was.

This curse was to leap upon him from the ground, "which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand."

This curse was to result in a twofold judgment. It would bring fruitlessness and homelessness. When they till the ground, it would not bring forth its fruit, and this would lead to a homeless condition. This would drive the Canaanites to city building and mechanical inventions.

Banished and homeless, Cain is like the people of Judah at a later time (see Lamentations ch. 1). Restless, pastureless and comfortless. Cain is driven by the agonizing torments of remorse, but not a truly penitent conscience.

2. The Complaint of Cain (4:13-14).

"My punishment is greater than I can bear." This is not the language of confession, but of desperation. The word "punishment" is the Hebrew word *awon*, and means both the consequences of sin, i.e., punishment, and the sin itself. The Targum (Aramaic paraphrase of the OT) renders "mine iniquity is too great to be pardoned." The phrase has also been understood as a question, "Is my iniquity too great to be forgiven?"

"Thou has driven me from the face of the earth, and from thy face." Cain now accuses God of driving him from the land and from God's face; although the latter God had not said, but it could be implied. Arthur Pink thinks this is the language of those who find themselves in the Lake of Fire - the unbearable fate of being homeless and Godless. To be "hidden from the face of God" (Deuteronomy 31:18) is to forfeit Divine provision, protection and pardon.

"Whosoever findeth me shall slay me." Cain feared death at the hands of some future avenger (see Numbers 35:10 ff.).

3. The Sign upon Cain (4:15).

"The Lord set a mark upon Cain."

The Hebrew word translated "mark" is *oth*. It is also translated ensign, miracle, sign and token. Sign is a better translation. It is used in Genesis 1:14;

9:12, 13, 17. This word has three Hebrew characters: Aleph, meaning "an ox" - the first letter of the alphabet; Vau, meaning "a hook" - the sixth letter; and Tau, meaning "mark" - the last letter. Jesus Christ is the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega (Greek); and six is the number of man (see Revelation 1:8; 22:12-13; 13:18).

This is a sign of protection. Sevenfold vengeance is pronounced upon the slayer of Cain (see Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30). God alone is the final judge. Seven is the number of completeness (see Leviticus 26:27-28; Proverbs 24:16). It is also the sign of rejection. Between Aleph and Tau is Vau, the sixth character, the sign of Antichrist. Note the number six in Genesis 1:27, 31; Leviticus 23:3; I Samuel 17:4, 7; II Kings 11:3; Daniel 3:1, 5; Revelation 13:18).

IV. THE SEPARATION (4:16-24).

Humanity is certainly on the toboggan slide, the downgrade in sin. First there is the sin of Adam and Eve, then the murder of Abel by Cain, and now the polygamy and murder by Lamech.

A. Brings the Way of Meandering (4:16).

"...from the presence of the Lord...in the Land of Nod."

Cain now begins his wandering in the Land of Nod, which means "wandering." This is the essence of retribution - godless, aimless, purposeless wandering.

The curse that fell upon Cain included the words, "A fugitive and vagabond shalt thou be in the earth" (4:12). The word "vagabond" is the translation of the Hebrew word Nod, which gives its name to the land whither Cain went. This same word translated "Nod" here is translated "wanderings" in Psalm 56:8. "Presence of the Lord" may mean from the place of the Cherubim by the Garden of Eden. Bullinger thinks by the Tabernacle placed here by God for worship.

Mankind is now formally divided into two classes - those who still abide in the presence of God, and those who have fled from His presence. Distinguishing names will soon be given to these (Genesis 6:1-2). The distinction has already been made in the "Seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent."

B. Brings a Way of the Matrimonial (4:17a, 19).

1. With Cain (4:17). "And Cain knew his wife." Cain's wife was his sister or some near relative, whom he married before the death of Abel. The union of brothers and sisters at the first was clearly indispensable if the race was to multiply from a common stock. In the absence of any law to the contrary, there would be no sin in the marriage of a sister. In modern times, this has been practiced in Egypt to try and keep a pure blood. It was also an Athenian law. The Hebrew commentary suggests that the Hebrew people looked upon this with such abhorrence (Leviticus 18:19) that Scripture makes no reference to the identity of Cain's wife.
2. With Lamech (4:19). "And Lamech took unto him two wives."

Here we have the first case of polygamy, which was a new evil. *Adah* means "beauty, pleasure, adorned." *Zillah* means "to hide or shade." It is but natural that when men leave God out of their thinking, they will also leave His institutions out too. God had established the law of marriage, which consisted of one man and one woman, and they two would be one flesh (Genesis 2:24).

C. Brings the Way of Materialism (4:17b, 18, 20).

"He builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch."

Going out from the presence of the Lord, Cain and his descendants sought to reproduce Eden artificially, and to make themselves as comfortable as possible on a cursed earth. Scientific invention produced manufacturing.

Cain was the first one in Scripture to build a city; the second was Nimrod. The Israelites were compelled to build cities for Pharaoh. The only building recorded of God's people in the first two books of the Bible is that of an altar. Cities are symbols of civilization. The arts, crafts and music were all introduced by descendants of Cain.

Four great cities are mentioned in this book of Genesis: Enoch, built by Cain (4:17); Nineveh, built by Asshur (10:11); Babel (11:4, 5, 8, 9); and Sodom (18:24).

"This sinister history of city-building, recorded in the early pages of Genesis, finds its echo in the book of the Revelation, where Babylon is called "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Thus Enoch the city of Cain, the vagabond; Nineveh the city of Nimrod, the mighty rebel; Sodom, to which apostate Israel is likened (Isaiah 1:10; Revelation 11:8), and Babel, the city of final antichristian rebellion, are linked together." - C. H. Welch.

Enoch comes from the word *chanak*, "to dedicate." This word is chiefly used to dedicate offerings, houses or persons to the Lord. Could it be that Cain dedicated his son and city to the Serpent, the Wicked One, whose child he was?

We cannot help noticing the similarity of names that occur in the two lines of Adam's descendants: If there is an Enoch who walked with God, there is an Enoch born to Cain in the land of his banishment. If there is a Jared in the line of Seth, there is an Irad in the line of Cain, which differs only in one letter. Methuselah has a son named Lamech in the line of Seth, so Methusael has a son of the same name in the line of Cain. Here begins now that parody of truth which Satan has so skillfully established and maintained down through the ages. Satan has always tried to ape God in all ways - even to the same sounding names.

Cain begets Enoch, "dedicated or initiated." Enoch begets Irad, "townsman or ornament of a city." Irad begets Mehujael, "smitten of God." Mehujael begets Methusael, "man of God." Methusael begets Lamech, "strong youth." Lamech begets Jabal, "traveler or producer" and Jubal, "player on instrument, musician."

D. Brings the Way of Merriment (4:21).

"Jubal...the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ."

Music had its start in the wicked seed. A world of materialism in which music drowns out the conscience. It is an opiate to deaden and drown out the groan of creation.

We have here the two basic and leading types of musical instruments - the harp or stringed instrument, and the organ or pipe instrument.

E. Brings the Way of Merchandising (4:22).

"...instructor of every artificer in brass and iron."

Materialism made great strides in manufacture and mechanical inventions. They go hand in hand. Satan is a master at commerce, colonization and scientific inventions.

The Bible has many things to say about inventions. The following from Ecclesiastes 7:29 is significant: "God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." Here the inventions of man are set in contrast to his being made upright. These inventions are then an exhibition of his fall. The word "inventions" is the word chashab, meaning "to think, purpose, intend." The word is used in a good sense, such as the "purpose" of the Lord (Jeremiah 50:45); but most often in an evil sense. See I Samuel 18:25; Esther 9:25; Psalm 21:11; Daniel 11:24; Amos 6:5.

Cain and his descendants are in league with the Devil. He can produce all things both beautiful and utilitarian. But the very thing that seems so useful is the thing that has caused disaster (the automobile which is such a means of destruction).

F. By the Way of Murder (4:23-24).

The translation of this murderous idea can be given as follows:

"I can kill a man for wounding me, and a young man for hurting me."

As was his ancestor Cain, so is now Lamech. Such a life will sooner or later end in blood. Lamech not only commits murder, but rejoices in it, and sings about it to his wives Adah and Zillah.

The evil seed of Cain is now following its true father, the Devil (John 8:44). Apostasy in worship leads to idolatry, to humanism, materialism and finally murder.

The murderous song of Lamech is the supreme expression of the confidence of a man in his own ability to act without God - glorifying in polygamy and murder. Godlessness breeds an air of presumption, arrogance, self-sufficiency and blasphemy.

In Cain and his descendants we see:

- Human thought opposed to Divine revelation;
- Human willfulness opposed to Divine revelation;
- Human pride opposed to Divine humility;
- Human hatred opposed to Divine love;
- Human hostility opposed to Divine favor; and
- Human loneliness opposed to Divine fellowship.

The Canaanite civilization was of the earth, earthy; it was ungodly and unspiritual; it was cultured, prosperous, proud.

V. THE SUBSTITUTION (4:25-26).

We learned from the record of Cain and Abel of the presence of the two seeds. The enmity which exists between these two seeds is irreconcilable. It is indeed a fundamental of dispensational truth to recognize the presence and the utter contrast of the principles for which Cain and Abel stand.

The name Cain (Acquisition) is affixed to that which is evil. The name Abel (Vanity or Transitoriness) is affixed to that which is good. So another fundamental of dispensational truth is that the present life is comparable to a wilderness journey, the believer's hope lies beyond. On the other hand the sinner gets all his good here, and lives primarily for material acquisition.

The narrative now reverts to the first pair again. God now gives them another son, whose name is Seth. This does not mean that Adam and Eve had only three sons. They must have had many other sons and daughters.

A. The Name Seth.

At his birth, he was called Seth, "for God hath appointed another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

The words "Seth" and "appointed" are in Hebrew from the same root, and are almost alike in form - Seth (*seth*) and appointed (*sath*).

The name Seth occurs eight times in the OT and once in the NT (Genesis 4:25, 26; 5:3, 4, 6, 7, 8; I Chronicles 1:1; Luke 3:38).

B. The Nature of Seth.

There is an important difference between the record of Cain and Abel, and that of Seth. In the former, we have the record of deeds. We are told of their daily occupations and their acts of worship; also the sin of Cain in murdering Abel, and his punishment. All this is seen in contrast to Seth.

Of Seth's life we know nothing except that he begat a son and called him Enos, meaning "frail or incurable." He also had other sons and daughters and then died at the age of 912 years (5:6-8). So this man's individual actions do not constitute the lesson which the Holy Spirit would have us see.

C. The Position of Seth.

It is his position in the line of purpose that is important for us here. He is a substitute for Abel. So SUBSTITUTION constitutes his main lesson.

The words of Genesis 4:25 indicate that Abel was, humanly speaking, the chosen vessel through whom the deliverer should come, for Eve tells us that Seth was appointed as "another seed instead of Abel." Here is a great principle of redemption as is seen in Jesus Christ.

This same principle of substitution runs through the whole Bible:

1. Adam himself was dealt with not merely as a private individual, but as head and representative of unborn millions who had no voluntary association with his deeds (Romans 5:14-21). The penalty threatened in the Garden of Eden was suspended and endured by Christ Himself - "For he hath made him (Christ) sin for us." And "in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6). This substitution was typified to Adam and Eve in the provision of the "coats of skin" (Genesis 3:21).
2. Isaac's life, of the three fathers, is the most passive and quiet. As a type of the Promised Seed,

his birth, and offering on the mount are of more importance than his subsequent manner of life. Like Seth, he speaks of substitution. Isaac lived because of a ram that was offered "instead" of his life.

3. The High Priest. By reason of death of the High Priest, provision is made in the law for "that son that is priest in his stead" (Exodus 29:30). He is to put on his holy garments. Here is substitution the one priest for the other.
4. The Levites show forth the principle of substitution. "And I, behold I, have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel; therefore the Levites shall be mine" (Numbers 3:12). All the firstborn of Israel, both man and beast belonged unto the Lord.
5. The animals belonged to God, and so provision is made that "every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb" (Exodus 13:13). The first belonged to God, but could be redeemed by a substitute.
6. Jesus Christ is God's great Substitute. The word "for" is from the Greek word *hyper* meaning "in behalf of." Note how Christ is our substitute in such passages as: John 6:51; 10:11; 10:15; Romans 5:6, 8; 8:32; I Corinthians 5:7; 15:3; II Corinthians 5:14, 15; Galatians 1:4; 2:20; 3:13; Ephesians 5:25; I Thessalonians 5:10; I timothy 2:6; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 2:9; 10:12; I Peter 2:21; 3:18; 4:1; I John 3:16.

This substitutionary offering on the part of Christ is more than a mere example, a way-shower of God. He was more than a martyr to a good cause. He actually took our place, the penalty, the judgment that was due us, and brought to us God's righteousness.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #10 - GENERATIONS OF THE GODLY SEED

TEXT: GENESIS CHAPTER 5.

Introduction:

This is a wonderful chapter in its comprehension of time. It covers 1556 years of human history - from Adam to Noah; and within 100 years of the flood.

This chapter is a record of births and deaths. Either time in this chapter we have the sad refrain, "And he died." So Genesis 5 is the OT graveyard. It shows that "the wages of sin is death." The "King of Terrors" swayed his black scepter undisputed for all of the 1656 years of the antediluvian times. All died except one man - Enoch, who had a startling and significant change - "he was not, for God took him" (5:24; Hebrews 11:5).

"Art is long and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still like muffled drums are beating
Funeral marches to the grave."

The seventh in the line of Cain was Lamech, a man who was a murderer, polygamist and the worshipper of the god of forces (4:23). The seventh in the line of Seth was Enoch, a man of whom it is written that he walked with God, pleased God and was translated by God to Heaven.

Satan deceived Eve with the lie, "Ye shall not surely die." The phrase "and he died" repeated eight times in this chapter is a complete vindication of God's warning "thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17).

"This is the book of the generations of Adam" (5:1). There are two books of generations found in the Bible. The first relates to Adam (Genesis ch. 5) and the second to Christ (Matthew 1:1-17). After the birth of Christ, chronology ceases and all attempts to construct a chronology of the NT fail.

I. CHRONOLOGY OF TEN PATRIARCHS.

The chronology which here extends from Adam to Noah is simplicity itself. We must not assume that the son named in the genealogy is always the first. Seth was born after Cain and Abel; and Shem, though mentioned first, was not the eldest (Genesis 10:21). No such careful catalogue of births and deaths in the line of Cain (Genesis ch. 4) is found as we have here in the line of Seth.

Some have objected to the length of the lives of these men and suggest that they should be months instead of years. But what then shall we do with the statement that Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh? However, it is reasonable to believe that disease was less rampant and climate more conducive to longevity before the Flood than after.

Moses does not give the date of the birth and death of each individual, neither day nor month, but reckons by complete years.

A.H. (Anno Hominis)

0	..	Adam created (Genesis 5:1).
130	...	Age of Adam at birth of Seth (5:3).
130	...	Seth is born.
105	...	Age of Seth at birth of Enos (5:6).
235	...	Enos is born.
90	...	Age of Enos at birth of Cainan (5:9).
325	...	Cainan is born.
70	...	Age of Cainan at birth of Mahalaleel (5:12).
395	...	Mahalaleel is born.
65	...	Age of Mahalaleel at birth of Jared (5:15).
460	...	Jared is born.
162	...	Age of Jared at birth of Enoch (5:18).
622	...	Enoch is born.
65	...	Age of Enoch at birth of Methuselah (5:21).
687	...	Methuselah is born.
187	...	Age of Methuselah at birth of Lamech (5:25).
874	...	Lamech is born.
182	...	Age of Lamech at birth of Noah (5:28).
1056	...	Noah is born.
500	...	Age of Noah when Shem, Ham & Japheth are born (5:23).
100	...	Add 100 years from Shem to the Flood (7:6).
1656	From Adam to the Flood

So here we have the most venerable family history in the world, the ancestors of all mankind from Adam to Noah.

Without it there would be no record of man's beginning. Here is an important link between Adam, the first head of the race, and Christ, the true Head and Saviour of mankind.

II. CONDUCT OF ONE PATRIARCH (5:21-24; Hebrews 11:5-6; Jude 14-15)).

All the Scriptures we have on Enoch's life are the three listed above. There is also an apocryphal book by this name, and Ecclesiasticus, another apocryphal book, mentions his name.

He lived a short life, only 365 years, in comparison with his contemporaries. Jared, his father, lived 962 years (5:20); Methuselah, his son, lived to be 969 years (5:27); and Lamech, his grandson, lived to be 777 years (5:31).

Jude speaks of Enoch as "the seventh from Adam." Jesus tells us that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall return (Matthew 24:37-39). This applies also to the days of Enoch. The seventh from Adam is not allowed to see death. Here we may observe a prophetic foreshadowing of the end. Just as the seventh day of the creation foreshadows "the rest that remaineth to the people of God," so the seventh from Adam foreshadows the triumph over death of those who shall not sleep, but be changed at the last trump. This last trump is no doubt the seventh trump of the Book of Revelation. Enoch was saved from the Deluge; while Noah was saved through the Flood. So he is a type of that Christian remnant who will be taken out from The Great Tribulation.

A. As Seen In His Disposition,

"For before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God." "And Enoch walked with God."

1. He walked with God (5:22, 24).

To walk with God implies, first, understanding. At some point in his career he came into agreement with God. "Can two walk together except they be agreed." (Amos 3:3). The point at which this took place seems to be at the birth of his son, Methuselah. Secondly, it implies fellowship, A community of interest, activity, feeling, partnership.

This walk was during a period of 300 years. Here again we see the Heavenly beauty of perfection in the number three.

- God is a Spirit (John 4:24). This is the very essence of God's nature. Therefore to walk with God, Who is Spirit, there must be something spiritual in our lives. It is the Holy Spirit of God within us that gives us a walk with God. We must never substitute the soulical, psychical nor material for the spiritual. It is only the Spirit of God that can lead us into the supernatural and the heavenly.
- God is Light (I John 1:5). Therefore Enoch walked in the true light. We too are to "walk in the light" (Ephesians 5:8). The natural man walks in darkness to all spiritual things.
- God is Love (I John 4:16). Love knows no boundaries, no limitations. Nothing is too hard for love. It penetrates all mysteries, and goes beyond all human reason. When all else is gone, love abides (I Corinthians 13:13). So we too are to "walk in love" (Ephesians 4:2).
- God is Truth (I John 5:20). Truth is the opposite of the lie. Satan is a liar; hence all that belongs to him is of the lie. We need to discern the difference between truth and error, and walk in truth if we are to please God. We are to "Walk in truth." (II John 4).

2. He Well-pleased God (Hebrews 11:5).

This means that Enoch was acceptable to God. Two Greek words are translated by the word "acceptable" in the NT (Ephesians 1:6 and II Corinthians 5:9). The first is "made acceptable in the Beloved," something that God has done for us. The second is "labor to be acceptable to God" - that is man's part. It is the latter of these two words that is used in Hebrews of Enoch. The verb is in the perfect tense, which means that it was a perfect well-pleasing. In Hebrews 11:6 we read that to please God one "must believe that He is." Enoch had a positive belief in the reality of God. Enoch's faith and walk are united. He walked by faith and not by sight. So we

are to "walk by faith, not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7).

3. He Witnessed for God (Jude 14-15). From Jude we learn that Enoch was a prophet and prophesied in a day of declension. Besides pronouncing judgment upon the ungodly, he also prophesied in two other ways:
 - In the number seven. "Enoch, the seventh from Adam." In the generations of Adam here in chapter five, there are two significant entries: "and he died" (5:5); "and he was not for God took him" (5:23-24). The entry of death, first made against Adam, is repeated with constant succession until we come to Enoch. That Enoch did not die we are told in Hebrews 11:5. The seventh from Adam is not allowed to see death. Here is a prophetic foreshadowing of the end of time. Just as the seventh day of Genesis chapter two foreshadows "the rest that remaineth to the people of God," so the "seventh from Adam" foreshadows the triumph over death of those who shall not sleep but be changed at the last trump and meet the Lord in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).
 - In the naming of his son. "And Enoch...begat Methuselah" (5:22). Methuselah means "at death it shall be." This is the coming wrath of God in sending the Flood. Note - 187, age of Methuselah at birth of Lamech; 182, age of Lamech at birth of Noah; 600, age of Noah at the time of the flood. Add these and it is 969, age of Methuselah at his death (5:27). At his death the Deluge came.

Here is a glorious exhibition of longsuffering. The man whose death was to be the signal for judgment lived longer than any man before or since. It was as though God waited until He could wait no longer. How strange a work is judgment! How the Lord delights in mercy! (See Isaiah 28:21.)

B. As Seen in His Destination.

"...and he was not for God took him" (Genesis 5:24). "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him" (Hebrews 11:5).

Enoch changed his place, but not his company. Someone has said: "He did not leave this world by the dark tunnel of death; but by the golden bridge of translation."

Enoch's life had a purpose and a goal. He had an objective that was Godward, and thus heavenward.

He was translated by faith. This was the foundation of his walk and his translation. In I Corinthians 10:5, we read: "But with many of them God was not well-pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness." Unbelief leads to death; faith leads to life.

Of Enoch it is said that "he pleased god" (Hebrews 11:5). Then the writer of Hebrews says: "But without faith, it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6).

Enoch's faith believed in the reality of God, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Did God actually remove Enoch alive, or did He take him away in death? This has been a point of discussion. Some contend that Enoch was removed by God in death that he should not see "the death," meaning the Flood.

It is our feeling that God worked a miracle and took Enoch away alive. This becomes then a beautiful type of those who will be taken by Christ alive before the wrath of God is poured out in The Great Tribulation. Enoch is a type of I Thessalonians 4:15-17.

Some hold that Enoch will be one of the two witnesses or prophets to appear in Jerusalem during the tribulation. He will then be killed and resurrected after three and a half days. (See Revelation chapter 11.)

CONCLUSION

Enoch prophesied: "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all," etc. (Jude 14-15). The Flood was real and dreadful judgment, a type of a future day of judgment. The ungodliness of Enoch's day is in turn typical of the character of the time of the end. "The coming of the Lord" is not a new doctrine. It is as old as Adam, for Enoch lived together with Adam for the last 308 years of Adam's life.

Adam must have understood the meaning of Methuselah's name, and heard Enoch's prophesy.

"And God took him." In the end of that age, it will again be true that "one shall be taken, and the other left" (Matthew 24:40-41). The word "taken" is *paralambano* and means "to take to one's side."

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #11 - SONS OF GOD VS DAUGHTERS OF MEN

TEXT: GENESIS 6:1-7.

Introduction:

- "As the day of Noah were." In describing the scenes at the close of this present age, our Lord declares that the end of such an epoch is to offer a reproduction of the days of Noah - "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matthew 24:37). There will be witnessed the same intense apostasy in the forms of worldliness and wickedness. Men will be utterly unapprehensive of the impending judgments of God
- A knowledge of the days of Noah should be a means of enlightenment and warning for the days in which we live.
- The world of Noah's day was destroyed by a judgment of water. The world of today faces a judgment of fire (II Peter 3:10-13). God is a God of love, but He is also a God of holiness. The same sin that destroyed the world of Noah's day will destroy the present world; and from it will emerge New Heavens and New Earth.
- The problem of "the sons of God." The new nature in redeemed man is the direct creative act of God by the Holy Spirit. This act constitutes the saved sinner a "Son of God": for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6; see Romans 8:14).

It is for this reason that angels are called "sons of God" (Genesis 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Psalm 29:1; 89:6; Daniel 3:25). They are so called because they were created, and not begotten. For the same reason Adam (unfallen) is called a "son of God" (Luke 3:38), because he came into being from no human source; but was formed, created by a Divine creative act. Never after the fall is Adam or any of his descendants called "sons of God" until we come to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans. The "sons of God" are in Hebrew *bene Elohim*. Remember it is Satan's purpose to neutralize and negate God's purpose. But as Paul says: "Lest Satan get an advantage of

us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Corinthians 2:11).

- "The proper study of mankind is man," sad Pope. The more we study man, the more convinced we are that human nature has not changed much since the days of Adam and Eve and the Flood. Sin may have taken on a more cultured and intellectual aspect today, but it is the same ungodliness.

I. THE CAUSES OF CORRUPTION (6:1-2).

The causes re of two kinds: the remote and the immediate.

A. Original Sin.

Original sin had its source in Satan, who was a murderer and a liar from the beginning (John 8:44). Isaiah ch. 14 and Ezekiel ch. 28 give us a graphic description of Satan or Lucifer in his original unfallen state, and then in his sin and fall.

From this beginning in Satan came the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and God's revelation of the "seed of the woman" and the "see of the serpent" (Genesis 3:15).

B. Organized Sin.

In chapter four, we saw how Cain's civilization took the form of gigantic organizations, the building of cities, the great institutions, and the coming of a high level of scientific achievements.

This was all fostered by pride and issued out in polygamy, idolatry and murder.

C. Superhuman Sin.

"...the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (6:2).

This verse is among the most disputed in the Bible. Interpreters are divided on its meaning. There are three main interpretations of the passage:

1. The "sons of God" were the sons of princes or noble men, and the "daughters of men" were daughters of people of the lower classes. This is a traditional

view of Jewish orthodoxy, but is not usually accepted by modern scholars.

2. Intermarriage between the Seth and Cain lines. This theory holds that "the sons of God" referred to those on earth who feared God, namely the pious descendants of Seth, for which reason they are thus named. The specific sin of these "sons of God" consisted in their intermarriage with the godless race - the Cainitish offspring. It was then their progeny that led to the Flood. Many good scholars have held this view, such as Leupold, Lange, Erdman, Keil, Scofield, Jamieson and Scroggie.

Prof. W. G. Moorhead summarizes the view as follows: "Good angels would not commit sin: bad angels are not called "sons of God." The statement in Jude 6-7 may mean that the sin of the fallen angels was spiritually what that of Sodom was carnally. Besides, the offspring of these unholy alliances are called "men," which they could not be if the product of demons and women. It seems more natural and Scriptural to regard the "sons of God" as the pious Sethites.

3. Intermarriage between Fallen Angels and daughters of men.

The Septuagint (LXX) version translates "the sons of God" by "the angels of God." This is regarded as a reference to those angels who kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation to consort with human beings. These angels are kept in chains under darkness for the day of judgment (Jude 6). In Jude 7, it says that these fallen angels, like the Sodomites, went "after strange flesh." The word translated "strange" is *heteros*, flesh of another kind. If it were the same flesh the word would be *allos*.

Heathen mythology speaks of a race of giants, the offspring of a superior race of beings, who intermingled with the human race and produced these giants.

Such men as Pember, Delitzsch, Pink, James Gray, Bullinger, Newell, etc., have held this view.

It is noteworthy that these marriages were only between "the sons of God" and "the daughters of men." Nothing is said about the sons of men and the daughters of God, as would have been the case had it been simply intermarriage between the two races of Seth and Cain.

The following is a comparison between Peter and Jude of the NT and Enoch, the apocryphal book:

II Peter 2:4: "The angels that sinned."	Enoch 1:2: "It happened, after the sons of men had multiplied in those days that daughters were born to them, elegant and beautiful. And when the angels, the sons of heaven beheld them, they became enamored of them saying to each other: Come let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children."
Jude 6: "The angels which kept not their first estate."	Enoch 15:7: "Therefore I made not wives for you (angels), because, being spiritual, your dwelling is in heaven."
Jude 6: "The angels...left their own habitation."	Enoch 105:13-14: "Behold, they committed crimes; laid aside their class, and intermingled with women. ...A great destruction, therefore shall come upon the earth - a deluge."
II Peter 2:4-5: "God spared not the angels that sinned."	
Jude 6: "The angels...He hath reserved in everlasting chains."	

This was the interpretation of Josephus and of many of the early church fathers. It is supported by the original Hebrew texts.

Those who object that angels do not marry are reminded that Jesus was speaking (Matthew 22:30) of the angels "in heaven," while the reference in Genesis 6:2 is to angels who "left their first estate" (Jude 6).

Many also object to this theory because they feel such a relationship is unnatural and not comprehensible. Let us be reminded that many things cannot be reasoned out. If they are revealed in Scripture they can be accepted by faith.

II. THE CHARACTER OF CORRUPTION (6:3-5).

It was a corruption that affected both the inner and outer life of men. It was a complete corruption.

A. As seen in God's warning (6:3).

The human race had degenerated to the level of plain, sinful stock (flesh); wholly abandoned to a life of sin.

The "hundred and twenty years" is not a reference to the length of man's life, for many of the patriarchs after the flood lived 400 years or more. It is a reference to the limit of time given Noah to warn men.

B. As seen in man's wickedness (6:4-5).

1. Mighty in stature (6:4). "There were many giants in the earth."

The word "giants" is *nephilim* meaning "fallen ones."

Later we read about Anakims, the Rephaims and the Zamzummims. These demi-gods are do doubt responsible for the mighty deeds, often evil, of the deities of the Greek and Roman mythology.

Luther translates the word by "tyrants." Erdman says: "Tyrants ruling by force."

The words "mighty men" is the Hebrew word *hagibborim*. The Hebrew word for weak man is *enosh*. They were great in stature.

2. Mighty in Name. "...men of renown," or better, "men of the name."

These giants were men of great exploits. They could attain almost the impossible.

This age will close with men doing enormous and astonishing exploits. We are witnessing achievements today in the scientific and psychic never dreamt of ten or fifteen years ago.

3. Mighty in nature. "...every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (6:5).

Recently the convicts in one of our large penitentiaries went on strike and destroyed \$2,500,000 worth of property. The rioters demanded, among other things, a free banquet of steak, ice cream and all the trimmings as the price of coming to terms with the prison administration, the state police and National Guard. And they got it.

The statistics of sin are horrifying: One American out of twelve attends church of any kind. Seven children out of eight quit Sunday School before they reach 15 years. We spend \$750 on pleasure and amusement for every dollar given to the Lord's work. We have three times as many criminals as college students. A major crime is committed every 22 seconds, a murder every 40 seconds. There are 60 suicides every day. A million illegitimate children born every year. 800,000 prostitutes and 18 million of our citizens are infected with social diseases. Four million alcoholics. We spend two billion dollars more for alcohol than for education. All this in America.

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION (6:6-7).

1. As seen in God's displeasure (6:6).

"...it repented the Lord...it grieved him at His heart." All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth, except Noah and his family.

2. As seen in God's destruction (6:7).

"I will destroy man."

Here God reveals his intention with sinful man. And with men will also be destroyed beast, creeping thing and fowls of the air.

The state of the world just prior to the Flood was one of overwhelming wickedness, violence and moral corruption. It was fully ripe for judgment. Enoch had prophesied judgment. Noah had preached righteousness. God had given 120 years of grace, but they did not repent. It foreshadows Revelation 14:18-19.

CONCLUSION

- Did God actually change His mind and regret that He had created man? "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent" (Numbers 23:19). Someone has said: "With man, repentance is a change of will; with God, repentance is willing a change." God's grief is called "a window into the heart of God."
- Multitudes, who will not yield to God, are gladly yielding to Satan by seeking intercourse with the unseen world. Lying signs and wonders by Satanic forces are very great. Such crazes as crystal gazing, star reading, palmistry and seeking out modern witches for information show how ripe our age is for God's judgment.
- "Coming events cast their shadows before." We are seeing shadows of the coming doom upon this age in The Great Tribulation.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #12 - NOAH'S PREPARATION FOR THE FLOOD

TEXT: GENESIS 6:8-22.

Introduction:

- Abel, Enoch and Noah follow each other, not only historically and chronologically, but also experientially, in their spiritual experience. It is only the man who has been accepted by God as was Abel, that can walk with God as did Enoch; and it is only the man who walks with God as did Enoch, who can witness for God as did Noah. Noah had Abel's worship and Enoch's walk; and now he is called upon to have something else - to witness for God. Faith was the key to all their lives (Hebrews 11:4-7).
- Contrast with Eden. All now stands in contrast to Eden. The Garden was the realm of life with the tree of death in its midst. This now is a realm of death with a "Tree of Life" (the Ark-Christ) in the midst. For by smitten trees was the ark made. There was death in the tree; but life in the ark. In the Garden of Eden, God said, "away from the tree, do not eat of it!" Satan said, "Haste to the tree and eat of it." God now says, "Come into the ark" and live. Satan would say to Noah, "Stop building the ark, keep away from it." Disobedience in unbelief drove Adam from God; wile obedience in faith draws Noah to God.

➤ Notable Quotes

"In Abel we see how faith makes death the path of life. In Enoch, how faith conquers death. In Noah how faith saves others from death by the work it does for them." - Andrew Murray.

"The temptation and fall of man must be viewed as part of a plan, and the words of Christ in the parable of the Tares explains much that occurs in Scripture history, "an enemy hath done this." Sin opened the door for death, and death reigned from Adam. God, however, is not thwarted either by sin or by death. From Genesis ch. 3 onwards, we are reading chapters in the conflict between the Seed and the Serpent, and their respective "seeds;" hence the sad history of Cain and Abel -

hence, too, the awful corruption that necessitated the flood."
- Charles H. Welch.

- Noah and the Number Eight. Noah in II Peter 2:5 is called "the eighth" and in I Peter 3:20, we read that "eight souls" were saved in the ark. Enoch was the seventh from Adam (Jude 14). The eight or octave is a new beginning; the first day of the week is also an eighth day. The gematria (number values, using the alphabet as numbers) of Noah and his sons are a multiple of eight. Noah - 58; Shem - 340; Ham - 48; Japheth - 490; making a total of 936, or 8 x 117. Ham becomes a curse under his father's sin, and is the father of Canaan. Remove his name from the list and we have 888. Eight stands for a new era or order, which Noah represents.

I. THE GENERATIONS OF NOAH (6:8-13, 17).

"These are the generations of Noah: Noah was..perfect in his generations."

Enoch, being the seventh and Noah the Eighth, indicates that one era is about to end and another is to begin.

A. Days of Corruption.

"The earth was also corrupt" (6:11); "behold it was corrupt" (6:12); "all flesh had corrupted his way" (6:12).

We note here the completeness of the corruption that was on the earth. In verse five we read "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

We saw in our former lesson that this corruption was of a very special nature and origin. Some time before the days of Noah angels fell from their high estate. These are called: "the sons of God" (Genesis 6:2,4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Psalm 29:1; 89:6); "Sons of El" (Daniel 3:25); "Spirits" (I Peter 3:19); "Angels" (II Peter 2:4; Jude 6). They were disobedient (I Peter 3:20). They sinned (II Peter 2:4). They kept not their first estate or principality (Jude 6). They left their own habitation (Jude 6). They went after "strange flesh" (*heteros* or another kind).

These angels that sinned are reserved in everlasting chains unto judgment (Jude 6; II Peter 2:4). They are now in prison (I Peter 3:19). The offspring or progeny of this union of fallen spirits and corrupt flesh are

called by various names: Nephilim (Genesis 6:4; Numbers 13:33); Emim (Deuteronomy 2:10), Anakim (Deuteronomy 2:10); Horim (Deuteronomy 2:11); Zamzummim (Deuteronomy 2:20). These were also the Canaanites. The offspring or progeny of this evil union are not reserved for any future judgment or resurrection (Isaiah 26:14). The word "deceased" is the word Rephaim. These Raphaim are the progeny of the fallen angels. See note in Companion Bible. The fallen angels will find their final abode in the Lake of Fire (Matthew 25:41).

These giants or men of renown are the subject of Greek mythology. They were abnormal, super-human and uncanny. Greek mythology was not a fabrication of the human brain; but a remnant of primitive truth. These were the demi-gods of the Greeks. Thus the Babylonian tablets, the Egyptian Book of the Dead and the heathen cosmogenies are the corruption and perversion of the primitive truths.

These fallen ones were also the "sons of Belial" (Judges 19:22).

B. Days of Violence.

"...earth was filled with violence."

The corruption took the nature of violence. Corruption is the inner character; while violence is the outward conduct. What this means can be seen in chapter four where Lamech killed a man who offended him, and then sang about it to his wives. Life means nothing to a demonized atheist.

C. Days of Condemnation.

"I will destroy" (6:7), "I will destroy" (6:13), "to destroy all flesh" (6:17).

Three times God says He will bring destruction upon the earth of these corrupters because of their corruption and violence.

When sin has ripened, God will thrust in His sickle and reap the harvest of iniquity (Revelation 14:14-20).

II. THE DISPOSITION OF NOAH (6:8-10).

In Romans 10:17, we learn that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." So both Enoch and Noah must

have heard directly from God in order to believe and act accordingly.

A. Divinely Accepted.

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord...Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (6:8-9).

Noah found grace because he was just and perfect, and walked with God.

The word "perfect" is the Hebrew word *tamim* and means "without blemish as to breed or pedigree." He was uncontaminated by the evil seed of the fallen angels. It does not indicate that Noah was spiritually perfect.

C. Divinely Instructed.

"Being warned of God of things not seen as yet" (Hebrews 11:7). (See Matthew 2:12-22; Luke 2:26; Acts 10:22).

"And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me..."Make thee an ark."

The word "warned" means "to be divinely instructed." His instruction may be seen in:

1. The basis of faith. He was instructed.
2. The sphere of faith. It lives among things not seen.
3. The attitude of faith. He moved with fear.
4. The obedience of faith. He built an ark.
5. The efficacy of faith. It saved his house.
6. The testimony of faith. He built the ark with which he condemned the world.
7. The reward of faith. He became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

It was only by a direct communication from God that he could have any knowledge of the impending deluge. This meant that he walked by faith, and not by sight. He did not live by the things around him - human progress coupled with idolatry and immorality.

A. Divinely Obedient.

"Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, so did he." (6:22).

His obedience is outstanding. To build a boat of this magnitude on dry land where there had never been any previous rain or flood is a marvel of obedient faith. Such obedience is outstanding and truly noteworthy. God loves those who will trust him implicitly.

Two elements are to be noted in his faith obedience:

1. He believed God concerning the coming of judgment.
2. He believed God concerning the provision for salvation in the ark (See Hebrews 11:7).

Noah saw the terrible upheaval, the terrible destruction by means of the Flood some 120 years before it took place. God's instruction for us is usually in "things not seen as yet."

III. THE OCCUPATION OF NOAH (6:14-22).

"Make thee an ark." "Thus did Noah." (6:14, 22).

Noah's faith led him to do the most unbelievable thing that any man has ever been called upon to do. Faith always leads to that which is paradoxical in this world, to that which is foolishness to mere man.

A. Prepared an Ark.

"...moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Hebrews 11:7).

1. Its Materials (6:14).

"...gopher wood" and "pitch."

"Gopher wood." We do not know exactly what kind of wood this was. It was thought to be a species of pine, cedar or Cyprus. Cyprus was used in some parts of Asia exclusively for ships, in Athens for coffins, and in Egypt for mummy cases.

"Pitch" is the word *kopher* meaning resin. It is from the Hebrew word *kaphar* - "to cover." It is the only word for atonement in the OT. So it is only by atonement - to cover - that the judgment waters could be kept out.

2. Its Dimensions (6:15-16).

300 cubits long. 50 cubits wide. 30 cubits high. Taking 18 inches to the cubit, which is considered the smallest dimension for a cubit, it would measure 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high.

It was to have three stories, which could be 15 feet high for each and in each story were rooms.

It was also to have one window, built presumably near the top, and perhaps built all around. There was one door built in the side.

Such a boat would have a displacement of 43,000 tons, compared with 25,000 tons of many of our ocean-going ships today. The proportions of the ark, six times as long as wide, are often used by our shipbuilders today.

In 1609-21, a Dutchman named Peter Janson built a model vessel proportioned after the ark. His experiment proved both its sea-worthiness and its relatively high storage capacity. The ark could carry as much cargo as a modern freight train six miles long. It was a rectangular scow, without engines, which meant it could carry much more cargo.

3. It Occupants (6:18-21).

Noah's family (6:18): Noah, his wife, their three sons with their wives - eight souls in all. Some commentators believe that Noah must have taken some servants with him; but this cannot be proved from Scripture.

God now establishes His covenant with Noah. This is the first occurrence in Scripture of the word "covenant." The Hebrew word is *berith* which means "an agreement." The root meaning of the word is "to cut or divide." (See Genesis 15:9-18.) The NT word is *diatheke*. When heirship takes the place of covenant in the NT, the word means "will" or

"testament." The first covenant in the OT is The Noahic; and the first mention of a covenant in the NT is with reference to The Davidic (See Luke 1:72).

The Animal Kingdom (6:19-7:2). Noah is now told to take two of every sort, male and female. He is told to take "every living thing of all flesh." He didn't need to take the fish for they could survive the Flood. In 7:2-3, God says 120 years later that Noah is to take by sevens the clean beasts, and fowls. This does not necessarily contradict the earlier command by twos. This is no doubt an additional instruction. The clean animals would be used for sacrifice when Noah came out of the ark (Genesis 8:20). There seems to be a parallel between this first structure commanded by God and the tabernacle and temples of Moses, Solomon and Ezekiel. In the Ark, actual animals and birds were preserved; in the Tabernacle and Temples, the cherubim shadowed for the same hope.

Food for humans and animals (6:21). Noah is now told to gather all food for both humans and animals. It has been questioned how the ark could contain enough food for so many animals over such a length of time. First, let us say that God could have provided food miraculously for the occupants of the ark. But He chose to do otherwise. The animals would have no physical exercise, so they would eat much less. In any event, there was enough food to keep them alive.

4. Its Obedience (6:22). Noah now does all that God commanded him to do.

Faith always discovers its existence by obedience to God's Word. God's plan of salvation is always adequate and sufficient, and man can fully trust in it, and act accordingly.

The greatest wisdom is displayed when one explicitly follows God's directions.

Noah's construction of the Ark is one of the world's most heroic acts of faith. The amount of work involved must have been immense. The physical magnitude of the task would indicate that others must have helped him. Noah no doubt had to hire godless carpenters to work on the ship. Even a lost sinner

can, and has, driven nails into a fundamental, Gospel church.

B. Preached Righteousness (II Peter 2:5).

Of all the holy men of old, Noah is singled out as a preacher.

His preaching consisted not so much in what he said as in what he did. His faith, his conduct and his work were all in perfect harmony.

It was Emerson who said: "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." "Actions speak louder than words."

Noah preached the righteousness of God in judgment. He did not preach the message of grace to these sinners. They were already condemned.

Later in history, Lot preached to his wife and relatives; but it was like talking nonsense. There is a contrast here between Noah and Lot. Lot's deeds belied his words. He had "lifted up his own eyes" and chose all the plain of Jordan (Genesis 13:10-11). Then he "pitched his tent toward Sodom" (Genesis 13:12). Then he "dwelt in Sodom" (Genesis 14:12). Then he sat "in the gate of Sodom" (Genesis 19:1), which means that he took part in the government of Sodom, and fulfilled the duties of citizenship. What Lot did condemned himself; what Noah did condemned the world.

C. Peopled Heaven and Earth.

His success is seen in the eight souls saved in the ark - his own family. The whole human race from that day and on went into that ark. Every member of Israel's race, the future earth people, were there. Every member of the Church, the Body of Christ, God's heavenly people, were there also.

Noah went in a father and came out of the ark a patriarch, a second Adam. All of us, under God, owe our being to the faith of this man. Every one who will ascend the steps to the New Jerusalem will do so because of Noah's faith. Every one who will be manifested in glory when Christ is manifested will do so because of Noah's faith. He truly peopled Heaven and Earth.

CONCLUSION

Tradition has held that the remains of Noah's ark are still in existence on Mt. Ararat (elevation, about 16,000 feet). On April 13, 1949, an Associated Press dispatch from Moscow told of the opposition of Russian authorities to a proposed expedition to Mt. Ararat, in Armenia, to verify claims that the ark is still there. March of Progress, a secular publication, a few years ago printed the account of a Russian airman who, circling his plane over the mountain, saw "a huge boat with an overall deck...stranded against the shore of a glacial lake." It is reported that the Czar sent two companies of soldiers to investigate. They found the ark, measured it and made sketches. But then the revolution broke and the documents were destroyed.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #13 - NOAH'S PRESERVATION IN THE FLOOD

TEXT: GENESIS 7:1-24.

Introduction:

- The human race owes its existence to the fact that one man "found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8), and believed to the building of an ark that saved him, his family and animals alive.
- There are three judgments which man cannot bring about nor control:
 - Earthquakes. No human can bring about nor control this disastrous judgment. It is a red light from God flashing in urgent warning.
 - Famines. This is another dark specter that stalks the footsteps of man, and which he cannot control. Diversified farming, rotation of crops, animal husbandry, scientific distribution of harvests all may help, but can also fail to stay this judgment. If total famine were to occur, the human race would eat every edible thing within 18 months.
 - Floods. Dams can be built to hold back the waters, but dams break, and when they do, the devastation is terrible.

Insurance companies acknowledge that all three of these are acts of God.

- Universality of the Flood. Was the Flood universal is a question often asked and discussed. Some believe it was more or less localized, which would mean that man and beast were more or less localized at this time.

But the Scriptures are quite specific on this matter. In verse 19 we read: "...all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered." In verse 20: "Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." This means that the highest mountains were covered

with some 22 feet of water. In verse 22 it says: "all that was in the dry land, died."

- The Flood in Tradition. Almost every race has its separate tradition of a flood, indicating that all peoples descended from Noah and his three sons.

The Babylonian account is most like the Hebrew and at the same time, unlike. This was found on clay tablets excavated in Nineveh between 1850 and 1854 AD.

The American Indians have a flood account.

The Polynesians have a tradition in which a certain Nuu, who built a large vessel and with his wife, Lili-Noe, rode out the Deluge.

The Chinese have an account found in the book of Li-Ki. It has similarities to Genesis.

- The Three Arks of Scripture.

- o Noah's Ark. It is called *tebah* - a big chest, a large box adrift on the waters.
- o Moses Ark (Exodus 2:3). Here Moses was laid adrift in the Nile river. It too was called a *tebah*.
- o Jehovah's Ark, called The Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10). This was called *aron*, a common name for chest, coffer, coffin or box.

The first (Noah's) ark bore the "seed of the woman" and also "the seed of the serpent" in Ham. The second (Moses') ark bore the deliverer of God's people. The third, Jehovah's Ark, typically, the crucified and risen Saviour.

- Chronology of the Flood.

The following chronology is taken from "Noah's Log Book," by Sir William Dawson, as found in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. I have made some additions here and there. In this chronology, 30 days are allowed for each month or 360 days to a year.

600th Year of Noah's Life			
			DAYS
Genesis 7:11	2 nd month, 17 th day	All enter ark, flood starts	-
Genesis 7:17	3 rd month, 27 th day	Rain stops; waters continue to rise	40
Genesis 8:4	7 th month, 17 th day	Ark touches mountain, waters abate	150
Genesis 8:5	10 th month, 1 st day	Waters decrease. Mountains seen	224
Genesis 8:6	11 th month, 11 th day	Noah sent forth a raven	264
Genesis 8:8	11 th month, 18 th day	Noah sends forth a dove (returns)	271
Genesis 8:10	11 th month, 25 th day	Noah sends dove again (returns)	278
Genesis 8:12	12 th month, 2 nd day	Noah sends dove again (no return)	285

601st Year of Noah's Life			
			DAYS
Genesis 8:13	1 st month, 1 st day	Waters dried. Noah uncovers ark	314
Genesis 8:14	2 nd month, 27 th day	Earth completely dried	370

I. THE DELIVERANCE OF NOAH

"And the Lord said unto Noah." At the end of 120 years, when the building of the ark had been completed, and only seven days before the flood.

A. The Lord's Invitation.

"Come thou and all thy house."

This is the first time that the familiar word "COME" occurs. It is found some 600 times in the rest of the Bible. God said, "come into the ark," not go. He was already in the ark, as He is in salvation. See other invitations - Isaiah 1:18, Matthew 11:28, Revelation 22:17.

Noah being "righteous" and "perfect in his pedigree" is now saved in the ark. The invitation also extended to the beasts, the birds and the creeping things.

This invitation is both an individual and a family invitation (Acts 16:31). God is the first person in the

ark, and the last to leave it, for when it was time to disembark, He said: "Go forth from the ark."

B. The Lord's Preservation.

"The Lord shut him in."

To preserve him both from the violence of the waters and the rage of men. Hitherto the door had stood wide open. Now it is shut.

One is impressed with the numbers used in this chapter:

Seven. There were to be seven pairs of clean animals. Seven days is the final warning.

Two. Two pair of unclean animals. Two is the first number of division. It never represents anything good.

Six. Noah was 600 years old when the flood came. Six is man's number. Noah represents the end of man's time. It was the second month, which indicates division. But it was also on the 17th day. This is one of the indivisible numbers - 1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17. It is the 7th in order of these numbers, a combination of seven and ten. The number 17 occurs many times in the Bible in places of perfection, such as Romans 8:35-39, Hebrews 12:18-24, Psalm 83:6-11.

Forty. It rained for forty days and forty nights. Forty is also a Biblical number of significance.

Israel wandered forty years in The Wilderness (Numbers 14:33). The scouts remained forty days in Canaan (Numbers 13:25). Moses was forty days in the mount (Exodus 24:18). Elijah fasted forty days and nights in the Wilderness of Beersheba (I Kings 19:8). A respite of forty days was given to the Ninevites (Jonah 3:4). Christ fasted forty days before His temptation (Matthew 4:2). Christ sojourned forty days on earth after His resurrection (Acts 1:3). Forty represents a time of probation in which evil is destroyed and the good saved.

The preservation of Noah is seen in the numbers 7, 17 and 40 connected with his name, and activity, and God's dealing with him and mankind.

II. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WICKED.

"...all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered" (7:19). "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth" (7:21).

The only way in which it was possible to ensure the eventual purity of the race was by the destruction of that which was utterly and irrevocably impure.

"The fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened" (7:11).

In this destruction of the old world by water, God gave a specimen of the final destruction of the world that now is by fire (II Peter 3:6-7). As there are rivers and lakes of water under the earth, so there are Etnas, Vesuvius' and other volcanoes of subterranean fires; and fire will come from heaven.

A. The Two Classes.

1. In The Ark. The ark is here a type of Christ. "In Christ" (Ephesians 1:3, 4, 6, 7, 12-14). There is no other way to be saved.
2. Outside the Ark. "Without Christ...having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:11-12).

So today, there are only two classes: The saved (Ephesians 2:8), and the lost (II Corinthians 4:3).

B. The Two Results.

1. Saved (Romans 8:1). No condemnation.
2. Lost (Revelation 6:17). "Great day of His wrath is come."

Noah illustrates these terms "saved" and "lost." Standing outside the ark he was lost; but stepping inside he was saved. It was that simple - a simple exercise of faith in what God said.

Noah was saved through the baptism of the ark. The ark was sinless, but Noah sinful. The ark suffered the violence of the judgment waters, the Divine anger of God. But Noah inside the ark could not be lost because the ark could not sink. Peter tells us that salvation comes by

baptism, a baptism of Christ, in which we enter into his death and resurrection (I Peter 3:21).

Numbers, wealth, education, culture could not save. The destruction is complete and universal. None escape. They were without excuse for Noah had preached to them about 120 years.

CONCLUSION

- God's methods have many purposes: 1) To save the Godly; 2) To destroy the ungodly; 3) To restore the universe. The same sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay.
- Viewed from the Divine side, Noah's salvation was all of grace; viewed from the human side, it was through faith. Noah found grace in God's sight (Genesis 6:8); Noah believed God, "By faith Noah..." (Hebrews 11:7).
- Sevenfold glory of God's grace:
 1. The source was the sovereign will of God (Genesis 6:18).
 2. The instructions of grace were: "make," "take," "come" (Genesis 6:14, 19).
 3. The assurance of grace - "I will establish..." (Genesis 6:18).
 4. The warning of grace (Genesis 6:17).
 5. The provision of grace - in the ark (Genesis 6:14).
 6. The invitation of grace - "come" (Genesis 6:18; 7:1).
 7. The faithfulness of grace (Genesis 8:1).
- As Noah was saved by stepping into the ark and resting in it during the time of the Deluge, so we are saved in Christ. As the ark was baptized in the judgment waters, so Christ was baptized by the judgment of God at Gethsemane and Calvary.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #14 - GOD REMEMBERED NOAH

TEXT: GENESIS 8:1-19.

Introduction:

- It had rained for forty days and nights, and the flood waters had been on the earth for 150 days (7:12, 24). There was death and desolation everywhere. There was no immediate escape from the ark, although the rains had ceased. The earth was still covered with water.
- As God had welcomed Noah and his family into the ark, and shut the door; so He now will tell them to "Go forth of the ark..." (7:16; 8:16).
- God's way of salvation in Noah's day was by means of an ark of gopher wood, pitched within and without with pitch. God will now turn His attention to the eight souls within the ark, and with whom He will make a new start of the cleansed earth.
- God now remembers His own in the ark. It is well to remember at all times that "there is only one thing the Lord forgets with reference to His children - and that is their sin" (W. H. Griffith Thomas).

I. THE WATERS ABATED (8:1-3).

"And God remembered Noah...and the waters assuaged."

The drying up of the flood waters was every bit as much a miracle as their appearance. No explanation is given as to where the waters went, but the Hebrew of 8:3 indicates that "they subsided with a very pronounced fall." Perhaps they returned into the "fountains of the deep."

God's remembrance is an act of grace. Even the animals, and the cattle, He remembers. This is a touching indication of God's tenderness toward His creation.

A. By a Miracle (8:1-3).

God stopped the fountains of the deep and shut up the windows of heaven, and by the use of a wind, abated the waters. By a current of air, which promoted evaporation, God abated the waters. God has power, both over water and wind.

The word translated "wind" is the Hebrew word ruah. It is used also of the Holy Spirit as seen in Genesis 1:2 - but there it is called "the Spirit of God." Some think that as the Holy Spirit brooded over the waters at the beginning, so here He is used to abate the waters.

So little by little the waters ebbed away. As the earth was not drowned in a day, so it was not dried in a day.

B. To the Mountains of Ararat (8:4-5).

So the ark grounded and settled, after 150 days from commencement of the Flood.

The ark came to rest on the 17th day of the 7th month. The ark rested on the top of the mountains on the same day that Christ arose from the dead.

This is the same month many years later that Israel were brought forth out of Egypt; it was the month that the Lord said: "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months, it shall be the first month of the year unto you" (Exodus 12:2). It was on the 14th day of this month that the Passover Lamb was slain, illustrating very clearly the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Three days after His death, Christ arose, on the 17th day of the month Abib or about April. So all those in the ark were on resurrection ground on the 17th day of this 7th month.

"Upon the mountains of Ararat." The modern Ararat rises in north Armenia, about twelve miles south of Erivan, in the form of two majestic cones, the one 16,254 feet and the other 12,284 feet above sea level. Travelers describe the appearance of this amazing elevation as of incomparable and overpowering splendor: It appears as if the highest mountains in the world had been piled upon each other to form this one sublime immensity of earth and rocks and snow. The icy peaks of its double head rose majestically into the clear and cloudless heavens; the sun blazoned bright upon them, and the reflection sent forth a radiance equal to other suns. Nothing can

be more beautiful than its shape, more awful than its height. All the surrounding mountains sink into insignificance when compared to it. It is perfect in its parts; no hard, rugged features, no unnatural prominences; everything is in harmony, and all combines to render it one of the sublimest objects in nature.

While the ark rested on Mt. Ararat on the seventh month, the seventeenth day, it was not until the tenth month and the first day that the tops of the mountains were seen (8:5).

II. THE WINDOWS WERE OPENED (8:6-14).

"Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made." (8:6)

Noah opens now the window and sends forth the spies to bring him intelligence from abroad. God told Noah to the day when the Flood would come, but not when it would subside and pass away. Revelation was necessary for the start of the Flood, but ordinary means might discover its end.

A. The Messengers Selected.

"And he sent forth a raven." (8:7)

"And he sent forth a dove." (8:8)

In order to know the state of things beyond his vision, Noah now sends forth two birds.

The first is an unclean bird; the second a clean bird. Both birds of swift and strong wing, and clear vision. Aquatic birds would not have returned. These birds may be domesticated and have local attachments. Hence would come back to the ark.

B. The Messengers Sent.

So now, after forty days since the ark was grounded, Noah sends forth two birds, a raven and a dove.

THE RAVEN is considered an unclean bird; it is of a black color, a bird of prey that feeds on carrion. It would therefore land on the many dead bodies still floating on the waters. It flew "to and fro" but apparently did not return into the ark.

THE DOVE is the most domestic of all the birds. It has more than any other bird the homing instinct. The dove always comes back to the dove cote.

Whether Noah sent the dove with the raven or waited to send the dove some time later after the raven returned, we are not told. The dove upon the first sending could find no resting place for its feet and so returned (8:8-9). Then seven days later, he sent the dove again, and now it returns with a fresh olive leaf, which it had taken from an olive tree (8:10-11). Then Noah waited another seven days and sent forth the dove and she did not return (8:12).

These birds are typical: The Raven is a type of the flesh, which can live on the dead things of this world, and does not need the safety of the ark. The old nature has a craving for carnal, deadly things. The Dove is a type of the Spirit. The new nature finds nothing suited to its taste in the scene of condemnation - the things that perish. In its first time out, the dove finds no rest, no peace and thus returns to the ark. The second time out, it comes back with the earnest of the new creation. It was not a dead olive leaf, but a fresh one. It was a sample, a foretaste of what waited those in the ark. The third time out, it reaches the fullness, the inheritance itself; it did not return.

The Psalmist says: "Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then I would fly away and be at rest (Psalm 55:6).

Our salvation passes through four stages, which are typified in this experience of Noah. First there is Ruination, through the Flood; then there follows Redemption, in the ark; then Restoration in a renewed earth; and finally, Realization, when Noah and family step out on the new earth.

In the 600th year, the first month and first day, the earth was dry, and Noah uncovered the ark. But it was not until the second month, and twenty-seventh day that the earth was fit for man to come forth (8:13-14).

III. THE WORLD WAS DRY (8:15-19).

A. The Lord's Command (8:15-17).

"Go forth of the ark."

It was the same voice that said some year or more before: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark" (7:1). God never commands before the time required for obedience. Step by step He makes known His will. It is never too soon, and never too late.

B. The Servant's Compliance (8:18-19).

"And Noah went forth."

As Noah had obeyed implicitly, accurately and immediately before the flood, so he does now.

He goes forth at the command of God. Obedience to be real must be prompt and full. This is one of the supreme tests of genuine living.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we see:

- God's Love Planning. Only a loving God could have planned the ark for the saving of His own.
- God's Grace Providing. The ark was adequate against the judgment waters; and inside there was all the provision for life.
- God's Power Preserving. Only an Almighty God could shut the ark and preserve them during this long time of judgment.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #15 - NOAH'S CONSECRATION & GOD'S COVENANT

TEXT: GENESIS 8:20 - 9:17.

Introduction:

- "Noah now takes his place as the second head of the human race. There was to be a new beginning, a fresh start, full of hope and with every Divine guarantee of blessing. Sin had been punished, grace was working, and God was ready to guide and bless those through whom the earth was to be peopled and ruled." - W. H. G. Thomas.
- When Noah and his family stepped out of the ark, they stepped into a world that was empty and devoid of life, a miniature of the condition "without form and void" that prevailed after the chaos of Genesis 1:2.
- The dominion given to Adam was passed on to Noah in modified terms; and instead of the sun, moon and stars being indicated as "signs" (Hebrew *oth*), the rainbow was appointed as a "token" (Hebrew *oth*).
- After Noah's emergence from the ark, we hear no more about it. Lest it should become an object of worship as did the Brazen Serpent later (II Kings 18:4 - destroyed by Hezekiah), it was in all probability destroyed. Noah worshipped not the ark that saved him, but the God of the ark; just as we worship not the cross, but the Christ of the cross. "Blest cross, blessed sepulcher, blest rather be, The Man who there was put to shame for me."

Superstition makes everything of God's ordinance; infidelity makes nothing of it; faith uses it according to Divine appointment.

I. EVIDENCE OF A NEW CONFESSION (8:20-22).

After the Flood, there was a new beginning human history, and it is now marked by a wonderful expression of Noah's faith in God, and God's faithfulness to Noah and the earth.

A. Noah's Consecration (8:20).

The first act of Noah on coming out of the ark was not to build himself a new house, but a new altar to the Lord. He put first things first. He offered clean beasts and fowl.

By this he testified to: a) His gratitude toward God for deliverance; b) Need of a sacrifice to approach God; and c) Consecration of his life to the service of God as symbolized in the burnt offering.

B. God's Revelation (8:21-22).

The Lord gives a twofold response to Noah's sacrifice:

- 1) Acceptance of the sacrifice. "The Lord smelled a sweet savour." The words are more literally, "a savour of rest." The word may be a play on the word Noah (5:29), which means "rest." What Noah did here the Lord did in a greater and better way when He became a "sweet-smelling savour to God" (Ephesians 5:2).
2. Assurance of the Seasons. An absolute guarantee that there would be no more flood of this nature; and that the seasons would remain for the duration of the earth. There will be perpetual "Seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night."

II. ELEMENTS OF A NEW COMMENCEMENT (9:1-7).

With Noah, the eighth person, God now makes a covenant. This covenant is referred to eight times - once before the Flood (Genesis 6:18), and seven times afterwards (Genesis 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). This covenant, said God, is "between Me and you and every living soul of all flesh" (9:15). It was for "perpetual generations" or generations of the *olam* or age. This age lasts as long as the earth remaineth; and under these early terms, man still is assured of God's providential blessings as here stated. These have never been abrogated.

A. Propagation of the Race (9:1).

This was a repetition of the primeval blessing (Genesis 1:28), rendered necessary by the devastation of humans by the Flood. God now gives the whole earth to man and his

posterity. It is not a paradise, but an empty wilderness. His blessing is given to the multiplication and replenishment of the earth.

B. Power over the Animals (9:2).

The fear and dread of Noah would now be upon every beast, every fowl and every fish. This revives a former grant given to Adam (Genesis 1:28). However, Adam's dominion was by love, and this by dread and fear.

The horse and the ox patiently submit to the bridle and the yoke; the sheep is dumb before the shearer and butcher, for the fear of man is upon them. What keeps the lions and the wolves from the streets where they could be found?

C. Provision of Meat (9:3).

"Every moving thing...shall be meat."

To Adam, God gave "herb bearing seed, fruit of a tree yielding seed" (Genesis 1:29). But to Noah was added all kinds of meat.

Here we observe a most important change. For the first time in Scripture, we read of flesh being given as a part of man's diet.

To those who have any knowledge of the ways and means of Spiritism, the change will be most suggestive; for anyone to attain to a high position in this cult, a vegetarian diet is essential, as also is abstinence from marriage.

To preserve the race from universal effects of another eruption of spirit beings, this change or addition is made. There is here a foreshadowing of the end-time. (See I Timothy 4:1-3.)

If the abstinence from flesh food and from marriage makes intercourse with the spirit world easier, we can perceive the wise provision in the change of human food as given to Noah.

There is also a physical reason. Under the new conditions that are now prevalent, with the sun's rays beating down upon man directly, without a firmament, there is the need to build cells quickly. Animal flesh will do this as nothing else.

D. Prohibition of Blood (9:4).

They were not to eat raw flesh as the beasts do; nor be hasty and greedy as a hungry animal. They were not to be like Saul's soldiers who flew upon the spoil and ate both flesh and blood (I Samuel 14:32); nor riotous eaters of flesh (Proverbs 23:20). Blood is considered as the seat of the soul, or the life principle (Leviticus 17:11), and even as the soul itself (Leviticus 17:14).

The idea of unity of the soul and blood, on which the prohibition is based, comes to light everywhere in Scripture.

1. In the blood of one mortally wounded his soul flows forth (Lamentations 2:12).
2. He who voluntarily sacrifices himself pours out his soul unto death (Isaiah 53:12).

Nor is this exclusively peculiar to Scripture. In ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics the hawk, which feeds on bloods, represents the soul. The Greek philosophers taught that the blood was either the soul (Pythagoras) or the soul's seat (Empedocles) or the soul's producing cause (Stoics).

E. Protection of Life (9:5-7).

"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.

Here is the foundation of human government. We can thus go back further into history than Nebuchadnezzar for the Divine institution of "the powers that be."

When Cain shed his brother's blood, God made a special provision in protecting him against the hand of his fellowman. But here, man is appointed judge and executioner.

This law of capital punishment has never been abrogated. The sword of justice is placed in man's hand, and it still abides there (Romans 13:1-7). See also I Peter 2:13-15. Man must not take his own life (suicide); neither must he take another man's life (murder); neither must a beast kill a man; "For in the image of God made He man." So he that murders a man defaces the image of God.

III. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW COVENANT (9:8-17).

The Covenant made with Noah (Genesis 6:18) is now formally confirmed. The purpose conceived in the heart of God (Genesis 8:21) now receives significant expression. Not only is a new blessing bestowed, but also a new covenant is formed with Noah. He that has now offered an acceptable sacrifice is not only at peace with God, but renewed in mind. He is a fit subject for entering into a covenant.

The word "covenant" (Hebrew *berith*; Greek *diatheke*), is one of the great words in the Bible. It means "a coming-together" (a *co-venant*, *con-venite*). In Scripture, covenants are of two kinds: Conditional and Unconditional. In the former, God says, "If ye will." In the latter, "I will." This covenant made with Noah is unconditional. It is God's covenant with Noah, and not Noah's covenant with God (note "I" in verse 9). Noah is the receiver; he is not asked to do anything.

A. Its Source (9:8-9).

"I establish my covenant with you."

The source is to be found in God, Himself. He has always been the One to seek out man and bring a blessing to him. God is graciously pleased to deal with man. It reveals His condescending power - "I behold, I" (9:9), "I will" (9:11), "I make" (9:12), "I have established" (9:17). There are ten "I's" on the part of God in establishing this covenant.

B. Its Scope (9:9-10).

Here are enumerated for us the subjects of this covenant and its promises: Noah is first, then his posterity, and then every living creature. (See Isaiah 11:6-8; Romans 8:19-22.) No end to this covenant is indicated, so we can be sure that it is yet effective.

C. Its Substance (9:11).

The substance is principally this, that no Flood such as the one that covered the earth will ever occur again. There will be local devastating judgments, but no universal deluge of waters. The old world was ruined in order to be a monument of God's judgment and justice; so this present earth is a monument to God's grace. If the

sea should continue to flow for a number of days as it does twice every day for a few hours, what devastation it would make! And if the heavens would open up and let down the rain for a long period as it does for a short period, what might take place? SIN which drowned the old world will burn the present one.

D. Its Sign (9:12-17).

"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."

"And I will look upon it" (9:13-16).

Here is a phenomenon of nature: the rainbow in the clouds, which becomes God's sign of promise. The rainbow consists of a series of successive zones or bands of polarized light, in which the vibrations of the wave assume a definite form. It is produced by the refraction and reflection of the sun's rays through the spherical raindrops on which the light falls. It must accordingly appear with a greater or lesser degree of visibility when the two material agents come in contact. The rainbow appears when the clouds are most disposed to wet, and returns after the rain. The rainbow is the reflection of the beams of the sun.

Note that it says: "I will look upon it." It is not enough that we look upon the rainbow, God must look upon it. My look alone is not sufficient.

"I change, He changes not. The Christ can never die; His love, not mine, the resting place, His truth, not mine, the tie."

The rainbow is the child of storm and sun. It is as someone has said, "the smiling offspring of the weeping storm." Three things are necessary to produce it: CLOUD, RAIN, SUN.

There may be a cloud without a rainbow; but there can never be a rainbow without a cloud. The rainbow tells us that however dark the cloud may be, the sun is shining still. Someone has said that the rainbow is, "The ribbon that ties the promises of God."

The colors of the rainbow are: Red, Yellow, Green, Blue and Violet.

The cloud of guilt is always arched by the bow of His grace; the cloud of sorrow with the bow of comfort; the cloud of death with the bow of hope and resurrection.

“Through gloom and shadow look we on beyond the years;
The soul would have no rainbow had the eyes no tears.”

We can only see part of the prismatic ring of the rainbow on earth; airmen see the whole ring. When we ascend into the Heavens, we shall see a rainbow round about the throne (Revelations 4:3).

Meantime,

“Be thou the rainbow in the storms of life,
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints tomorrow with prophetic ray.”

CONCLUSION

“I do set my bow in the cloud.” Consider its Conspicuousness, its Universality, its Uniqueness, its Beauty, its Permanence.

God’s grace is seen through Christ on the dark background of our clouds of sin.

There is a “pot of gold” at the foot of every rainbow - the unchanging promise of God.

God’s eyes and ours meet at the rainbow.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #16 - THE CURSE UPON CANAAN

TEXT: GENESIS 9:18-29.

Introduction:

A good beginning soon comes to a bad ending. The events recorded in the preceding section might well suggest that henceforth everything would be well with Noah and his sons. A new start, in a new surrounding, amid high hopes had been made.

There was Divine provision, protection and promise. Yet here is the sad record of failure. The Flood had not extirpated evil in the heart. Human nature was still subject to evil.

We have here the greatest evidence that environment is not sufficient to make men holy, moral, Godly. Neither is heredity a safe guarantee of strength against evil. Noah could trace his ancestry to Methuselah, and then to Enoch, his great grandfather; and Ham and Canaan were the son and grandson of Noah. So then neither environment nor heredity are safeguards against a sinful life.

These verses illustrate the familiar saying that "the best of men are but men at best." Although Noah passed through thrilling experiences both of judgment and mercy; although he was "an heir of the righteousness which is by faith" and an honored servant of God; and although he stood firm on the rock in testimony for God during times of adversity - yet when times of prosperity came, he tampered unduly with the wine-cup and brought a stain upon his otherwise blameless name and that of his posterity. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

I. THE SONS (9:18-19).

The names of Noah's sons are here given as "Shem, and Ham, and Japheth." They are so listed in all references, six in all - Genesis 5:32; 6:10; 7:13; 8:18; 10:1; I Chronicles 1:4.

However, in their genealogies, they are listed Japheth, Ham and Shem (Genesis 10:1-32; I Chronicles 1:5-23).

Canaan is here mentioned with his father and uncles in anticipation of what is to take place later (9:25). He is the youngest son of Ham (Genesis 10:6).

Who was the oldest and youngest of Noah's sons? The Companion Bible has this comment on Genesis 5:32: "Named in inverted order. Japheth was the elder (Genesis 10:21), Shem the youngest and, as in other cases, the youngest chosen for the blessing. Cp. the inversion of the order in 10:1, with 2, 6, and 21 and see 11:10 and note on 9:24; 10:1."

In verse 24, the antecedent of "his" is no doubt Ham, and the "younger son" would then be Canaan. This it seems would be in keeping with the statement in verse 18 concerning Canaan being singled out with Shem, Ham and Japheth.

These three sons now become the three heads of the human race; and it is unlikely that God has ever abrogated this order. It will stand to the present order of things.

There is a blood brotherhood of man in the fact that all have come from these three sons. See Acts 17:26.

II. THE SINS (9:20-23).

"And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard."

It is perfectly legitimate to plant a vineyard, and to use the fruit thereof. Though Noah was a great man and a good man, and a rich man, a man greatly favored by heaven and honored on earth; yet he could not live a life of idleness.

A. The Sin of Intemperance and Intoxification.

"And he drank of the wine, and was drunken."

The word "drunken" is in Hebrew, the word *shakar*, "to be satiated, merry." The word "wine" is the Hebrew *yayim* and means, "to ferment." It is used of every sort of wine. This is the first occurrence of wine in Scripture.

Some hold that Noah had never tasted fermented wine before. This strong fermentation would then be a result of the flood and the changed conditions on the earth. While we are going to see that God nowhere condones intemperance and intoxication, He does not directly condemn Noah of this act.

The Bible abounds with warnings and denunciations against this evil. Drunkenness is included in Paul's catalogue of the works of the flesh with all nameless and shameful evils. (See Proverbs 23:20; Isaiah 5:11, 22; 18:1-7; Luke 21:34; Romans 13:13; I Corinthians 5:11; 6:10; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:18; I Thessalonians 5:8.)

The word "husbandman" is in the original "man of the ground" - *ish ha adamah*. The Bible often uses such expressions. (See note in Companion Bible on Genesis 9:20.)

B. The Sin of Immodesty and Immorality.

"And he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment...and covered the nakedness of their father."

"...and he was uncovered," literally, "he uncovered himself."

"And Ham...saw the nakedness," literally, "to make naked."

So Noah who had kept sober in drunken company is now drunken in sober company.

Intoxification is the forerunner to nakedness and then to sensuality. Nudism is one of the worst evils according to The Word of God. It stands for shame. "The shame of Egypt" is literally "The nakedness of Egypt" (Isaiah 20:4).

In Leviticus chapter 18, the word translated "nakedness" is *ervah*. It occurs some 23 times in this chapter. The shame of nakedness is here connected with some phase of immoral sex. Man's clothing is not only a necessity, but also a constant reminder of his sin and shame before God. Note the judgment upon drunkenness and immorality in Habakkuk 2:15-16.

The evil of drunkenness:

- Discovers man. What infirmities they have and display when they are drunk, and what secrets are uncovered! "Drunken porters keep open gates."

- Disgraces man. (Habakkuk 2:15-16). What disgraceful words and acts are said and done under intoxication.

It says now that "Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers without." The actual part that Ham played in this episode will be discussed more fully in our next main division. We simply note here that he told his two brothers. With filial love, purity and profound sorrow, they took immediate steps to cover their father's nakedness and shame. "With a robe of reverence and a mantle of love" they cover him (9:23).

III. THE SEQUEL (9:24-29).

When Noah awoke from his stupor, he recognized what "his younger son had done unto him," literally, "his son, the little one." In verse 22, we read that "Ham saw the nakedness of his father." Here we read that something was done to Noah. It is evident that here is a case of homosexuality. This is one of the most abominable sins in the sight of God, and is utterly condemned. (See Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Deuteronomy 23:17; Romans 1:27; I Corinthians 6:9; I Timothy 1:10.)

This sin is fast becoming one of our worst national abominations. It will surely bring the curse of God upon our nation.

A. Retribution.

"And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."

This is now the second curse that God pronounces upon a person, and the fourth in order of the curses. God put a curse upon Cain (Genesis 4:11), and He had also cursed the serpent (Genesis 3:14) and the ground (Genesis 3:17).

A curse is any privation, inferiority, or other ill, which is expressed in the form of doom. It does not always bear upon the subject directly, but upon the party connected with the transgressor. The earth is cursed for Adam; and many think that Canaan is cursed for Ham.

"A servant of servants." This is a Hebraism for the superlative degree. The last even among servants. The

lowest degree of bondage and degradation. It conveys the notion of permanent hereditary servitude.

This prophecy was literally fulfilled upon the Canaanites in the time of Joshua, when they were partly exterminated, and reduced to the lowest slavery (Joshua 9:23; I Kings 9:20-21).

WHY DID GOD CURSE CANAAN INSTEAD OF HAM?

There are two possible answers to this problem:

1. God visited the iniquity of the father upon the child.

This view holds that Ham was the actual sinner.

In Exodus 20:5 we read, "God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." However, in the time of restoration, God will put an end to this arrangement (Jeremiah 31:29-30). Because intoxication and immorality have their effects upon generations that follow is the same principle that Canaan is cursed instead of Ham.

2. God brought the curse upon Canaan, the actual sinner.

The "younger son" can also be translated the "younger grandson." The same word is used for son or grandson. Canaan is the youngest of Ham's sons (Genesis 10:6).

There is something sinister and inherently evil about Canaan. If the "younger son" refers to Canaan, then he is referred to six times in this context (9:18, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27). The curse upon him is mentioned three times (9:25, 26, 27). These numbers suggest 666, which is the number of the Antichrist.

For these reasons and God's subsequent attitude toward the Canaanites make us believe that Canaan is the actual sinner here. Ham merely "saw" while Canaan "had done" the evil deed.

In this connection, we can also note that men might suffer for the glory of God as seen in the man born blind (John 9:1 ff.).

So men can suffer:

- a. For the wickedness of parents.
- b. For the own sins.
- c. For the glory of God.

B. Reward (9:26-27).

1. Blessings Upon Shem (9:26).

After the affirmation of the unity of the human race (9:19), we have foretold in a sublime epitome the three great divisions of the human race and their ultimate historical destinies.

The supremacy of Shem is foretold with reference to his religious privileges. The knowledge and practice of the true God should continue among his descendants. They would preserve the idea of monotheism - one God. Christ would be born of this race, and Christianity proclaimed by them. They were to be custodians of the Sacred Scriptures.

2. Blessings Upon Japheth (9:27).

The Japhethic have been the enlarging and the dominating races, the great world monarchies - Grecian, Roman, Gothic, Celtic, Teutonic, British and American.

Ham lost all empires; Shem acquired ethical and spiritual blessing through the Prophet, Priest and Potentate, the Messiah; Japheth took world-embracing imperial supremacy and has stood for industry, commerce and politics.

"Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). The Japhethic people have had to come to the Jews for their spiritual blessings - they "dwell in the tents of Shem." This was true in former times and will be true in the coming age.

Grace overrides all these distinctions and selects from all three branches those who will ultimately make a better world. Acts chapter 8 records the conversion of the Ethiopian treasurer, a descendant of Ham; Acts chapter 9, the conversion of Saul, a

descendant of Shem; and Acts chapter 10 that of Cornelius, a descendant of Japheth.

Noah lived after the Flood for 350 years, and his whole life span was 950 years (9:28-29). He lived to see two worlds. He lived to the 58th year of Abraham, and was in all probability a witness to the building of the Tower of Babel.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #17 - THE NUMBER AND NATURE OF THE NATIONS

TEXT: GENESIS 10:1-32.

Introduction:

This tenth chapter of Genesis is the oldest ethnological chart in the world. It is the earliest account of races and tribes that has come down to us. It is the first attempt to classify the divisions of mankind and to arrange them in genealogical groups.

Texts and paintings in Egypt divide mankind into four races, according to their colors - red, white, black and yellow; and even describe them as being separate creations of the supreme god Ra. But here we have the true account, and the first classified account of the peoples of the known world.

In this listing, Japheth has 14 nations; Ham has 30; and Shem has 26; making 70 in all. In Deuteronomy 32:8 we read, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." And in Exodus 1:5 we read, "And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls." This shows that Israel was to be the center of God's purpose in the redemption of the races; and that the nations of the earth were ranged around her in order to subserve that purpose.

All ethnological and philological investigation confirms the division of mankind into three primary groups from which the seventy nations of Genesis chapter 10 descended. These verses contain the germ of civilization, the outline of every tragedy, the promise of final redemption and glory.

The Japhethites occupied the northern zone; the Shemites the middle zone; and the Hamites the southern zone.

In 10:1, the sons of Noah are mentioned in the usual order of Shem, Ham and Japheth; but in the listings in the remainder of the chapter, they are listed: Japheth, Ham and Shem. As God's redemptive purpose will come through Shem, this is now revealed last, and will lead right into the remainder of the Bible.

As our first parents by providence had no children until the Fall, so by providence Noah's sons, who were all married, had no children until after they came from the ark.

It is evident from the many parallels exhibited between the period immediately following the Flood and the period of the creation of Adam that a new dispensation commenced with Noah and his saved family. All mankind descended from Noah, through his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, as we saw in 9:19. Paul, speaking to the Athenians, applied the term "autochthones" to other peoples, believing that other peoples had sprung as a separate creation from the soil. One can feel the point of the apostle's words to these very Athenians, knowing the belief they entertained. So the testimony to the unity of the human race seems to be the exclusive witness of Scripture. So what science is reluctantly but nevertheless definitely approaching, the humblest believer in the Word has known all along.

Adolph Saphir says, "Before God leaves, as it were, the nations to themselves and begins to deal with Israel, His chosen people (Genesis 12-50), He takes a loving farewell of all the nations of the earth."

I. THE LINEAGE OF JAPHETH (10:2-5).

The name "Japheth" means "enlargement," and the fulfillment of the promise, "God shall enlarge Japheth" is seen to this day in the fact that the white man is still the colonizer and pioneer. The sons of Japheth are seven, a perfect number.

A. The Generations (10:2-4).

1. GOMER. Ezekiel 38:6 places him in "the north quarter." In the Syrian inscriptions, Gomer is called "Gimarra," and by the Greeks "Kimmerii." The name is preserved in the word "Crimea." The Romans called it "Cimbri." This is the name of the Celtic Race. They have left traces of their journey across Europe from the Crimea to Cumberland.
2. MAGOG. Ezekiel 38:2-6 associated Gomer with Magog, and also the land of Gog. He is no doubt the ancestor of the Tartars, whose descendants predominate in modern Russia.
3. MADAI. This is Media or the Medes, the ancient Persians of the Caspian Sea.

4. JAVAN. The ancestor of the Greeks and Syrians. Both Sargon the father of Sennecherib and Darius use this name for Ionia and Greece. In Hebrew, this is the ordinary name for Greece.
5. TUBAL. Ancestor of those who settled south of the Black Sea and then spread north. Also those who spread over the southeastern part of Cappadocia in Asia Minor. A branch of this race may have gone as far as Spain. Probably Tobolsk perpetuates the name.
6. MESHECH. A race mentioned in connection with Tubal, Magog and other northern nations. Supposed to include Russia.
7. TIRAS. Probably the dreaded Thracians.

Max Muller says: "There was a time when the ancestors of the Celts, the Germans, the Slavs, the Greeks, the Italians, the Persians and the Hindoos were living together beneath the same roof, and separate from the Semitic and Turanian races."

Prof. Sayce sees in Ashkenaz, son of Gomer, the Assyrian Asguza, a district which lay between the kingdom of Ekbatana and the Minni. The Jews, however, have always applied the name to Germany.

Three sons of Gomer are given and four sons of Javan. So we have here seven sons of Japheth and seven grandsons.

B. The Geography (10:5).

"By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands."

Here it is clear that the Gentile nations arose from Japheth. These were to dwell in the tents of Shem (Genesis 9:27). But Israel never provided adequate dwelling for Japheth in their tents. She will some day in the future.

So Japheth is the father of one large branch of the human race that came from Noah. His descendants would scatter far and wide in their search for material prosperity, power and prestige.

These people though not in the direct line of God's special blessing given to Shem would nevertheless share

in their spiritual inheritance. See Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47-48.

III. THE LINEAGE OF HAM (10:6-20).

The name "Ham" means "Black, "Heat." The line of Ham was to be involved in a judicial condemnation - to become an inferior, subordinate people.

A. The Generations.

Ham has four sons. Three of these sons have generations listed, namely, Cush, Mizraim and Canaan.

1. CUSH (10:7-12). The Cushites first lived in South Mesopotamia and, afterwards, in Africa; the Ethiopians. The Queen of Sheba is supposed to have been from this race. Mid-Southern Arabs.

Cush has six sons; and his son Raamah is listed as having two sons:

<u>SEBA</u>	<u>HAVILAH</u>	<u>SABTAH</u>	<u>RAAMAH</u>	<u>SABTECHAH</u>	<u>NIMROD</u>
			Sheba		
			Dedan		

2. MISRAIM (10:13-14). The Egyptians. Mizraim is a name for Egypt (Psalm 105:23). Various African Tribes. And also, The Philistines.

Isaiah 37:25 records Sennacherib's boast that he had "dried up all the rivers of Matsor," that is, the mouths of the Nile. Also in Isaiah 19:6, the "brooks of defense" should read, "The Nile-arms of Matsor." While Matsor was the name of Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt was called Pathros (see Isaiah 11:11).

The sons of Mizraim are seven in number:

<u>LUDIM</u>	<u>ANAMIM</u>	<u>LEHABIM</u>	<u>NAPHTUHIM</u>	<u>PATHRUSIM</u>
<u>CASLUHIM</u> and <u>CAPHTORIM</u> .				

3. PHUT (10:6). Probably Somali-land, and also what is now known as the province of Morocco. This is the Punt or Put of the Egyptian Monuments. Libya is Phut (Jeremiah 46:9; Ezekiel 27:10; 30:5; 38:5).

4. CANAAN (10:15-19). The Tel-el-Amarna tablets show that the land of promise was known by the name of Canaan in the time of Moses. They took in the land from Sidon in the north to Gaza in the south, and from the Mediterranean Sea to Sodom and Gomorrah.

The two sons of Canaan as listed are: Sidon and Heth.

Sidon gave name to all the land of Phoenicia (Joshua 13:6; Judges 18:7). From him the ancient city of Sidon took its origin. Tyre was 20 miles to the south, a daughter of Sidon (Isaiah 23:12).

Heth is the father of the Hittites. At one time, they were a dominant power in Syria and Asia Minor. Their territory was from Sidon on the N.W. to Gaza on the S.W., and from thence to the Salt Sea or Dead Sea.

The Canaanites included such nations as The Jebusite, The Amorite, The Girgasite, The Hivite, The Arkite, The Sinite, The Arvadite, The Zemarite, The Hamathite.

B. The Rebellion (10:8-12).

In the midst of all the names given in this chapter, one stands out among them all, namely NIMROD. He was the son of Cush, and his name and prowess became a proverb: "Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord" (10:9).

The name Nimrod is from the Hebrew marad, to rebel. The Merodach of the Bible (Jeremiah 50:2) is the name Nimrod. The Accadian Merodach was called Amaruduk or Amarudu, and became the Assyro-Babylonian, Marduk. The suffix uk dropped and prefix ni added in Hebrew. Thus we have the Hebrew name Ni-marad or Nimrod. Merodach (i.e., Nimrod deified) is creator and savior in the whole unholy parody. He does battle with Tiamat, and to him it was said: "Fear not, and make merry, for thou shalt bruise the head of Tiamat." Here is the first declaration concerning the seed diverted from its true object. Merodach is exalted above all gods. "Among the high gods thou art highest; thy command is the command of Anu, O Merodach, our avenger, we give thee sovereignty over the entire universe. Thy weapon will be irresistible." "May

Merodach, the mighty overseer of the heavenly spirits exalt thy head."

What is true concerning the usurpation of the glory and offices of Christ in this satanic scheme, is true also of the gospel associated with it. There is here a complete religion dealing with life, death and judgment, salvation by works, penance and rites, a Christless creed, the very mystery of iniquity. So with Nimrod, Babylon and all that Babylon stands for are associated together. "Babylon is taken; Bel is confounded; Merodach is broken in pieces" (Jeremiah 50:2).

Nimrod is called "a mighty hunter before the Lord." To this day, it is common to refer to a man who is fond of hunting as a "Nimrod." He was a mighty hunter in defiance of Jehovah. He no doubt hunted men, tyrannizing them or enslaving them. The Chaldee paraphrase of 10:8 says: "Cush begat Nimrod, who began to prevail in wickedness, for he slew innocent blood and rebelled against Jehovah."

Nimrod was a kingdom builder (10:10-12). Babel, his original headquarters, was doubtless the beginning of the city, which was later called Babylon. Up to his time, an earthly king was unknown. This first king was a rebel and the first kingdom began at Babylon. From its first mention here in Genesis until its final mention in Revelation, Babel, or Babylon, has been the seat of all rebellion and opposition to the Divine purpose. So Nimrod revived the spirit of independence and rebellion, disregarding God and all authority. It was a "Babylonish garment" that caused the first sin in the Promised Land (Joshua 7:21). It was to Babylon, with all its immoral idolatry, that Judah was finally led captive. Its final doom as seen in Revelation chapter 18 is set in a context of the most godless system.

Nimrod is a foreshadowing of the Antichrist. His name means "the rebel." Antichrist is called "the lawless one" (II Thessalonians 2:8). Nimrod and Antichrist both head a great confederacy in open revolt against God. Nimrod was a "mighty one." Antichrist will come in power, signs and lying wonders (II Thessalonians 2:9). Nimrod and Antichrist are both hunters of men. Their headquarters is Babylon (Revelations 17:3-5).

The name "Shem" means "renown" (see Ezekiel 34:29). The line of Shem is to be the Covenant Line, possessing special relation to Jehovah. They will be the channel of blessing to the other nations. So Shem becomes the progenitor of the Hebrew nation, the human ancestor of the Messiah (Luke 3:23-26).

Shem has five sons, another perfect number, the spiritual number of grace. Shem is called the father of "all the children of Eber," for Peleg's descendants, who carry us down to Abraham, are not named in this chapter, but given in 11:10, ff.

It is of interest to note that with Ham it says, "Ham is the father of Canaan" (Genesis 9:18); and now with Shem, it says, "Shem, the father of all the children of Eber" (10:21). Canaan will be the father of all the wicked seed; while Eber will be the father of all the spiritual seed, leading to Christ.

A. The Generations.

1. ELAM (10:22). Josephus thought that the Elamites were Persians.
2. ASSHUR (10:22). From him came the Assyrians, whose language is closer to Hebrew than French is to Latin.
3. ARPHAXAD (10:22, 24-30). Refers to Chaldea.

Arphaxad begat Salah -
 Salah begat Eber -
 Eber begets Peleg and Joktan -
 Joktan begets Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,
Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir,
 Havilah and Jobab - 13.

4. LUD (10:22). These went to what was known as Lydia in Asia Minor.
5. ARAM (10:22-23). Mesopotamia and Syria. Language called Aramaic, the language of Daniel 2:4-7. See Mark 5:41, the language of the common people in the time of Christ.

Aram begat Uz, Hul, Gether and Mash.

B. The Revelations.

"And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided" (10:25).

The word "Eber" means "one who passes over." "And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan" (Joshua 24:2, 3, 14, 15).

Eber gives the name Hebrew (see Genesis 14:13).

Eber had two sons: Peleg and Joktan. Attention is drawn to the fact that in Peleg's days the earth was divided: then nothing more is said of him until chapter 11, where he is seen in the direct line from Shem to Abraham. In the days of Peleg (Divider), the earth was apparently divided into continents. Europe was split from Africa by the Mediterranean; South America from Africa by the south Atlantic; and northern Europe from the Americas by the north Atlantic. A glance at the map will reveal how easily these continents would fit together if there were no oceans. There is a tradition that Europe was split from America by the sinking of Atlantis, which originally joined the two.

There are other divisions: If Hebrew were the original tongue then it was split up into many languages as seen in chapter 11; personal life was divided in that the longevity of centuries was taken away - one hundred years now being old; the nations were divided into Jew and Gentile; and then there is Romans chapter 1, "He gave them up."

CONCLUSION

- All nations have one need. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Amid every variety of race, circumstance, place and temperament, this one great fact of sin, deep-seated, permeates the whole human race.
- All have one way of salvation. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God's Savior would come through Shem, and through him to all mankind.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #18 - THE BUILDERS OF BABEL

TEXT: GENESIS 11:1-9.

Introduction:

- The sons of men were very loath to disperse into distant places as the Lord commanded Noah (Genesis 9:7). They thought "the more, the merrier" and the safer; and therefore, they contrived to keep together.
- Because all men spoke the same language, they naturally all would congregate together. What this original language was is not certain. It has been thought to have been Hebrew, or that Hebrew is a form of the original.
- We are told that men migrated in an eastward and southeastern direction from Ararat, coming into "a plain in the land of Shinar," generally believed to be Chaldea or Babylonia. Babylon has become one of the most terrible strongholds of idolatry and false religion.
- Satan now makes a third attack upon the human race. He attacked Eve in the Garden of Eden, and humanity before the Flood. He is determined to destroy "her seed."
- It is important to see the relationship between chapters 10 and 11. They stand related to each other as cause and effect. Chapter 10 is the effect; chapter 11 the cause. So in chronological order, chapter 11 comes first.
- Two names arrest our attention: Nimrod and Shem. Nimrod, the son of Cush, the grandson of Ham, became so great that his name and prowess became a proverb, "Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord" (Genesis 10:9), literally, "against the Lord." Shem becomes the father of Eber, and Eber becomes the ancestor of Abraham.
- Nimrod, the nephew of Canaan, and the grandson of Ham, became:
 - A great man in the earth - ambitious, proud and lordly (Genesis 10:8).

- o A hunter of souls of men - cruel and tyrannical (Genesis 10:9).
- o A great ruler - mighty and powerful (Genesis 10:10).
- o A great builder, not only of cities, but of a tower, original and clever (Genesis 11:1-4).

➤ In Scripture, there are the perpetual antagonisms between two opposing purposes, principles and practices - the one is crystallized in the name Babylon, and the other, in Jerusalem - Godlessness and Godliness. (See Zechariah 5:5-11 with 8:1-8.)

I. THE DIABOLICAL INVENTION (11:1-4).

"Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top is heaven."

This diabolical intention is one of the greatest movements ever inaugurated in the past.

A. Its Purpose.

"...lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth" (11:4).

This purpose is best seen in its contrast with God's purpose: "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 9:1).

So they seek now to consolidate against the decree of God.

Two men are outstanding in chapter 10, as we have seen - Nimrod (v. 8) and Eber (v. 24). Nimrod was the fourth descendant from Noah through Ham; Eber was the fifth in line from Noah through Shem. Hence they lived contemporarily. Nimrod founded Babel or Babylon and also Nineveh in Assyria. He became the head of two dynasties. Eber directed the separation of the people or at least tried to do so. The name of his son is Peleg, which means "division" and it says "in his days was the earth divided." Abraham came from Eber, and he left his city of Ur and went to a land God would show him.

It was in this day when God said, "Move forward, colonize, spread abroad, replenish the earth," that men said, "Let us get together, lest we be scattered." So God's purpose is frustrated.

B. Its Principle.

"...and let us make us a name."

Here is the underlying principle. It was an effort of human glory. Pride was the goal. This was the offspring of human ambition.

This reminds of Satan's five "I am's" in Isaiah chapter 14: "I will ascend," "I will exalt," "I will sit," "I will ascend," and "I will be like."

Here was the dream of the solidarity of humanity; the dream of a great social effort; the dream of imperialism; the dream of a large, united church organization.

"Let us make us a name," and "a tower with heaven on its top." Philo Judaeus says, "They engraved everyone his name upon a brick in perpetual memorial." Some believe that the top was the twelve signs of the Zodiac, the imaginary belt in the heavens, 18 degrees wide, encompassing the apparent path of the principle planets.

III. THE DIVINE INTERVENTION (11:5-9).

"And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

God comes upon the scene, and says: "Let us go down," to man's "Let us go up." Every time that God comes down it is to judge: The Garden (Genesis 3); The Flood (Genesis 7); Sodom (Genesis 18); Egypt (Exodus 3); and Babylon (Revelations chapters 17-18).

A. Its Purpose.

"So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the whole earth."

God's purpose was to scatter, and then that He might replenish the earth to the full realization of humanity.

God originally placed man on this earth to rule over it. But Satan came and tempted Eve, and she in turn caused the ruler to sin. Satan then took over the rulership. "The whole earth lieth in the Evil One" (A.R.V. 1901).

It is God's purpose to redeem the world, not a part, but the whole. So His purpose in replenishing was for the purpose of redeeming.

B. Its Program.

"And there confound their language...The Lord did there confound the language of all the earth."

The program was that of confounding and confusion of speech. Here is the beginning of languages. (See Acts 2:6.)

"These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations" (Genesis 10:31).

Here is supernatural intervention into the human communication of speech. Students of speech believe that all languages can be traced to three sources. The people did move in three directions.

C. Its Principle.

Divine Glory in the accomplishment of His word. God will never let Satan, demons, or wicked men frustrate His word. That stands supreme and secure. "Heaven and earth may pass away, but my word shall never pass away." God's glory here lies in the accomplishment of His word: "Replenish the earth." So God takes this means to realize His glory.

CONCLUSION

- In Genesis 11:9 we have tongues confounded in guilt. In Acts 2:4 we have tongues given in grace. In Revelation 7:9 we have tongues united in glory.
- History of Babylon. From its beginning here in Genesis chapters 10 and 11, we can trace it down through Scripture.

Daniel chapter 2 gives its greatness, fall to Medo-Persia, and its relation to Israel.

Isaiah chapter 13; 14:4; 21:9; 47:1-15 all speak of Babylon.

Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51 tell of her sin and judgment. Revelation mentions Babylon six times. Five times she is called "great." Revelation 14:8; 16:19; and chapters 17 and 18.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #19 - THE GENERATIONS OF SHEM AND TERAH

TEXT: GENESIS 11:10-32.

Introduction:

- The Two Generations. Our text presents two of the eleven generations of this Book of Genesis: The Generations of Shem (10-26) and The Generations of Terah (27-32). The *Student's Commentary* calls this "Messiah's Highway; for he was to spring out of Shem." The Book of Genesis ends with just eleven generations. The twelfth or complete generation is found in Matthew chapter 1 of Jesus Christ from David and Abraham to Mary and Christ.
- A Distinct and New Departure. With this section of the Book of Genesis, we get a new and distinct departure. From consideration of the human race (chapters 10-11:9), we are now directed towards one family, and one man in that family - Abraham. The earlier chapters are but a preface to the remainder of the book, a foundation of which the remaining 39 chapters are in the superstructure. As the root is to the stem, so are chapters 1-11 to chapters 12-50. These first eleven chapters cover about 2,000 years of human history.
- Abraham stands half-way from Adam to Christ.

Noah lived for 350 years after the Flood (Genesis 9:28), and died at 950 years (Genesis 9:29). Two years after his death, Abraham was born.

Shem, Noah's youngest son, was then 450 years old. He lived on through 150 years of Abraham's life (Genesis 11:10-11). He was 600 years old when he died (11:10-11).

Methuselah, Noah's grandfather, lived during the last 243 years of Adam's life. He lived also through the first 98 years of Shem's life. He died at 969 years (Genesis 5:27).

Thus these overlapping lives span the history from the Garden of Eden to the Call of Abraham. Abraham was born about 2,000 years after the Creation, and 2,000 years before Christ, and so stands mid-way from Adam to Christ. Only eleven chapters

cover the first 2,000 years; and then about thirteen chapters for Abraham's life of 175 years.

- The Priority of Names. It is the one through whom Christ came that is mentioned first in the Scriptures: Shem is mentioned first in Genesis 10:1; Abram is mentioned first in Genesis 11:26-27; and Jacob before the older twin (Hebrews 11:20). It is the one through whom Christ came that is mentioned first.
- Abram was born at Ur in the Chaldees (Genesis 11:31; Nehemiah 9:7). The sight of this ancient city is now called Mugheir, west of the Euphrates, halfway between Babylon and the Persian Gulf. It was a great center of idolatry, worship of the Moon god. This city, Ur, was at the time of Abraham a center of learning, science, art and wealth, even to the point of luxury. This has been discovered from the monuments and remains of the city. Abraham is the only man in the Old Testament called the "Friend of God" (Isaiah 41:8) and "Abraham my friend" (II Chronicles 20:7; James 2:23). To this day, Abraham is known among the Arabs as *El Khalil* (Friend of God).

I. SEPARATING THE TWO SEEDS.

The Godly seed is now separated from the ungodly. The ungodly world is permitted to go its way. In Romans chapter one, it says three times "God gave them up" (Romans 1:24, 26), and "God gave them over" (Romans 1:28).

A. Selected By God.

In God's sovereign will, these were selected as vessels and channels of His promise and purpose. These are to be honored by being the ministers of His Kingdom Gospel, the messengers of His earthly covenants. The others are passed by for the time being to go their own way. Others are ignored and forgotten, but these are written down in His book (Exodus 32:32, 33; Revelation 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; 22:7, 9, 10, 18, 19).

These were all known by God, as individuals, known by their families, by their offspring, by their very names.

B. Separated By God.

In the days of Shem's grandson, Peleg, the son of Eber, the earth was divided (Genesis 10:25). The purpose of

this division seems to be to separate the Shemites from the rest of mankind, and particularly those of Eber.

The migration of Eber and his descendants added further to the isolation of the children of promise.

Then the selection and separation of Terah and his son Abram conclude the separation, and narrow it down to one man and his family.

II. SHORTENING OF HUMAN LIFE.

Shem, who lived the longest of the men of this period (777 years; Genesis 5:31), did not live as long as Lamech, who lived the shortest life in the previous period or before the Flood. Shem lived 177 years shorter. Terah lived just 205 years (Genesis 11:32). From Shem at 500 years to Terah at 205 years.

A. The Reality of Sin.

Whatever might have been the cause - the change in the physical conditions, gradual deterioration of race, or direct appointment from Heaven - it must remind of the patent fact that sin was in the world.

The race was guilty and condemned. Every death that took place would sound like a trumpet-call to sinful man to turn to God.

B. The Vanity Of Life.

We are told that Abraham looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker was God (Hebrews 11:10).

As men's lives became shorter upon earth, they would be reminded that this life is not the permanent one.

Before the Flood, they might have thought that this one was the one and only life.

C. The Certainty Of Death.

When men counted their lives by centuries, it might be easy to evade the thought of death. But when decades were sufficient, it might well remind them that "it is appointed unto men once to die."

III. STOPPING AT THE HALFWAY HARAN.

"And Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there" (11:31).

Haran, the son of Terah, and father of Lot, died in Ur we are told (11:28). The Jewish Book of Jubilees declares that he was burnt to death, whilst attempting to save some of the images of the gods when Abram burnt the house in which they were kept.

Places can often become symbolical for actions, states of soul, or experiences of various kinds. Such Biblical places as Bethel, Kadesh-barnia, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem; and such other places as Waterloo, Gettysburg, Bataan and Corregidor have their associations.

Such a place was Haran. What does it stand for? Geographically - between Ur and Canaan. Historically - halfway point in Abram's life. Spiritually - Incomplete obedience.

Israel stopped short in the Wilderness. Saul stopped short with the Amalakites. Abraham stopped short at Haran, and this is marked by a dead and negative experience. It may not be so much a state of wretchedness, as that the blessing is absent. There is a conspicuous lack in Abraham's life in Haran, especially when contrasted to his life in Canaan.

A. No Promises.

There is not a single promise given him in Haran. But no sooner does he come to Canaan when God gives him the greatest of all promises:

"I will make of thee a great nation."

"I will bless thee."

"I will make thy name great."

"Thou shalt be a blessing."

"In thee shall all families of earth be blessed"

(Genesis 12:1-3).

Promises him a seed as numerous as the dust, the sand, and the stars (Genesis 13:16; 15:5; 22:17).

B. No Possessions.

Nothing is said of any possession in Haran. But in Canaan, he is promised a large and fertile land, and with it blessings to the end of the earth (Genesis 13:14-17; 15:18-21; 17:8).

He knew the God who was the possessor of Heaven and earth, and would not therefore take even a thread of a shoe latchet from the King of Sodom (Genesis 14:22-23).

C. No Provisions.

In Canaan he built an altar; no mention of an altar in Haran.

In Canaan he met Melchizedek, King-Priest of Salem, who blest him; no Melchizedek in Haran.

In Canaan he met Jehovah in angelic form that spoke to him and gave him seven or eight revelations; no such revelations in Haran.

CONCLUSION

- The first call to Abraham came in the land of Ur (Acts 7:2-4) from "The God of Glory." From that initial separation, it was separation all the way. God's calls are his enablings. The very fact of the call is the signal that He who called is faithful and will fulfill his promise.
- Halfway places can be the most faithless and fruitless of all experiences. It is the same for us today. Unless we go on to the fullness of the revelation in Ephesians and Colossians, we are stopping at the halfway places of absolute deadness in our lives.
- There is no parallel to Genesis 1-11 in the ancient literature of any race. Only here in the Bible do we have a record, for all mankind, of the early development of civilization. In these eleven chapters, we also have a brief and condensed revelation of the fundamentals of Christian theology:
 - Theology - The Science of God. The eternity of God - "In the beginning, God." The trinity of the Godhead - Elohim, a uni-plural noun.

- Cosmogony - The Science of the Universe. "God created the heavens and the earth." Spencer said: "Unknowable is divided into space, time, matter, force and motion." "In the beginning - TIME. "God" - FORCE. "Created" - MOTION. "The Heavens" - SPACE. "And earth" - MATTER.
- Anthropology - The Science of Man. Genesis is the only non-speculative account of the origin of man. Three creative acts of God: Vegetable life (Genesis 1:11-12); Animal life (Genesis 1:20, 21, 2-25); and Human life (Genesis 1:26; 2:7).
- Sociology - The Science of Society. The first family based on marriage relation. Marriage, the first Divine institution.
- Hamartiology - The Science of Sin. The effect seen on earth before man (Genesis 1:1-2; Jeremiah 4:23-26; Isaiah 24:1; 45:18). The sin of Adam and Eve (Chapter 3).
- Soteriology - The Science of Salvation. Based upon the prophecy of Genesis 3:15. Seen in the clothes God made for Adam and Eve. Manifested in the altars built by Abel and Noah.
- Ethnology - The Science of the Races. Chapter 11, the reason for and origin of languages. Chapter 10, the origin of the races and nations.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #20 - **ABRAM - THE FATHER OF FAITH**

TEXT: GENESIS 12:1-9. (JOSHUA 24:2-3; ISAIAH 51:1-2; ACTS 7:2, FF.)

Introduction:

- The narrative of Abraham's life consists of eight Theophanies or Divine revelations, eight responses or results; and three reflections from the pathway of faith because of fear. We shall see the discipline of this man is along the pathway of faith and fear.
 - First Revelation (12:1-3). First Response (12:4-6).
 - Second Revelation (12:7a). Second Response (12:7b-9).
 - First Deflection (Genesis 12:10-13:13) - EGYPT.
 - Third Revelation (Genesis 13:14-17). Third Response (Genesis 13:18-14:24).
 - Fourth Revelation (Genesis 15:1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 13-16, 18-21). Fourth Response (Genesis 15:2, 3, 6, 8, 10-12, 17).
 - Second Deflection (Chapter 16) - HAGAR.
 - Fifth Revelation (Genesis 17:1-16, 19-21). Fifth Response (Genesis 17:17-18, 22-27).
 - Sixth Revelation (Genesis 18:1-10, 13-14, 20-33). Sixth Response (Genesis 18:11-12).
 - Third Deflection (Chapter 20) - GERAR.
 - Seventh Revelation (Genesis 21:12-13). Seventh Response (Genesis 21:14-21).
 - Eighth Revelation (Genesis 22:1-2, 11-12, 15-18). Eighth Response (Genesis 22:3-10, 13-14).
- The Book of Genesis, from the twelfth chapter onwards, relates the dealings of God with four patriarchs: Abraham,

the rock from which the Hebrew nation was hewn (Isaiah 51:1-2); Isaac, the medium through whom Abraham's blessing passed to the posterity (Genesis 21:12); Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 28:3); and Joseph, the man through whom a remnant is preserved in the earth, and saved alive by a great deliverance (Genesis 45:7).

The contents of Genesis chapters 12-50 may be set out as follows:

- o The Life of Abraham (Genesis 12:1 - 25:11).
 - o Interlude: The Generations of Ismael (Genesis 25:12-18).
 - o The Life of Isaac (Genesis 25:19 - 28:9).
 - o The Life of Jacob (Genesis 28:10 - 35).
 - o Interlude: The Generations of Isaac (Genesis 36).
 - o The Life of Joseph (Genesis 37:1 - 50:26).
- "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (Genesis 50:24). These three names occur many times in Scripture outside of Genesis, which indicates that this is an important section of Scripture, and that knowledge of these men will throw much light upon the rest of the Bible. (See Exodus 3:6; 32:13; Leviticus 26:42; Numbers 32:11; Deuteronomy 1:8; I Kings 18:36; II Kings 13:23; I Chronicles 29:18; Psalm 105:9, 10; Jeremiah 33:26; Matthew 8:11; Mark 12:26; Luke 13:28; Acts 3:13.)
- A Striking Change. In chapters 1-11, God was dealing with the race as a whole, with all the nations and lands of the earth. Read 10:5, 20, 31, 32, and note the words "families," "tongues," "lands" and "nations." But now when we come to 12:1-2, we see such words as "thee," "thy," "land" and "nation." So with chapter 12, we come from many "nations" and "lands" to one individual and one land.
- "Terah is the watershed of the Old Testament, even as his generation is the central one of the eleven in Genesis. His most famous son, Abraham, not only left his city and his home, but we nowhere read, "these are the generations of Abraham," the whole of his wonderful life being ranged under the "generations of Terah." Abraham beyond all else sets forth the principle of faith. He is the first one of whom the Old Testament records that he believed in the Lord." - Charles H. Welch.

- Abram and Abraham. Abram is a Chaldee word meaning, "high and exalted father." Abraham means "Father of nations" (Genesis 17:5).

Two words describe his life - FAITH and OBEDIENCE. He believed, and he obeyed. His faith was marvelous and his obedience absolute.

- * He believed when he knew not where. From Ur to Canaan (Hebrews 11:8). He was the "Columbus of Faith."
- * He believed when he knew not how. He received a promise that he would have a son, when both Abraham and Sarai were too old to naturally bear children (Hebrews 11:11; Romans 4:19-21).
- * He believed when he knew not why. He was commanded to offer up his only son, Isaac, and did; but God spared him (Hebrews 11:17-19).

- Confidence begets confidence. So intimate was Abraham's life with God that he became:

- The Friend of God (II Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23).
- The Founder of the Jewish nation (Isaiah 51:1-2).
- The Father of all that believe (Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:7).

- Why did God choose Abraham and his seed?

- To be God's witnesses to all people (Isaiah 43:10, 12; 44:8).
- To be the custodians of God's oracles (Romans 3:2).
- To be the channel for the coming of God's Son (Matthew 1:1-17; Galatians 4:4; Isaiah chapter 53).
- To be a blessing to all nations (Romans 15:8-12).

- The study of Abraham's life is one of deepest interest for two reasons:

- o His Personal History. He is one of the noblest and most heroic figures in ancient history.
- o His Spiritual Impact. He is God's chosen vessel for the realization of divine purposes in redemption.

I. THE COMMAND OF GOD (Genesis 12:1).

"Get thee out." In Genesis 11:31-32 and 12:1-3, we learn that Terah took Abram and Lot, and Sarai and went forth to Haran to live there; and then he finally died. In Genesis 12:4, we learn that Abram and Lot went forth to Canaan "as the Lord had spoken unto him." When and where did the Lord give this command? Was it in Ur or in Haran? From Acts 7:2-3, it seems he got the call in Ur, "before he dwelt in Haran."

A. To Obedience.

The main ingredient of faith is obedience. It does not question or doubt. It obeys. God's command was accompanied not with reasons, but with promises. To give his reason would lead to discussion; but to give a promise is to show that the reason though undisclosed is all-sufficient. In the case of God, a promise is the harvest of which reason would be but the bare seed (Matthew 19:21; Mark 10:29-30; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 6:17-18).

In reality, we have nothing to do with the reasons upon which God's commands are founded. We are to walk by faith and not by sight. Implicit obedience walks by faith.

B. To Separation.

1. From his country (Ur).
2. From his kindred (all but Sarai).
3. From his father's house (all near relatives).

Separation was a necessary condition to blessing. It was the key to his life from first to last. It was in separation that he found peace, prosperity and the highest fellowship.

God never asks us to give up anything without getting more in return - more of that which is real and lasting. What we give up is only temporal; what we get is eternal.

God's biddings are His enablings.

So the first Theophany or manifestation of God came to Abram in Ur. But he did not completely fulfill God's command until he went to Canaan. His sojourn in Haran is a blank. There is a solemn principle here. If there is anything in God's Word to which we are consciously disobedient, further communication from God is impossible; so long as the disobedience continues. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (I Samuel 15:22).

II. THE COVENANT OF GOD (Genesis 12:1-2).

These verses set before us one of the most remarkable and far-reaching covenants ever made between God and man. It is unconditional. Note the "I wills" in these verses. This covenant has never been completely fulfilled in the past.

It is sevenfold:

- 1) "I will make of thee a great nation."
- 2) "I will bless thee."
- 3) "Make thy name great."
- 4) "Thou shalt be a blessing."
- 5) "I will bless them that bless thee."
- 6) "Curse them that curseth thee."
- 7) "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Here God permitted Abram to look into His telescope, and to see "Things to come."

We have here the germ of the whole of God's covenants with Abram and the nations. Like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which stands on the threshold of the times of the Gentiles, this covenant spans and embraces the whole period and scope of the Abrahamic Covenant. All other covenants and promises, including Paul's witness to justification by faith in Romans and Galatians, are but expansions and details of this one grand covenant.

A. For a great posterity (12:2).

"I will make of thee a great nation."

"And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth"
(Genesis 13:16).

"I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and
as the sand which is upon the seashore" (Genesis 22:17).

This posterity will include, not only those who come from
Isaac and Jacob, but also those from Ishmael, Esau and
the children of Abraham by Keturah (Genesis 25:1-4).
(See Genesis 18:18; 46:3; Deuteronomy 26:5.)

Some think that the "star" seed represent the faithful
remnant in Israel, those of the heavenly calling; the
"sand" seed those of Israel who will inherit the land;
and the "dust" seed all others of Abraham's posterity.

But Abraham saw more than this. Jesus said: "Your
father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and
was glad" (John 8:56). He saw the day of Christ, who was
the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, and all the
spiritual seed through Him.

B. For a great Posterity (12:2).

"I will bless thee, and make thy name great."

This blessing was both material and spiritual. He was
promised a land from the river of Egypt to the great
river (Genesis 15:18). God bestowed upon Abraham
temporal, material blessings; so that his seed who
trusted in God were never in want.

Abraham's name is a household word among the Jews, the
Mohammedans, and the Christians.

C. For a great Purpose (12:2-3).

"Thou shalt be a blessing...In thee shall all the families
of the earth be blessed."

Here is the greatest of all - God's purpose in and
through Abraham and his seed. This purpose can only be
fulfilled through one person of the seed of Abraham -
Jesus Christ. Through Him the Jews will fulfill this
promise, which has never been fulfilled.

"For salvation is of the Jews," said Jesus to the
Samaritan woman, and so it is and will be.

"I will bless him that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee." No people and no nation has ever prospered who persecuted God's people.

This revelation given to Abraham is staggering in its content and outreach.

But our blessings today as members of the Church are also great and more far-reaching in content and scope. (See Ephesians 1:3-23.)

Perhaps nothing reveals the greatness given to Israel as the oracles of God (Deuteronomy 4:7-8; Romans 3:1-2). No promise in this wonderful covenant is conditional to Abraham. Israel must be a great nation, Abraham must be a blessing, all families must be blessed in him. God has said so, and it must come to pass.

III. THE COMPLIANCE OF ABRAHAM (12:4-5).

"So Abram departed...and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."

Dates in Abraham's life:

- * Abraham was 75 years old when he entered Canaan (Genesis 12:4).
- * Ishmael was born 11 years after Abraham entered Canaan (Genesis 16:16).
- * Isaac was born 14 years after Ismael (Genesis 21:5).
- * Abraham lived for 75 years after Isaac was born (Genesis 25:7).

Nothing is more striking than the immediate response made by Abraham. At the outset, he manifests that faith which characterized him almost the whole of his life.

A. In Canaan - Separation.

He went first to Haran with his father and Lot; then to Canaan with Lot and his wife. He had to separate from his father in Haran, and he will have to separate from Lot in Canaan before complete separation comes. So separation is the keynote to Abraham's life; and in that separation lay his blessing.

Later another vision led Israel out of Egypt to Canaan. They had to make a complete break. This has always been the way.

B. To Canaan - Security.

It is important to have a definite end in view. It is definiteness that makes the difference between a traveler and a tramp, a pilgrim and a wanderer. The tramp and wanderer have no clear objectives; hence no security. They do not guide their feet; their feet guide them.

Abraham had a starting point and a goal; Chaldea at one end and Canaan at the other. He had direction and attainment.

IV. THE COURSE OF ABRAHAM (12:6-9).

"...unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh."

"...unto a mountain on the east of Bethel."

"...going on still toward the south."

Here we are given the first two stopping places of Abraham in Canaan. We note that he doesn't stop to build a city.

We are now told that "the Canaanite was then in the land." The Devil had planted his evil seed to frustrate God's purpose.

God now comes in his second manifestation (12:7). At first, He told Abram, "unto a land that I will show thee" (12:1). Now He adds, "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (12:7).

- A. He builded an altar (12:7-8). He testifies to the Canaanite that he is a true worshipper of the One God. Worship by sacrifice.
- B. He pitched his tent (12:8). He was a pilgrim, recognizing that he had here no continuing city (Hebrews 11:13-14).
- D. He called upon the name of the Lord (12:8). The name of the Lord is a strong tower, into which the righteous may run and be safe (Proverbs 18:10).

CONCLUSION

So Abraham enters the Promised Land. He is:

- In intimate fellowship with God;
- Increasing fruitfulness in soul; and,
- Inexhaustible fullness for others.

THE FIVE BIBLICAL COVENANTS

I. NOAHIC COVENANT (Genesis 8:20 - 9:27).

A. Its Constitution (Genesis 6:18).

B. Its Contents.

1. No Condemnation (8:20).
2. No Destruction (9:9-11).
3. Preservation (8:22).
4. Reproduction (9:1, 7).
5. Domination (9:2).
6. Addition (9:3-4) - Meat.
7. Institution (9:5-6) - Capital Punishment.

Noahic Covenant: This is an **Unconditional Covenant**.

SIGN: Rainbow (9:12-16).

II. ABRAHAMIC COVENANT (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17-1-14).

A. Its Constitution (Genesis 12:1-3; Acts 3:25; 7:8).

B. Its Contents.

1. Promise of Seed: Dust (13:16), Sand (22:17), Stars (15:5; 22:17).
2. Promise of Land (12:7; 13:17; 15:18; 17:8).
3. Promise of Nations (17:6; 85:11).
4. Promise of Redeemer (22:8, 18; Galatians 3:16).

Abrahamic Covenant: This is an **Unconditional Covenant**.

SIGN: Circumcision (17:9-14).

III. **MOSAIC COVENANT** (Exodus 19:1 - 34:35).

A. Its Constitution (Exodus 19:1-9).

B. Its Contents.

1. Moral Law (Exodus chapters 19-20) - Commandments.
2. Civil Law (Exodus chapters 21-24) - Judgments - Social.
3. Ceremonial Law (Exodus chapters 25-31) - Ordinances - Religious.

Mosaic Covenant: This is a **Conditional Covenant**.

SIGN: Sabbath (Exodus 31:13-17; Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Ezekiel 20:12-20).

IV. **DAVIDIC COVENANT** (II Samuel 7:12-17).

A. Its Constitution (Psalm 89:3-4; 20-37; Deuteronomy 7:12).

B. Its Contents.

1. A Perpetual House (II Samuel 7:12).
2. A Perpetual Kingdom (II Samuel 7:12-13).
3. A Perpetual Throne (II Samuel 7:13, 16).

Davidic Covenant: This is an **Unconditional Covenant**.

SIGN: Son (Isa. 7:14; 9:6-7; Luke 1:30-33; 2:12).

V. **NEW COVENANT** (Jeremiah 31:31-37; Hebrews 8:6 - 9:28).

A. Its Constitution (Matthew 26:26-28; Hebrews 8:6-13).

B. Its Contents.

1. Regeneration (Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 8:10).
2. Revelation (Jeremiah 31:34a; Hebrews 8:11).
3. Restoration (Jeremiah 31:34b; Hebrews 8:12).

New Covenant: This is an **Unconditional Covenant**.

SIGN: Holy Spirit (Acts 2:16-18).

GENEALOGICAL CHART OF ABRAHAM'S FAMILY

T E R A H

ABRAHAM

NAHOR

HARAN

SARAI

BETHUEL
(Gen. 24:47)

LOT

ISAAC

REBEKAH

MILCAH

JACOB

LABAN
(Gen. 24:29)

ISCAH
(Gen. 11:29-30)

BILHAH

ZILPAH

LEAH

RACHEL

5. Dan
6. Naphtali

7. Gad
8. Asher

1. Reuben
2. Simeon
3. Levi
4. Judah
9. Issachar
10. Zebulon

11. Joseph
12. Benjamin

Note 1: Abraham married his half sister, Sarai. Nahor married his niece, Milcah. Isaac married Rebekah, his second cousin through Nahor and third cousin through Haran. Laban was the father of Leah and Rachel. Jacob married Leah and Rachel who were his first cousins through his mother, fourth cousins through Nahor, Bethuel and Laban, and fifth cousins through Haran, Milcah, Bethuel and Laban.

Note 2: Abraham was born when his father was 130 years old as comparison of Genesis 11:32, Acts 7:4 and Genesis 12:4 will show. The statement in chapter 11, verse 26, means simply that Terah was 70 years old when he began to have children. His first child was not Abram, though he is mentioned first as being either the one designated as "Firstborn," in the Law of Primogeniture, or exclusive right of inheritance, or as the most important in the record.

Supplement to Genesis Lesson 20
By William B. Hallman

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #21 - DOWN INTO EGYPT

TEXT: GENESIS 12:10 - 13:4.

Introduction:

We have seen that the ties of nature hindered Abram from coming into the land; we are now to see that the pangs of hunger drove him out of it.

This is the first mention of Egypt in the Scriptures. Chaldea, the great world power in the north, out of which Abram was called, was the land in which they worshipped false gods (Joshua 24:2-15). Egypt, the great world power in the south, into which he now descends, was the land in which they were independent of God. The inhabitants of Egypt, instead of looking up for their supplies, looked down the valley of the Nile River. This river made its annual inundations of the whole land. It was upon this that their very existence depended. They would boastingly say: "My river is my own; I have made it for myself" (Ezekiel 29:3; cpr. Deuteronomy 11:11). So this first mention of Egypt stamps upon it the character of a nation depending on its own resources, and in which men live as if God did not exist. The people of Israel are warned not to go down to Egypt; for the descent is not merely a geographical one, it is a spiritual one (Isaiah 31:1).

"The character and history of ancient Egypt are of absorbing interest. The people and the land were in many respects unique. The fecundity of the soil, unlike other countries, was not contingent on seasonal showers; there was no rain in Egypt. The Nile inundated the country twice a year. When the waters receded, they left an alluvial deposit, which fertilized the soil and caused it to bring forth. The Egyptians, therefore, regarded the Nile as the source of their phenomenal prosperity and felt themselves quite independent of the rain, which God sends on the just and the unjust. Egypt is bounded by the Nile and the desert. The river brought tides of prosperity; the dry, desert winds blew the scorching sands that blasted the harvest; so that Egypt was the scene of interrupted contest between prosperity and adversity - between life and death. Furthermore, the ruthless hand of death has left a deep mark upon Egyptian

history; its cold breath chills us as we delve into its lore. The monuments which have come down to us, are the mummies, the embalmed bodies of rulers, and the pyramids are royal sepulchers. The worship of the dead was a prominent feature in the religion of ancient Egypt. Its great work of literature is *The Book of the Dead*. How admirably is the spirit of the world portrayed in Egypt! That great land of art and trade and magic, lived, and moved, and had its being, apart from God; it worshipped nature but ignored the God of nature, its titanic energy devoted to making their land beautiful and attractive - a place where God would not be missed. Decay and death - the faithful reminders of man's sin and God's sovereignty - ravaged Egypt; their mossy fingers turned its magnificence to ashes, and yet the Egyptians went on and on, and would not be warned nor turned from the error of their way." - Vladimir Gelesnoff - "The Pathway of Faith"

I. ABRAM'S RETREAT INTO EGYPT (Genesis 12:10-20).

"Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there."

A. The Occasion (12:10).

"...there was a famine."

A grievous famine had now come over the land of Canaan; and that perhaps for two reasons: a) To punish the wicked Canaanites in the land; and b) to test Abram's faith in God. Would Abram's faith in God's promise to give him a great inheritance in this land stand firm under these circumstances? Here is now a material difficulty that would fill Abram with fear.

One of the best lessons we have to learn is expressed in Deuteronomy 8:2-3. The strongest test of faith expressed in this passage is the character of the *manna*, "which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know." Faith always trusts apart from sight or knowledge, but sense yearns for something substantial, no realizing that "faith is the substance of things hoped for."

God has promised His people: "For there is not want to them that fear God (Psalm 34:9). "No good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11).

This famine was no doubt Satan's attempt to destroy Abram's seed, through Sarai. There are 13 recorded famines in the Bible (Genesis 12:10, 26:1, 41:54; Ruth 1:1; II Samuel 21:1; I Kings 18:2; II Kings 4:38, 7:4,

25:3; Nehemiah 5:3; Jeremiah 14:1; Luke 15:14; Acts 11:28). The Biblical number 13 denotes rebellion, apostasy, defection, disintegration and revolution.

B. The Outcome (12:11-13).

"Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister."

From the material difficulty of the famine, Abram now comes into moral danger. Sarai was Abram's half-sister (Genesis 20:12). They had the same father, but different mothers. Was this a true lie? Sarai was also Abram's wife, so in the light of this, it was a definite prevarication.

Abram now feared for his life, and this lie would protect him, even if Sarai were taken to Pharaoh's harem. A lie which is a half-truth is ever the blackest of lies, and it becomes more abominable in Abram to make the semblance of truth his refuge, than for the wicked to lie outright.

The famine in Egypt was certainly a trial, but all trials are to lead us more continually to Christ. True, Abram had "sheep and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels" (Genesis 16). So Abram exchanged Canaan's famine for Egypt's plenty, but he had no fellowship with God in Egypt, and no altar and no worship, no communion with God, and no confession before men.

C. The Outcome (12:14-20).

"...the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house."

Pharaoh is the official title of the kings of Egypt; cpr. Pharaoh-Necho (II Kings 23:29). It comes from the Egyptian word *Pr'o*, or "great house." It was originally applied to the royal estate and palace, and afterwards to the king. We have the word "court" to designate the king and his household today.

1. Pharaoh's Intention (12:14-16). Both the people and princes of Egypt saw how beautiful Sarai was and told Pharaoh. So he took her into his harem and intended to make her one of his wives.

Abram was well treated because of this, and was showered with many riches (12:16).

2. God's Intervention (12:17-20).

"And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues."

These may have been similar to those that came to another Pharaoh and Egypt in the days of Moses (Exodus chapters 7-10).

"What is this that thou hast done unto me" (12:18). The pilgrim cannot step aside from the path of faith without evil resulting to himself and others. He, who has been called to be a blessing to all nations, is now chastised by a wicked king. He is severely rebuked.

Sarai is saved from any contamination with the Egyptians and Pharaoh. God protected the seed from falling into the hands of Satan. It was to Sarai that the promise was made.

Abram is now sent away by the men of Egypt, together with his wife and all the riches that Pharaoh had given him.

Lapses of faith enter into the great prophetic reckonings of God and His people. There are the so-called *lo-ammi* ("not my people") periods in Biblical history and chronology. In I Kings 6:1 the temple was commenced in the 480th year after the children of Israel had departed from Egypt; whereas, according to Acts 13:17-22, the period is given as 573 years, including three years of Solomon's reign, a difference of 93 years. The years of the Acts reckoning are *Anno Mundi* (in the year of the world); whereas the 480th year of First Kings is *Anno Dei* (in God's year) showing that no record is made of the years of captivity. The years of Captivity are:

Chusan-rishathaim _____	Judges 3:8	8 years
Eglon _____	Judges 3:14 ...	18 years
Jabin _____	Judges 4:2	20 years
Midian _____	Judges 6:1	7 years
Philistines _____	Judges 13:1 ...	40 years
	TOTAL	<u>93 years</u>

III. ABRAM'S RETURN UNTO BETHEL (13:1-4).

"And Abram went up out of Egypt...even to Bethel."

Abram goes back to the altar and the tent where he "had been at the beginning." He is back again in faith and fellowship with God in his life of pilgrimage and prayer. Time spent out of fellowship with God is time out of faith. The backslider must get back to Bethel. Separation from Egypt unto restoration at Bethel. No restoration without separation.

CONCLUSION

The famine was a test of Abram's faith. A famine in the land of Promise. "God would see whether he had such confidence in His goodness that even famine could not shake it. Alas, Abram did as we are prone to do, he sought relief from all his difficulties, rather than profit by the trial." - Ridout.

We often have great faith with regard to our eternal interest; but afraid to confide in God for our temporal needs.

A lack of faith will always lead us downward to deception and denial.

Beware of going down to Egypt!

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #22 - ABRAM & LOT AT THE CROSSROADS

TEXT: GENESIS 13:5-18.

Introduction:

In Genesis 12:10, we learn that there was a famine in the Land of Canaan and Abram goes down to Egypt. While there, he lies about his wife, which brought plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt. But Abram is sent away, rich in goods. He then returns to Canaan and to Bethel "where his tent had been at the beginning." "Bethel" means, "House of God."

Abram's life may be seen in both forward and backward movements:

- Forward - Ur to Bethel.
- Backward - Bethel to Egypt.
- Forward - Egypt to Hebron.
- Backward - Hagar to wife.
- Forward - Abram and household circumcised.
- Backward - His conduct at Gerar.
- Forward - Separation from Hagar and Ismael.
- Sacrifice at Mt. Moriah.
- Purchase of Machpelah.
- A wife for Isaac.

Abram had not fully obeyed God according to Genesis 12:1: "Get thee out...from thy kindred." He took his nephew, Lot, with him to Canaan and also down to Egypt, and back again to Canaan.

I. A SERIOUS PROBLEM (13:5-7).

"And there was strife."

A. In Possessions of Wealth (13:5-6).

Both Abram and Lot were rich in "flocks and herds, and tents." "The substance," literally "that which is gathered together," was partly accumulated in Egypt and partly at Haran (Genesis 12:5-16).

The LXX Version translates this word "substance" by *ta huparchonta*; and in Hebrews 10:34 we read, "Ye...took

joyfully the spoiling of your goods (*ta huparchonta*) knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." The goods of Lot are seen again in 14:11-16, where they are lost and restored; again in 19:24-25 where they are completely destroyed. It was because of all this wealth that the land could not sustain them both.

B. In Contentions of the Herdsmen (13:7a).

Riches have their special troubles that poverty knows nothing about. It is a striking fact that money was also the first cause of trouble after the Israelites entered Canaan (Joshua 7:21); and after the commencement of the Pentecostal Church (Acts chapter 5).

So Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen came to strife over pasturelands.

C. In Occupations of the Land (13:7b).

"The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land."

These were the Nephilim, a doomed race, fallen ones as the word means. These people were later to be utterly destroyed. (See Deuteronomy 20:17; Joshua 3:10.)

Abram no doubt felt that this strife of the herdsmen might come to the masters and have a bad effect upon these heathen tribes. These evil nations also needed pasture, and were not to be driven out until God's time was ripe for it. (See Genesis 15:16).

II. A GENEROUS PROPOSAL (13:8-9).

The significance of the number two is that its numerical value means opposition, enmity and division.

A. For Brotherly Conciliation (13:8).

"We be brethren." This is the first mention of this word in the Bible. Cpr. Matthew 23:8. Brothers should be known for their love, tolerance and a desire for harmony. So Abram takes the initiative and begs that there be no strife between them. (See I Corinthians 6:7-8.)

B. For Friendly Separation (13:9).

"...separate thyself." We note again Abram's large-hearted suggestion. Although older than Lot, yet he gives him first choice. "The servant of the Lord must not strive" (II Timothy 2:24).

A child of God can afford to be magnanimous, simply because he is a child of God.

How differently Abram might have acted. The whole land was his. He was most powerful and wealthy. He might have decided without consulting Lot, and simply announced his decision. How many would not have stood on their dignity, and vindicated their rights? But not Abram. He took Lot to a rising ground, showed him the whole land, and offered him the first choice. This is the result of a peaceful spirit and a firm faith in God, and his ultimate blessing.

III. A SELFISH PURPOSE (13:10-13).

"Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan...then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan."

Lot then takes the generous Abram at his word, and begins to calculate his choice.

A. Its Origination (13:10).

"And Lot lifted up his eyes."

The lust of the eyes have led to the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

The Companion Bible lists six downward steps in Lot's course:

- "Strife" (13:7),
- "Beheld" (13:10),
- "Chose" (13:11),
- "Pitched toward" (13:12),
- "Dwelt in" (14:12),
- "Sat in gate" (19:1).

1. He saw a productive plain. It was well-watered and fertile, "even as the Garden of the Lord." Here would be good pasture for his flocks.

2. He saw a prosperous land. It was to him "like the land of Egypt." Sodom was a wicked city, but prosperous; as so often is the case with wicked cities.

B. Its Obtainment (13:11-13).

How suggestive it is: "Lot chose...and Lot journeyed east...and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain."

The direction of going east has always been suggestive of a backward step, spiritually. Abram went west. Israel entered Canaan from the east. Paul was called to go west. The Pilgrims came to this country from the east. As we now move back east we get every kind of false religion and cult - Mohammedanism, Bahaism, Theosophy, etc. (See Proverbs 4:14.)

The man of faith says with the Psalmist, "God will choose my inheritance for me" (Psalm 47:4).

While Sodom was a most wicked city (13:13), yet Sodom had not completely overtaken Lot as we see from II Peter 2:7-9. Here we are told that Lot was a "righteous man, ... vexed with the filthy conversation" of Sodom. While Lot himself was righteous, he did not bring forth the fruit of righteousness. He is like the good seed that fell among the thorns (see Luke 8:14).

IV. A GLORIOUS PROMISE (13:14-18).

Lot did his looking and landed in Sodom. Abram let God look for him and he saw the whole land. The man of this world has indeed a small portion filled with wickedness; but the man of God all things.

A. Viewing His Provision (13:14-16).

1. A Great Land (13:14-15). In every direction Abram looks and sees the land God is giving to him. In 15:18 the land is further described.
2. A Great Seed (13:16). "...as the dust of the earth." This promise came to Abram before he had even one heir. Some hold that there are three companies from Abram who will inherit the promises, spoken as "dust," "sand" and "star" seed. Others would combine the "dust" and "sand" seed into one group.

The Dust Seed may represent all the seed of Abraham outside of Isaac, all from Ismael, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.

The Sand Seed may represent those from Isaac who will inherit the Land of Palestine some day, the nation Israel (Genesis 22:17).

The Star Seed may well represent the faithful remnant, the overcomers who will inherit the New Jerusalem. These are the Bride of Christ (Genesis 15:5; 22:17).

God adds some thing to every promise He makes to Abram. In 12:1-2 He says, "...unto a land that I will shew thee." In 12:7 - "unto thy seed will I give this land." In 13:15 - "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

"He gives the best to those who leave the choice with Him."

B. Entering His Possession (13:17-17).

"Arise, walk through the land."

Our inheritance comes by promise; our possession by faith.

Then Abram, separated from all his earthly ties, now removed his tent and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron. "Hebron" means "fellowship;" "Mamre" means "fruitfulness." Judah among whose mountains Hebron lay (Joshua 20:7) means "praise." So here we have separation, fellowship, fruitfulness and praise.

CONCLUSION

We see here:

- Differences In Believers - Abram and Lot. One cannot serve both God and mammon.
- Differences Between Believers. Even believers have their difficulties. Abram's spirit would settle all.
- Differences For Believers. Lot got his wealth here; Abram hereafter. Abram will inherit the city, Lot not.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #23 - VICTIM AND VICTOR

TEXT: GENESIS 14:1-24.

Introduction:

- The scene now changes. Abram is walking by faith, and worshipping God by faith in the land of promise. Lot is dwelling in Sodom, the wicked godless city of the plain. From worship of the Lord, Abram must now turn to warfare by faith.
- This is the first recorded war in the bible, a war of conflict and conquest. God had called Abram and Lot followed him until a separation was necessary. Lot walked by sight and chose the Jordan Valley with Sodom as the city of residence. Now he is taken captive together with all his goods. Lot's deliverance from Chedorlaomer was entirely the result of Abram's activity; and his deliverance later (Gen. Ch. 19) from God's wrath of fire upon Sodom was for Abram's sake. The Scripture does not say, "And God remembered Lot," but "God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow" (19:29).
- Sodom occurs some 39 times in the O. T. (13 x 3) and 9 times in the N.T. Both numbers are indicative of rebellion and judgment. The references to Sodom in II Peter 2:6-7 and Jude 7 show us the character of the last days fast approaching. In this light the connections between Sodom and Babylon are suggestive (see Isaiah 13:19; Jeremiah 50:40). Sodom stands for all that is anti-christian. The dead bodies of the two witnesses shall be in the streets of that great city, "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (Revelation 11:8). This old world with all its possessions, even though it may appear as attractive as the Garden of Eden, is on the verge of judgment. The lesson of Lot echoes the truth set forth in I John 2:15-17.
- We are now going to see Abram, a pilgrim with a tent and altar, become a soldier fighting the King's battles. He now defeats the army of the greatest conqueror of his time, liberates the prisoners of war, recovers all their property and returns laden with spoils.

I. A GREAT CONFLICT (Genesis 14:1-12).

In this first recorded war, we have four kings of the East against five kings of the Jordan Valley.

Four kings of the East: 1) Amraphel, king of Shinar; 2) Arioch, king of Eilasar; 3) Chedorlaomer, king of Elam; 4) Tidal, king of Nations.

Five Kings of the Jordan Valley: 1) Bera, king of Sodom; 2) Birsha, king of Gomorrah; 3) Shinab, king of Admah; 4) Shemeber, king of Zeboiim; 5) Zoar, king of Bela.

A. Its Reason (14:1-4).

"Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled."

Elam is at this time supreme over Assyria and Babylon. It was necessary for Elam to keep the Jordan Valley open as a trade route to Egypt.

These five kings of the Jordan Valley had been subject to Chedorlaomer and paid tribute to him. But now in the thirteenth year, they rebel.

Two numbers are interesting in this connection: twelve, the governmental number; and thirteen, the number of rebellion. The number thirteen is here seen for the first time, and is indicative of its meaning throughout the Scriptures.

In the British Museum at London, there are ancient Assyrian Tablets, which corroborate this Biblical account. The cuneiform inscriptions on them refer to a series of campaigns by the Kings of Elam, N.E. of Chaldea. Their conquests extended over large areas, which later became the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires. These included Syria and Canaan. The names of these kings are found in the inscriptions. Also, the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets discovered in Egypt testify to the dominion of these northern nations over Syria and Canaan.

The names of these kings are suggestive of their character. They were heads of savage and wandering tribes.

B. Its Result (14: 5-12).

"And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him...And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods and departed" (verses 5, 11-12).

The kings of the Jordan Valley thought they were strong enough to resist their ruler and so rebelled. Then Chedorlaomer and his confederates march to enforce their rule over these kings. On their way to the Jordan Valley, they fight against and plunder many other tribes (5-7). These nations called Rephaims, Zuzims, Emims, Horites, Amalakites and Amorites, six in number, are branches of the Nephilim, or super-human beings. (See Appendix 25 in Companion Bible.)

Then the five kings of the plain muster their forces against Chedorlaomer and his confederates and they meet in the Vale of Siddim. This vale was "full of slimepits," or pits of bitumen, a mineral pitch allied to naphtha. Masses of this bitumen are still thrown up south of the Dead Sea. Here the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah became snared in the slimy substance. So the kings of the plain were captured, their cities plundered and the goods carried away. These effeminate and dissolute men of the plain sought refuge in the slime pits, which proved to be their economic and political overthrow.

"And they took Lot." Lot, who, when he separated from Abram merely pitched his tent toward Sodom (13:12), eventually took up his abode in Sodom (14:12), and is now among the prisoners of war. So Lot suffers the penalty of his folly - the folly of choosing to live in a wicked city. Lot is now a hopeless captive and in utter poverty.

II. A GREAT CAPTURE (Genesis 14:13-16).

"And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people" (16).

An escaped prisoner now comes with the news to Abram in Hebron. Abram wastes no time, but musters together his trained servants, 318 in number, and goes to the rescue. In

the house of faith there are born, trained and armed servants for any emergency. Lot had trained none, and could not save himself. Abram saved many. The only blessing we can bring to the world is to live separated from it in fellowship with God.

"Abram the Hebrew," so called from his ancestor Eber (11:14). The Hebrew work **ibri** means "of the country beyond." He had come from across the Euphrates. This title may have been given him by the Canaanites. The LXX renders, "Abram and the crosser." (See Joshua 24:2.) These four against Chedorlaomer's four.

A. By A Man of Sympathy (14:14).

"...heard, armed and pursued."

Abram could have reasoned he was himself to blame for choosing to live in Sodom. It serves him right to be taken captive and lose everything. But Abram gets ready immediately to fight and to seek Lot's deliverance. There is a N.T. application to this in James 5:19-20. Abram had 318 trained servants, which he now arms. This shows he was a chieftain of great wealth and importance. He pursues the enemies to Dan, near the sources of the Jordan River, some 30 miles north of the Sea of Galilee.

B. By A Man of Courage (14:15).

"...and smote them and pursued them."

Against these four mighty kings comes this man of faith with his little band of men. The man of faith attempts great things. He uses strategy by dividing his men and come at the enemy from different sides, and in the darkness of the night. This creates a panic, similar to that caused by Gideon's army (Judges ch. 7).

C. By A Man of Power (14:16).

"And he brought back all."

The victory of faith is always complete. Not only are Lot and his goods brought back, but "the women also, and the people." Abram was marvelously successful because no army is invincible to the man of faith.

If we too put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians ch. 6), we too shall be victors over all the principalities

and powers in the heavenlies. Note that Abram was fighting on his own territory, which the enemy had invaded and taken. The heavenlies are ours, and so we too are fighting on that territory given us by God which we shall inherit some day.

We see in all this: 1) The evils of war. Destruction, desolation, separation. Many innocent suffer and perish. 2) Results of merely walking by sight as did Lot. Beware of being in the place of the wicked when they are destroyed. 3) A friend in need is a friend indeed. The prosperous Abram does not abandon Lot in his adversity. 4) We are more than conquerors in Jesus Christ, the great Conqueror.

"The only way to help and bless the world is to live apart from it, in fellowship with God. But, genuine separation from the world can only result from true fellowship with God. Isolation is not separation. Isolation chills, separation warms. Isolation makes self the center; separation makes Christ the center. Isolation produces indifference to the need of others; separation fills the heart with love and interest for the needy and perishing. As soon then as Abram hears of the captivity of his relative ("brother"), he immediately sets out to save him. Such is the energy of love. Abraham's was the faith that not only overcomes the world, but that works by love." - *Student's Commentary*.

III. A GREAT COMPENSATION (Genesis 14:17-24)

Abram is now met by two kings, "The King of Sodom," and "Melchizedek, King of Salem," as he returns from the capture. They come to bless and compensate him for his heroic deed. It would be natural for the King of Sodom to meet Abram, and to offer him a part of the spoil. But before he can answer, another king steps forward - Melchizedek, a King-Priest of Salem, the city of peace.

B. The King of Sodom - Renunciation. (14:17, 21-24).

The crowning hour of success is a good test of character. How a man behaves at the moment of victory often affords a supreme revelation of character and spiritual power.

Bera, King of Sodom, now offers Abram all the goods he had recovered (14:21). But Abram answers: "I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine" (14:23). The reason is

that Abram knew Jehovah, "the Lord," as El Elyon, "the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth" (14:22). So he certainly did not need a thing from a wicked king of Sodom. This man of God was in no way dependent upon the man of the world. As we shall see Abram will accept the heavenly spiritual blessing instead of the fruit of the curse.

No doubt the blessing of Melchizedek in giving Abram bread and wine prepared him for his renunciation.

C. The King of Salem - Recognition (14:18-20).

A King-Priest now meets Abram by the name of Melchizedek (King of righteousness - Hebrews 7:2), and blesses him in the name of the Most High God.

This strange mysterious personage has been the object of much speculation and vain discussion. The Bible doesn't say who he was.

But this Melchizedek is a type of Christ as seen here in this historical figure (Genesis 14:18-20), as seen in prophetic forecast (Psalm 110:4), and finally spiritual fulfillment (Hebrews ch. 7).

Melchizedek is noted chiefly for what is not known of him. We must note in Hebrews that he is set in contrast to Aaron and the Aaronic priesthood. He combines the office of King-Priest. Aaron was only a priest, and of a different order. From this King-Priest, Abram now receives "bread and wine," symbols of sustenance and enjoyment; and types of Christ's body and blood. So in type, Abram rejected the fruit of the curse to receive the fruit of Christ.

"Made like unto the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3) is the key to Melchizedek's life.

There have been many guesses as who this individual was. Some of the most common are: 1) He was Shem. Shem did live at this time and for some 60 years longer. But we are told that Melchizedek was "without father, without mother, without descent" (Hebrews 7:3). We know who Shem's father was, and also many of his descendants. 2) He was Christ Himself, and O.T. Christophany. But we are told that Melchizedek was "made like unto the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3). And also that Christ's priesthood is "after the similitude of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 7:3, 15).

3) He was a celestial being. But it says that he was a "man" (Hebrews 7:4).

Melchizedek is set in contrast to Aaron in Hebrews. He is presented as being without father and mother in the record. With Aaron, it was different. He was from Levi, and only his descendants could be priests. Christ was from Judah.

The Melchizedek type of priesthood was:

1. A Royal Priesthood. He was called "King of righteousness," "King of Salem," and "King of peace." He combined both the kingly and the priestly. This was God's original order and this is what Christ will be. Israel too will be a kingdom of priests. (See Exodus 19:6; I Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6.)
2. A Righteous Priesthood. "King of righteousness." The name Melchizedek means, "King of righteousness." (See Jeremiah 23:5-6).
3. A Peaceful Priesthood. He is the "King of Salem," which means "King of peace." So in his titles, he unites righteousness and peace. (See Psalm 85:10; Isaiah 32:17; Romans 5:1; 14:7; Colossians 1:20.) God's order is first righteousness, then peace. No true peace can come without righteousness.
4. A Personal Priesthood. This priesthood was not inherited. It was inherent in Melchizedek alone. Aaron's was followed by his descendants.
5. An Age-abiding Priesthood. "...abideth a priest continually." "...ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:3, 25).

The greatness of the Melchizedek priesthood is seen in the fact that Abram gave tithes unto him (Hebrews 7:4). In this too, he is a type of Jesus Christ.

Two things characterized the Levitical priesthood: a) They were unclean, and so needed to "offer for their own sins" (Hebrews 7:27), and b) They were mortal, death put an end to their ministrations. But Christ is endless or age-abiding (Hebrews 7:16, 21). The Aaronic priesthood was a treadmill, which never accomplished anything. The Melchizedek priesthood of Christ will endure throughout the ages.

“He cannot fail, for He is God;
He cannot fail - He’s pledged His word.
He cannot fail, He’ll see you through;
He cannot fail, He’ll answer you.”

CONCLUSION

- There is a fight of faith as well as a rest of faith.
- Faith makes us independent of man, but not indifferent to his needs and sorrows.
- Faith makes us chivalrous (14:14), disinterested (14:22) and unworldly (14:23).
- The way of earthly renunciation is the way of heavenly gain.
- In Paul’s Prison Epistles, Christ is spoken of as the “Head” of the Church, which is His Body; not as a Priest.

“In Him all fulness dwelleth,
All grace and power divine,
The glory that excelleth,
O Son of God, is thine.
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
And unto Thee we sing,
We praise Thee and confess Thee
Our only Head and King.”

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #24 - COVENANT OF THE SEED AND LAND

TEXT: GENESIS 15:1-21. (ROMANS 4:1-5; 9-25; GALATIANS 3:6, 16)

Introduction:

"After these things" - This chapter is connected with the previous one. Chedorlaomer, the King of Elam, had united his forces with those of three other kings, and made war with five kings in the Jordan Valley who had rebelled against him. He first defeated the Raphaim, the Zumim, the Emim, the Horites, the Amalekites, and the Amorites (Gen. 15:5-7). The five kings were defeated, Sodom and Gomorrah were sacked, and Lot taken prisoner. Abram then went forth with his trained servants and confederates, and in a night attack, won a signal victory. He then meets the King of Sodom and the King of Salem, Melchizedek.

Ten years had passed since Abram entered Canaan, and still he has no son to inherit his name and promises (Genesis 15:2-3). He has God's Word that he will inherit the land of Canaan; but now he asks for a sign whereby he may know that he shall inherit it (15:8). In response to his questions, God reaffirms that he shall have a son and inherit the land (15:4). God then enters into a covenant with His friend (15:9-12); outlines the history of Abram's descendents for 400 years (15:13-16); gives two symbols of their experience (15:17); and defines the limits of the land (15:18-21).

This is an exceedingly important passage and experience because it lays the foundation for one of the great doctrinal truths discussed by Paul in Romans and Galatians - Justification by faith. This is the first time in the Bible that his truth is set forth.

There are several firsts in this chapter: 1) "The Word of the Lord" (15:1); 2) "Fear not" (15:6); 3) "Counted": (15:6); 4) "Righteousness" (15:6). First occurrences are important because they represent a pattern of Bible interpretation for that truth throughout the Scriptures.

I. SETTING FOR THE COVENANT (Genesis 15:1-6).

The Covenant that God will now make with Abram has to do with "thy seed" and "this land" (15:18).

A. By A Divine Revelation (15:1).

"The Word of the Lord."

This is the first occurrence of this expression. It is the Word of light, of life and of liberty.

1. Its Mode. "...in a vision." God spoke to Abram in many ways, by direct communication in word and personal presence. Here it is by vision. Some think that "a vision" was a trance, with the senses dormant, but the mind awake to spiritual impressions (see Numbers 24:3, 4, 15, 16). The Jewish commentary by J. H. Hertz thinks that a vision took place during the daytime. The particulars as to how God came in a vision are not given.
2. Its Message. God's presence in His Word now assures Abram of three things:

PEACE - "fear not." After the glorious victory Abram became depressed, and entered a state of fear, possibly for two reasons. He may have feared a return of the kingdoms of the north; and he also had no heir to carry on if he should die. Fear is the harbinger, the herald of all other disasters. So God comes and removes his fear first, as Jesus did to His disciples, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (Matthew 14:27).

PROTECTION - "I am thy shield." Protection and shelter are needed by man, "A man shall be as a hiding place" (Isaiah 32:2). Noah was protected and sheltered in the ark. God shelters with blood as He did for Israel in Egypt (Exodus 12:13); and by intercession as Christ prayed for Peter (Luke 22:32). His shield is an omnipotent shield - "Kept by the power of God." Paul admonishes us to take "the shield of faith" with which we shall then be able to ward off all the fiery darts of the wicked one, our enemy.

POSSESSION - "...and thy exceeding great reward." Abram had refused the booty of Sodom, and now God comes and promises him greater riches. Here is the assurance of sufficiency. We are promised "every spiritual blessing in the Heavenlies in Christ." All the "unsearchable riches" are in Him in Whom dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head. We have the greatest reward of all - Christ.

B. By Human Reaction (15:2-3).

"And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir."

God had promised Abram a seed; and he began to think that the intention of the Lord was to run along the lines of human codes of that day. In the Assyrian room in the British Museum there stands a tall black pillar upon which there is engraved in cuneiform letters the famous Code of Hammurabi. It dates back to the days of Abraham. One of the laws inscribed here is The Law of Adoption, Code 191. It was no doubt this that Abram thought God would no sanction in the acceptance of Eliezer for his heir.

Abram became despondent - "What wilt thou give me?" The long waiting and the loneliness without an heir had made inroads upon his patience. Abram had no doubt come to the end of himself and his ability, and this is always good. It is not enough that we exercise faith; there must be patience. (See Hebrews 6:12; Romans 8:25; 15:4; Colossians 1:11; II Thessalonians 1:4; I Timothy 6:11; II Timothy 3:10; James 1:3-4.)

Abram became disappointed - "...seeing I go childless...to me thou hast given no seed." His hope of a son seemed shattered and because of their advanced age, no sign of fulfillment is forthcoming.

C. By A Divine Ratification (15:4-5).

"And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,"
-

God now comes upon the scene again. He begins to deal lovingly and faithfully with his tried and troubled friend.

His fears are removed. Eliezer is not to be the heir; only one that comes forth from Abram. God remembered His promise in 12:7 and 13:16. His faith is also strengthened. He is not told to look up to the stars. From looking around at powerful foes and within at overcoming fears, he is told to look up. It is the upward look that makes all the difference. Faith finds no

foundation or fruition without or within. It must look up from self and earth to God and His heavenly creation. From here we shall understand His power and His love. Abraham saw God's presence in His Word; His promise of an heir; and His purpose in the fact that Abram's seed shall be as numerous as the stars.

We have seen that God spoke of Abram's seed as "the dust of the earth" (Gen. 13:16); now as "the stars of heaven" (15:5; 22:17); and again as the "sand of the seashore" (22:17). We too must look up for our blessings: "Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

"My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior Divine."

"So shall thy seed be." The word "seed" here is zera. It is in the masculine, singular. (See Galatians 3:16.) God had spoken of this "seed" in 13:15, and will do so in 17:8 and 22:18.

D. By Human Reception (15:6).

"And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

This is one of the most important utterances of Scripture. It was upon this truth that Paul founded his gospel. One cannot understand Romans and Galatians without seeing it.

Abram had been called; now he is to be justified; for calling comes before justification - "Whom he called, them he also justified" (Romans 8:30). This sixth verse is quoted three times in the New Testament - Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6 and James 2:23.

Justification is now seen in its threefold relationship to both God and man:

1. Through Faith Displayed. Abram now puts implicit faith in God's Word, the promise of God. It is faith without human understanding, ability or good works. "He believed in the Lord." How simple, and yet inclusive! Note that it does not say merely that he believed, but "He believed in the Lord." Faith must have an object. God's grace and man's faith alone cannot save without the work of Christ.

The Hebrew word here translated "believed" is *aman*. It is the first occurrence of the word. From it we get the word "Amen." Faith is Amen to God's Word and promise. The operation of faith is first to be seen, Negatively. It is not of works (Romans 4:2, 5).

Abram had done many wonderful works. He left his country, separated from Lot, fought the robber kings, refused the spoils of war, gave tithes to Melchizedek, built altars. Yet none of these made him justified before God. Paul and James are not in contradiction here: Romans 4:1-5 and James 2:20-24. Paul refers to Genesis chapter 15, and James to Genesis chapter 22. Paul combines the truth of both in Ephesians 2:8-10. It is not by any ceremony (Romans 4:9, 11). Abram was justified before his circumcision. It contributed nothing to his standing (Galatians 5:6). He needed no water ceremony, no water baptism (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12). It was not by any legal system. The Law came several centuries after this promise (Galatians 2:16; 3:17-18). The Law came by Moses. Faith is also to be viewed, Positively. "He believed in the Lord." It is faith in God's Word, what He has said, and what He has promised.

2. Through the Fact Declared. "...and he counted it to him."

It was reckoned or imputed; i.e., put to his account. The same idea is seen in Philemon 18 - "If he wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." In Romans 4:1-8, we have such words as "counted for," "reckoned," "imputed" and "impute." They are all from the Greek word *logizomai*. The important thing here is that faith is "counted for," whereas sin, righteousness and reward are "counted." It is because these are real values in themselves, whereas faith is only of value by virtue of the work of another and the Word of God. A Federal Reserve note may be worth \$1.00; yet its intrinsic value is practically nil. If I drop a Federal Note in the fire its value ceases. But if I should drop a gold coin in the fire its value remains the same. Faith is the Federal Note. It is "counted for," but is it not of itself "counted" as righteousness. Faith in itself is not a meritorious cause for justification.

We shall see that following justifying faith comes the confirmatory covenant concerning the inheritance. Paul says, "Whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Romans 8:30).

The purpose of justification goes back as far as Genesis chapter 12, for Galatians 3:8 says, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."

3. Through the Fruit Demanded. "...for righteousness."

What righteousness is he here talking about? Man, as a sinner, had no righteousness before God. He was under condemnation and sentence of death. See I Corinthians 1:30; Romans 5:19; 5:18. The righteousness of Christ that we get in justification by faith gives us a perfect standing.

If Abram had merely looked upon his own dead body and that of Sarah's, it would have been impossible to believe the promise. But looking at the stars in the heavens, he believed the One Who created them that He could also give him an heir.

II. SUBSTANCE OF THE COVENANT (Genesis 15:7-12).

Abram had just believed in God's promise, "So shall thy seed be," and God "counted it to him for righteousness." This marvelous truth is elucidated in Paul's Epistles to the Romans and Galatians as we have seen.

In view of this, God now makes a covenant with Abram. He had previously made a covenant with Noah (Genesis 6:18); and He will make a covenant with Moses and Israel (Exodus 19:5-9); and then with David (II Samuel ch. 7); and, finally with Israel again (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Covenants are of two kinds: Unconditional and Conditional. The first is founded upon God's "I will," and the second upon man's "If ye will." This covenant is God's response to Abram's faith and gave him the assurance of God's promise to him.

A. Its Preparation (15:7).

The foundation of this covenant is fundamental. In it we see:

1. God's Presence. "And he said unto him, I am the Lord."

This is Jehovah, the unchanging and unchangeable character. This is the rock-bed of all God's promises. It is Jehovah Himself.

2. God's Purpose. "...brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." Note here the "out of," and "to give." Here we have the two aspects of salvation - an Exodus or "out of," and Eisodus, an "into." Redemption "out of," and restoration "into." See also Deuteronomy 6:23.

We too have this wonderful double purpose as seen in Colossians 1:12-13 - "hath delivered" and "hath translated."

B. Its Presentation (15:8-12).

Abram now meets this new assurance of Jehovah with an interrogation: "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" It is not a doubt, but a desire for confirmation of the vision. It is an appeal for knowledge, certitude, assurance (see Luke 1:18, 34).

1. By Divine Instruction (15:9).

The heifer, goat and ram were to be three years old, signifying maturity and perfection. These were taken together with a turtledove and young pigeon. They were thus five in number. Five is the number of grace. Thus it was an offering on the basis of grace. As such, it was a type of that true grace that came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). These animals are all associated with sacrifice under the Law (Exodus 29:25; Leviticus 5:7; Numbers 15:27; 19:2; Deuteronomy 21:3).

2. By Human Response (15:10-12).

So Abram proceeded to fulfill the Divine command - "He took, ...and divided, ... and laid." He divided the animals and placed the corresponding pieces opposite to each other; the birds he did not divide but laid them opposite to each other. (See Leviticus 1:14-17.) This was the usual form of agreement and contract. The two parties in procession between the sacrifice (see Jeremiah 34:18-19; Psalm 50:5).

We see here: Faithfulness Displayed in obeying exactly as God told him. Obedience to God's Word is the beginning of all blessing. Then there is Watchfulness Displayed (15:11) in driving away the birds of prey from the carcasses. The birds symbolically foreshadow the obstacles in the way of taking possession of the land.

(See Matthew 13:4, 32.) But Abram drove them away which showed that any attempt to frustrate God's plan would fail. There is also Receptiveness Displayed (15:12) in the supernatural slumber. A "deep sleep" now comes upon Abram; the same word is used of Adam in Genesis 2:21. Abram is put to sleep, so that he would have no part in ratifying the contract (see Galatians 3:20). The "great darkness" represents the bitter times of oppression that would come upon his seed.

III. SECURITY OF THE COVENANT (Genesis 15:1)

"...Know of a surety" (15:13). "Have I given" (15:18). We have here the perfect tense denoting the certainty of the event although it is in the future.

A. Its Revelation (15:13-16).

God now gives Abram a fourfold revelation concerning the future events of Himself and His Seed.

1. A Period of Humiliation (15:13).

Exile, bondage and humiliation are to be the lot of his seed. The word "stranger" could better be translated "sojourner."

The 400 years mentioned here and in Acts 7:6 date from the birth of Isaac, for it says, "thy seed." The 430 years of Galatians 3:17 date from the giving of the Covenant. So the whole sojourning from the giving of this Covenant until they come from Egypt was 430 years (Exodus 12:40). So first of all, they were to learn the meaning of heirship through privation and suffering (see Romans 8:17). This is the first and primary reason for a period of humiliation. Here then is the strange providence of suffering. In it lies a revelation of God's character and purpose as we shall see amplified later.

Israel is God's typical people. Their historical experiences are representative of the experiences of Christ (see Luke 24:26).

2. A Period of Redemption (15:14).

In Egypt, God would reveal His twofold purpose in redemption - complete subjugation and destruction of His enemies, the Egyptians; and the complete salvation of

His people Israel. Israel would not only be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and the power of God, but would come forth exceedingly rich - "come out with great substance." (See Exodus 12:35-36; Psalm 105:37.) Note here the perfect order of the typical teaching of redemption - First, The Sacrifice (15:9); then, The Seed or sons (15:13); then The Suffering (15:13); and finally, The Substance or Inheritance (15:14).

3. A Period of Separation (15:15).

Abram was to die and be buried in a ripe old age. To this day, he has not inherited the land God promised him. He awaits the resurrection to bring this realization. Abram would go "in peace," and not witness any of the tribulation that would befall his people. "Go to thy fathers" does not mean that Abram's soul went to abide with his father in Mesopotamia, as the Jews teach. They taught the immortality of the soul, which much of Christendom has also taught. Dr. Bullinger brings out the fact that this expression, "Go to thy fathers" is a euphemism, or a pleasing expression for an unpleasant one. Abram's ancestors were idolaters in Chaldea. Abram died at the ripe age of 175 years (Genesis 25:7-8).

4. A Period of Restoration (15:16).

"...in the fourth generation."

The Arabic *dahr* as well as the Hebrew word *dor* are used for a hundred years or more. Thus the "four hundred years" of verse 13 are here referred to as four generations. The four generations would be Levi, Kohath, Amram and Moses (see Exodus 6:16-26).

"...the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." The sins of the Amorites and other pagan tribes in Canaan may be seen in Leviticus 18:21-30. The postponement of the penalty indicates Divine forbearance. God waits until iniquity has ripened (see Matthew 13:24-30). So the bondage in Egypt was not only for the discipline of Israel and the manifestation of redemption, but for iniquity to ripen and become incorrigible in the Land of Canaan. This is a fundamental of Dispensation Truth. (See Daniel 8;23-25; Matthew 23:32-36; I Thessalonians 2:16.) Here "filled up sins" are met with "filled up wrath." John in Revelation saw "seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath

of God" (Revelation 15:1). The Book of Revelation shows both human and Satanic iniquity as fully ripe. It is then that God will thrust in His sharp sickle and reap the harvest of iniquity (Revelation 14:15 - 15:1), and the bondage of the redeemed will come to an end.

In verse 13, we have Exile, Bondage and Affliction; in verse 14, we have Deliverance; and in verse 16, Possession. This describes Israel's history as set forth in detail from Genesis chapter 46 to Joshua chapter 4.

God is longsuffering today against all the wicked principalities and powers in the super-heavenlies, who possess our inheritance. In the meantime, we are in a state of humiliation waiting for the day when these shall be cast out, and we shall possess our possessions. In the meantime, we are to be clothed in that armour that will overcome them (see Ephesians 6:10-18).

B. Its Ratification (15:17-21).

1. By a Symbolic Action (15:17).

Abram had been put to sleep (15:12), and God passes alone between the pieces of the sacrifice in the symbols of a "smoking furnace," and a "lamp of fire." God appeared unto Moses in a "flame of fire" out of a bush (Exodus 3:2).

The furnace, symbolical of the afflictions of Israel (Deuteronomy 4:20; I Kings 8:51; Isaiah 31:9; Ezekiel 22:18-22).

The Lamp, symbolical of Israel's deliverance (I Kings 11:36; 15:4; Isaiah 62:1; II Samuel 21:17).

2. By a Specific Assurance (15:18-21).

"...from the river of Egypt unto the great river." God now reveals the precise limits of the land which He is giving them. See Numbers 34:1-12. "The river of Egypt" is said by the Jews to be "the Brook of Egypt" (Numbers 34:5) or the Wady-el-Arish. This is considerably east of the Nile River and the Suez Canal. "The Euphrates" was the limit in the days of Solomon (I Kings 4:21). This whole land has never been occupied by the nation Israel.

This land was occupied by ten nations (15:19-21). Israel did not fully destroy these nations under the conquest of Joshua; and so were in constant menace from them. These ten nations are typical of the overthrow of the ten antichristian kings at the time of the end, symbolized by the ten toes of the image (Daniel 2:41-44).

CONCLUSION

- God gives, Abram takes. "What shall I render unto the Lord? ... I will take" (Psalm 116:12-13).
- Faith drives out all fear, and produces Godly fruit in our lives.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #25 - THE BIRTH OF ISHMAEL

TEXT: GENESIS 16:1-26. (HEBREWS 10:36; JAMES 1:3-4)

Introduction:

"The biographies of the Bible are brief and ungarnished. The Narrator describes the career of the elect with super-human simplicity, calmness and fidelity. His purpose is to instruct and edify. Hence the account is given in the smallest possible compass. It is devoid of comment, moralizing or exhortation. There is no attempt at embellishment, no indication anywhere of the human propensity to elate the good and extenuate the bad. He is not man, to magnify the attractive and minimize the sombre in men's lives." - V. Gelesnoff

Satan, having defeated in his first attempt to separate Abram and Sarah, had made several attempts to control Abram, and bring defeat in his life:

- By creating strife between Abram's and Lot's herdsmen (13:7).
- By using the king of Sodom to bribe Abram (14:21-24).
- By trying to get Abram to adopt a son born in his own house (15:1-4).

So Satan again attempts to separate Abram and Sarah, and this time his attack is from within rather than from without.

Satan's method of attack: He filled Sarah's heart with discontent because she had no children. He filled Sarah's heart with thoughts of polygamy. He filled her mouth with tempting words and convincing arguments. He caused Abram to listen to his wife, to hearken to her voice, to fulfill her wish and take Hagar to wife.

It is the impotence of Sarah that leads to the impatience of Abram. Hebrews 6:12 says that is through faith and patience that the promises are inherited. We have seen Abram's great faith; we see now his great impatience.

In chapter 15, Abram had had a marvelous experience with God. He had been declared justified by faith in believing the Word of God. God then makes a covenant with him and his seed. After

such an experience one might think that Abram would continue in faith and in patience for the time when God would fulfill His promise of an heir. But Sarah's patience had run out, and Abram listened to her desire. Sarah and Abram had not yet learned with Paul: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18).

Man's extremity is God's opportunity.

I. SARAH'S REQUEST (Genesis 16:1-3).

Sarah's unbelief leads her now to help God, tempted by Satan. Abram was now 85 years old, and Sarah was 75, and the promise of an heir seemed no nearer fulfillment.

A. By Sincere Condescension (16:1).

Sarah realized her physical condition. So her motive no doubt was sincere. She wanted Abram no longer to be debarred from the realization of a child because of her apparent permanent sterility. In the ancient Orient, childlessness was a calamity and a disgrace to a woman. Sarah no doubt got Hagar during the stay in Egypt. Such female slaves remained the property of the wife solely.

B. By Severe Temptation (16:2).

Sarah, though in a spirit of self-denial, was giving her handmaid to Abraham, yet was leading him into temptation of unbelief, and out of the pathway of patient waiting for God's time of fulfillment. It was the legalized custom in Babylon, the home-land of Abram and Sarah, that if a man's wife were childless, he was allowed to take a concubine, but he was not to place her upon an equal footing with his first wife. "That I may obtain children by her" is literally "be builded by her." The family was pictured by the Hebrews under the image of a house. The Rabbis speak of the wife as the husband's "house."

C. By Natural Generation (16:3).

"Hagar ... the Egyptian." No promise was made to Hagar. "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed" (Genesis 17:19). Sarah was to be the wife and mother of the promised seed. God's intention was by supernatural generation. No Egyptian could ever bear the seed.

II. ABRAM'S RESPONSE (Genesis 16:4-6).

Abram yielded to the voice and request of Sarah. The result was that Hagar conceived and that started the trouble in that otherwise peaceful home.

A. Led to Pride in Hagar (16:4).

"...her mistress was despised in her eyes." Human nature is just that - just human nature. Hagar's heart filled with pride at having a child. It led to exaltation of the flesh. The natural is constantly at enmity with the spiritual. Cpr. Hannah and Peninnah (I Samuel 1:4-6).

The Arabs claim descent from Hagar through Ismael. Her name, which means "flight," is akin to the word *Hegira*, used of the flight of Mohammed from Medina to Mecca (622 A.D.), an event from which the Mohammedans date their era.

B. Led to Jealousy in Sarah (16:5).

"My wrong be upon thee." Sarah now puts the blame upon Abram for Hagar's attitude toward her. Perhaps Sarah felt that Abram should have reprimanded Hagar. So Sarah's reproach is that Abram did not check her haughtiness.

C. Led to Inability in Abram (16:6).

Abram was powerless in the matter of dealing with Hagar. She was Sarah's property, and he would not interfere. So Sarah dealt severely with Hagar and she went away. God gave Hagar a son who in turn would deal harshly with Abram's seed. So Hagar fled to the wilderness (see Proverbs 21:19).

From these verses we learn that there is such a thing as the discipline of delay. Right ends do not justify wrong means. Human expedients can never further the purposes of God. The intrusion of the flesh into the realm of faith will always bring an Ismael. The natural heart will trust anything rather than God. "The path of faith is full of dignity, the path of unbelief full of degradation" (Student's Commentary).

III. HAGAR'S REACTION (Genesis 16:7-16).

"...she fled from her face," to "a fountain of water in the wilderness."

Hagar finds herself now an outcast from her master's house, and becomes a vagabond fleeing toward her former homeland. She comes to Shur, which means, "wall." It was applied to the chain of fortresses on the northeast frontier of Egypt. The desert of Shur was the wilderness bordering on these fortresses. It was built to keep out Asiatic invaders.

A. God and Hagar.

1. His Condescension (16:7-9).

"And the angel of the Lord found her." (See Genesis 21:16-19; Exodus 3:2.) This is the first time that an angel is mentioned in the Bible. The Hebrew work *malak* means, "messenger," as does also the Greek word *angelos*. We see here the Divine interest in human troubles. God had not forgotten Hagar in her distress. The angel then asks, "whence," and "whither?" She is reminded of where she is, from whence she came and whither she was going. From Abram to Egypt can bring her no blessing. God called to Adam in the Garden, "Where art thou?" The phrase "angel of the Lord" may denote the second Person of the Godhead. He is identified as such in verse 13. She is then counseled to return and submit to her mistress (16:9).

2. His Omniscience (16:13-14).

"Thou God seest me." *El roi*, "a God of seeing." God saw her in the wilderness and knew all about her trouble. He knew all about the son that was to be born. Hagar recognized this fact and said: "Have I even here seen him that seeth me?" The well is then named "*beer-lahai-roi*" or, "the well of the living One who seeth me."

3. His Compassion (16:11b).

"...because the Lord hath heard thy affliction." God always pities men in their affliction, and brings comfort in the trying hour. The use of the word "affliction" indicates the Divine disapproval of Sarah's treatment of Hagar. But Hagar is still a bondmaid. God brings men back to their natural positions. She must obey God if the blessing is to ensue. (See Ephesians 6:5-8.)

B. God and Ishmael.

"...called his name, Ishmael." The name means "God heareth." God now proceeds to pronounce His benediction and prophecy upon his son.

1. Promise of great blessing (16:10-11).

"I will multiply thy seed exceedingly." Though she is but an Egyptian slave girl, yet her posterity shall become great and numberless. Her material and temporal benefits would more than compensate for all of the affliction she had to undergo.

2. Prediction of Great Enmity (16:12).

"...a wild ass of a man."

This is a vivid description of "the sons of the desert" owning no authority save their own chief, reckless of life, and treacherous to strangers. The descendants of Ismael have been, through the centuries, enemies and tormentors of the Jew and Christian. (See Genesis 21:2ff; Isaiah 21:13ff; Jeremiah 3:2; Ezra 8:31; Psalm 10:8-9.) The Mohammedans as descendants from Ismael have been constant enemies.

CONCLUSION

One false step can have far-reaching results. Ishmael, the son of Abram by Hagar, was the progenitor of the Arabians. Had Abram never departed from Canaan and gone into Egypt, he would not have met Hagar; had he never met Hagar, there would have been no Ishmael, and no Moslem problem - the blight and curse of Islam. "O mortal man of one false step beware, for one false step may bring an age of care."

Justification by faith does not remove the old nature. There are still temptations, weaknesses, sinful tendencies.

Sarah had good intentions and high motives, but wrong action.

Hagar is a type of the Law which gendereth to bondage (Galatians 4:24-25). Law given, as Ishmael was, until Isaac and Christ (Galatians 4:1-5).

Abram is 86 years old when Ishmael is born (16:16). Faith is yet to be strengthened by some 13 years (17:1).

* * * * *

A B R A H A M

F e a r

F a i t h

Hagar (Gen. 16:1-4)
Bondwoman
Flesh

Sarah (Gen. 21:1-8)
Free woman
Spirit

Galatians 4:19-31

Ismael

Moses
Sinai
Law

Isaac

Christ (Joshua)
Calvary
Grace

John 1:17

Bondage

Carnal (I Cor. 3:1, 3)
Cor. 2:15)
Fruitless (I Cor. 3:3)
2:15)

Liberty

Spiritual (I
Fruitful (I Cor.

Galatians 5:1

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #26 - THE COVENANT & CIRCUMCISION

TEXT: GENESIS 17:1-27. (NEHEMIAH 9:7-8)

Introduction:

The Structural Outline:

- A-1. PROMISE OF POSTERITY (17:1-2) - (TO ABRAM).
- B-1. PROSTRATION OF ABRAHAM (17:3).
- C-1. PROVISIONS OF COVENANT (17:4-9) - (TO ABRAHAM).
- D-1. PROCLAMATION OF SIGN (17:10-14).
- A-2. PROMISE OF POSTERITY (17:15-16) - (SARAI)
- B-2. PROSTRATION OF ABRAHAM (17:17) - (JOY).
- C-2. PROVISIONS OF COVENANT (17:18-22) - (SARAH).
- D-2. PERFORMANCE OF SIGN (17:23-27).

In spite of the failure of Abram in the matter of Hagar, God has some fresh surprises of grace and blessing. This chapter takes us back again to the Covenant which God made at the beginning (Genesis 12), and spoke of again (Genesis chs. 13 & 15). So Abram is brought back to the Covenant, for it was in and through the covenant that God was to bless him, and his posterity. So in spite of failure, God is faithful. His faithfulness cannot be affected by man's failure, for the covenant was founded on God's "I WILL." Note the seven "I wills" in this chapter (17:6, 7, 8, 19 & 21).

It is possible for man to hinder God's will for a time, but not forever. It was God who in the beginning made man a moral creature, and gave him a free will. The free will of man is God's sovereign work. By God's will I can thwart His will; but I can never do it ultimately. God has allowed ample room for Satan and man to do their own worst. I may have the liberty to go my independent way, but I shall soon find out that God's plan is the best.

I. A NEW REVELATION (Genesis 17:1-8).

God now comes to Abram again and talks with him about the covenant - the seed and the land - adding some new revelations.

A. The Time Of It.

"When Abram was ninety years old and nine..."

Thirteen years had elapsed since the birth of Ishmael (16:16). Nothing is recorded of these years. They are a blank in Abram's life. The number thirteen appears also in Ishmael's life at his circumcision (17:25). The number thirteen is seen the first time in Scripture at 14:4, and is connected with rebellion, apostasy, defection. Many other thirteens are found in Scripture. See I Kings 7:1 and contrast 6:38; Esther 3:12-13; Israel marched thirteen times around Jericho; thirteen judges enumerated in Book of Judges, book of apostasy (21:25); thirteen evil characteristics in Mark 7:21-23; "Dragon" mentioned thirteen times in Revelation; Jacob to Pharaoh - 130 years (13x10) (Genesis 47:9); Paul's stripes - 39 (13x3) (II Corinthians 11:24); unclean animals and birds were 26 (13x2) (Deuteronomy 14:7-19).

In all this time Abram became strong in faith (Romans 4:19).

B. The Author Of It.

"...the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God" (17:1).

The word for "Almighty God" is *El Shaddai*, meaning El, the source of grace, not as Creator but Giver; and Shaddai, the All-bountiful One. He is the One who has power to supply all the needs of His people. Shaddai also comes from a root meaning "to heap benefits." This is the first occurrence of title in Scripture. The first occurrence is in II Corinthians 6:18, in the N.T.

C. The Condition of It.

"...walk before me, and be thou perfect" (17:1).

The word "perfect" here does not mean sinless perfection. It is rather the perfection of the Book of Hebrews. Here Paul admonishes "go on unto perfection" (Hebrews 6:1), and

then says, "who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:12). "Faith and patience" constitute the way of perfection. Abram had showed a lot of faith, but was short on patience. He was to "walk" in these virtues of perfection before God.

D. The Substance Of It (17:2, 4-8).

"I will make my covenant between me and thee." "Behold, my covenant is with thee."

Whatever Abram had forgotten, God had not forgotten His covenant and promises. God is faithful. Time and circumstances cannot erase His purpose with Abram.

1. The Seed (16:2, 4, 6, 7).

"...multiply thee exceedingly." "...a father of many nations." "...make thee exceedingly fruitful." "...nations and kings shall come out of thee." "...and thy seed after thee."

There is a growth here in the revelation from the previous ones - "many nations and kings." Abram was not only to be the father of the Israelites, but also of the Ishmaelites, Arabians, Edomites, and Midianites, etc. (See Genesis 25:1-4.)

2. The Name (17:5).

"...thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made Thee."

His name up to this time had been "Abram" meaning, "exalted father." Now he gets an added consonant, and is called Abraham. Ab means "father" and raham is the Arabic word for "multitude." Jacob's name was changed to Israel; Cephas to Peter; and Saul to Paul.

The Hebrew or Arabic consonant added to Abram is the letter H or He (pronounced hay). It is the fifth letter of the alphabet. Five is the number of grace. It is not human merit, but Divine favor that gave Abraham this multitude. Abraham and Sarah were physically dead as far as productivity was concerned. So this multitude is all of God.

3. The land (17:8).

"...all the land of Canaan."

This was an old promise redelivered. God was anxious to impress upon Abraham that the land was connected with the Covenant. The Royal Grant to Abraham and his seed comprised the land from the Mediterranean Sea to the River Euphrates, and from Hamath in the north to the River of Egypt in the south. (See Genesis 15:18; Ezekiel 48:1, 28.) So the blessing of God upon Israel must come in this land.

E. The Result Of It. (17:3).

"And Abram fell on his face."

This was the oriental mode of expressing gratitude. It is an attitude of reverence for God's Word, and a readiness to obey His will. It says that "God talked with him." This shows the trust God had in His servant and friend. Here is holy familiarity between the Almighty God and His servant.

II. A NEW RATIFICATION (Genesis 17:9-14).

"Every man child among you shall be circumcised...and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant."

This act of circumcision now becomes the sign and seal of the Covenant. Several of the Covenants are connected with signs - The Noahic with the rainbow; the Mosaic with the Sabbath; and now, the Abrahamic with Circumcision.

The word circumcision literally means "cutting round," and is the removal of the foreskin. This rite was practiced by other peoples before Abraham, but not for the same reason. The apostate Dutch philosopher, Baruch, or Benedict Spinoza, declared: "Such great importance do I attach to the sign of the Covenant, that I am persuaded that it is sufficiently itself to maintain the separate existence of the nation for ever." This rite is also observed by the Mohammedans, the Abyssinians, Egyptians and Polynesians.

A. By The Sign of Separation.

Abraham and his people were marked out by this rite as a separated people. The Gentiles were known as those uncircumcised (Ephesians 2:11). Any Israelite who refused

to be circumcised was to be "cut off from his people" (17:14).

B. By The Seal of Righteousness.

"And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised" (Romans 4:11).

"God, by this ordinance, stamped with the sign of death the organ of man's highest physical power, and thus taught, and teaches him, his ruin as born of the first Adam, his incapacity to produce sinless life, and the truth that only by connection with the Prince of Life can he bring forth fruit of God." - *Student's Commentary.*

This act was performed on the eighth day (Genesis 17:12; Leviticus 12:13; Luke 1:59, 2:21; Acts 7:8; Philippians 3:5). Eight is the number of resurrection. Man must have the sentence of death written upon his flesh, and grace brings the dead man into vital relationship with God.

So Abraham and all his seed come into newness of life. On the eighth day they pass from the natural life and death into the new life of God's righteousness.

C. By The Sign of Purification.

This follows righteousness. Circumcision has a physical purity for the organ. When Paul comments on circumcision in Colossians 2:11, he says: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision of Christ" (Co. 2:11). Those who are spiritual, the sons of God, no longer live by "the will of the flesh" (John 1:13).

III. A NEW REASSURANCE (Genesis 17:15-22).

The object of this chapter is the expansion concerning the covenant, already revealed in chapters 12 and 15; and the giving of the sign of circumcision.

The Bible is a progressive revelation. God did not reveal all to Abraham at one time. As Abraham grew in faith and patience, God gave further revelation. So as the time draws night for the coming of the seed, the contents of the covenant are described more circumstantially. God's revelation often runs contrary to human expectation and realization.

A. Sarah's Assurance (17:16, 19).

God now assures the seed as coming from Sarah, and no one else. Abraham must get Ishmael out of his mind and life completely.

1. In A Changed Name (17:15).

"...not call her name Sarai, but Sarah." Sarai means "Princely." Sarah means "Princess."

God now does to Sarah what he did to Abraham: He placed the fifth letter of the alphabet in her name. Five is the number of grace and spiritual attainment. God did the same to Joshua (Numbers 13:16).

2. In A Promised Son (17:16, 19).

"Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed."

This is now the first time that a definitive announcement is made concerning Sarah as the mother of the seed. Until now it had been more or less vague, intimated in general terms as to "thy seed."

B. Abraham's Amazement (17:17).

"Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed."

Abraham receives this revelation with joyful reverence, in a spirit of trustful astonishment. This is not the laugh of unbelief, but of faith, which takes God at His Word. The Targum (Aramaic translation of parts of the Old Testament) renders "and rejoiced," implying that he laughed for joy, not from incredulity or unbelief. (See Romans 4:18-21.)

This is the joy of a husband in his wife's place in the covenant and her fruitfulness for God.

C. Ishmael's Acceptance (17:18, 20).

"O that Ishmael might live before thee."

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee."

Abraham seems to indicate here that God might destroy Ishmael in some way. The child had no doubt won his way into Abraham's heart. So God hears Abraham's prayer, and

although he is not included in the Covenant, yet he receives great temporal blessings.

He will be fruitful and multiply his seed. Like Jacob, he will beget twelve princes. But the salvation of mankind was not to come from him, the fruit of the flesh; but from him, the fruit of supernatural power, namely Isaac. Isaac was life from the dead. Ishmael's twelve princes are enumerated in Genesis 25:13-16.

D. Isaac's Affirmation (17:19, 21).

"...thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant."

"But my covenant will I establish with Isaac."

Isaac means "laughter." The name recalls the event when Abraham laughed with joy and wonder.

Isaac, a type of Christ in His supernatural birth, the child of promise, the true Son of the house. It is with Isaac that God is going to make the covenant and confirm the promises made to Abraham.

IV. A NEW RESPONSE (Genesis 17:23-27).

God now leaves Abraham (17:22). Revelation continues only while the necessity for it lasts. God leaves off speaking with men, so that they may return to duty and service.

A. Promptly ("...in the selfsame day" - 17:23, 26).

Abraham obeyed immediately and promptly God's command to circumcise himself and all his male household, including Ishmael. There is no delay, no reluctance, no considering the wisdom of the act; but an instantaneous compliance with Divine directions. God always expects implicit and instantaneous obedience; and always rewards those who are willing to take an immediate response.

B. Cheerfully.

The rite of circumcision was attended with pain and bloodshed, and personal humiliation. Yet none of these affected Abraham.

Tribulation, sorrow, pain are part of this life here, but they can be cheerfully accepted and promptly endured if they help to crucify the flesh.

C. Completely.

"...every male among the men of Abraham's house."

Prompt as to time, cheerful in spirit, and now complete in performance. It is a complete obedience in which God delights. Moses and Saul are examples of what partial obedience will result in.

Ishmael was circumcised in his thirteenth year, while Isaac was circumcised on his eighth day. He that is born of the flesh is a natural rebel; while he that is born of the Spirit is a child of the resurrection.

Circumcision teaches that the death of self is essential to a life of spiritual fruit-bearing.

CONCLUSION

God's grace is everywhere present in this chapter, planned, prompted and provided.

"God makes himself known by a new name, and Abram, too receives a new name - Abraham, father of many nations - suggestive of fruitfulness resulting from union with God and springing from a new comprehension of His power. God's might sweeps the obstacles which impede its advance. Its power in life means the crucifixion of the flesh, "for we which live," says the apostle, "are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh (II Corinthians 4:11). The flesh which limited God's power and leaned on its own contrivances is crippled." - Vladimir Gelesnoff.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #27 - FRIENDSHIP & FELLOWSHIP

TEXT: GENESIS 18:1-21.

Introduction:

This is one of the most unique visitations and revelations of Deity to humanity that we have in the Bible. Here Abraham is highly favored by a heavenly visit. He is the only one in Scripture to have the title, "The friend of God" (II Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23). He who is a friend of God must also have the highest of fellowship with Deity.

Abraham's faith is growing, and because of this, God can come and give him further revelations. He will not only show Abraham His acts but also reveal His ways (see Psalm 103:7).

Lot has been almost forgotten down in Sodom. He is not having a happy time in the land of his choice. The Sodomites are increasing in iniquity and ripening for judgment. On their way to Sodom, these Heavenly visitors stop to commune with Abraham.

I. THE DIVINE APPEARANCE (Genesis 18:1-8).

Obedience to a Divine command always brings to the believer a fresh revelation of the Lord. Abraham had just fulfilled the command to circumcise himself and his household.

A. Brings A Happy Revelation (18:1-2a).

Abraham was now in "the plains of Mamre" or better, "among the oaks of Mamre." This was at Hebron (see Genesis 13:18; 14:13; 18:1).

There is no doubt about the august character of the three who came to Abraham in the heat of the day when he was sitting in his tent door seeking shade from the hot Syrian sun.

The character of the appearance is noteworthy. It was not in the form of a vision (ch. 15); now was it merely in a word or message (ch. 17). It was a Divine appearance as

guests, thus marking Abraham's position of friendship and fellowship with god.

It is evident that the "three men" represent a personal manifestation of God in visible form, accompanied by two created angels. This is an O.T. Theophany. Some have seen here a foreshadowing of the Trinity.

The Jewish commentary says that one came to announce the birth of Isaac, the second to destroy Sodom, and the third to rescue Lot.

B. Brings a Hearty Reception (18:2b-8).

The response of Abraham reveals Eastern politeness and hospitality.

Abraham is courteous (18:2-3), practical (18:4-5) and hospitable (18:6-8).

The washing of feet is a refreshing comfort to travelers who wore sandals (see Genesis 19:2; 24:32; 43:24). They were then told to recline under the tree while Abraham got the meal ready.

Note the emphasis upon haste and speed here. Abraham senses that these visitors were in a hurry, for otherwise, they would not have passed his tent door "in the heat of the day." It says, "Abraham hastened," "Make ready quickly," "Abraham ran," "he hastened to dress it." (See Deuteronomy 10:17-19.) When God comes to judge, He does it with speed and swiftness ("shortly" in Revelation 1:1 should read "swiftly").

The guests were first given curds and milk to slake their thirst and refresh them (see Judges 4:19), and then the meal proper, which consisted of the calf. In the East, the host does not sit with the guests, but stands and attends them.

It is a mystery that these heavenly visitors ate with Abraham. Psalm 78:25 speaks of "angels' food" and Luke 24:30, 43 and Acts 10:41 speak of Christ eating after His resurrection. Hebrews 13:2 speaks of entertaining angels unawares. Milk and curds, bread and veal sufficed as a meal for celestial visitors.

II. THE DIVINE ASSURANCE (Genesis 18:9-15).

God always has a mission with every appearance of Himself to mankind. Here He comes to make the promise more sure and steadfast to Sarah that her faith may rise to the level of Abraham's. But it was still weak and vacillating, as we shall see.

A. Its Realization (18:9-11).

"Where is Sarah thy wife? ... I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life, and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son."

The messengers knew her name, and quickly repeated the approach of her coming motherhood. God is a faithful and true witness who is able to perform His promise.

Sarah is found "in the tent." The Talmud herein sees praise of Sarah, the highest excellence of a wife being her domesticity.

The words "according to the time of life" are literally "reviveth this time next year."

B. Its Rejection (18:12-15).

"Sarah laughed within herself." This message was received by Sarah with utter astonishment of unbelief. She could not credit the possibility of it. Abraham laughed in exultation (17:17). Apparently Sarah's faith in God had not risen to the height of Abraham's. Sarah followed her unbelief with a denial of the fact - "shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also." Sarah referred to both their old age, but God only mentioned that of Sarah's.

Sarah is now taught two solemn lessons. First, God's Power. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" or "Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?" (See Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:37.) Secondly, God's Knowledge. "...thou didst laugh." Sarah became afraid and denied that she had laughed. But these celestial visitors were omniscient, endowed with all knowledge.

III. THE DIVINE ANNOUNCEMENT (Genesis 18:16-21).

The visitors having completed their mission at Abraham's tent leave for Sodom on another mission. Abraham with

characteristic courtesy accompanies them a little way on their journey.

A. Reason for the Revelation (18:16-19).

"Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do..."

God reveals now to Abraham the purpose of His visit to Sodom. It was essential that His servant and friend as founder of a great nation should understand God's dealings with the nations in general.

While God is "slow to anger and of great kindness..." (Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2), He is also a righteous God who will by no means clear the guilty.

God's friends are let in on God's revelations. A threefold reason is now given for this further revelation:

1. Abraham's Position. "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation."
2. Abraham's Provision. "...all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him." His nation shall influence all posterity. This can only come about when they are fully committed to their Messiah-King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Today, the Jew is a curse among the nations.
3. Abraham's Proclivity. "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord," etc.

"I have known him," i.e., "regarded and chosen him" (Amos 3:2; Psalm 1:6). He will command obedience in his household. Here is the beginning, the root of all blessing. The home is the seat of all other blessing. This truth has been rooted in Judaism. It was God's purpose that Israel should preserve a pure faith, pure morals amid the corruptions of mankind around them.

B. Reason for the Retribution (18:20-21).

"...the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous."

The sins of these cities is exceedingly heinous as to character, and abundant as to measure, and exceedingly clear as to purpose.

God is now descending to these cities to obtain ocular proof of, or extenuating circumstances for, their crimes. God always acts with absolute justice and a perfect knowledge of all the circumstances.

CONCLUSION

This lesson gives us three wonderful illustrations of Divine truth. It is a lesson in the meaning of fellowship and friendship with God.

1. A Sacred Relationship. Abraham was a friend of God, and God became His guest. Our relationship with Deity is even greater. We are united to Christ in a relationship of Head and body (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:30; Colossians 1:18).
2. A Sincere Reverence. Abraham showed a humble awe and reverence for his heavenly visitors. We have access into the very holiest of all, unto the Father (Ephesians 2:18; 3:12).
3. A Special Revelation. God told Abraham things that no one else received. Fellowship with God issued out in deeper knowledge of God's will. Through the Apostle Paul, we have a special revelation in this Dispensation of the Secret. We are given to know the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:1-13).

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #28 - INTERCESSION FOR INTERVENTION

TEXT: GENESIS 18:22-23.

Introduction:

Abraham, "The Friend of God," had just had a remarkable fellowship with three celestial beings - Jehovah and two angels. He had also received a revelation regarding the future of Sodom and Gomorrah. In consequence of this revelation, Abraham's life takes on a different phase. We have seen him as a witness to Gods' word, as a worshipper at the altar, as a warrior, and now he appears as an intercessor.

So we have here now "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," humble, earnest and bold. One of the essential and most blessed features of the believer's fellowship with God is the privilege and responsibility, the joy and duty, of intercession.

We have here now the first great intercessory prayer in the bible. We have here all the elements that go to characterize true intercession. They are: Unselfishness (18:23); Compassion (18:24); Faith (18:25); Humility (18:27); Earnestness (18:30); Perseverance (18:32); and Communion (18:33).

Oswald Chambers says: "The meaning of intercession is that we see what God is doing."

I. ABRAHAM'S PRIVILEGED POSITION (Genesis 18:22-23).

Intercession before God presupposes a spiritual relationship from which all else follows.

A. He Stood in God's Presence.

"Abraham stood yet before the Lord and Abraham drew near..."

The two angels had gone to Sodom to fulfill their divine mission, leaving Jehovah with Abraham. So Abraham continues in the Divine presence as long as possible. He is in no haste to leave this Celestial Visitor.

A primitive text read: "Jehovah stood yet before Abraham."

Abraham on a true footing of fellowship with God draws nearer the Divine presence. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22).

B. He Knew God's Purpose.

"Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

God's will had been revealed to him in verses 20-21. He knew God would destroy the wicked. In order to pray intelligently, one must have a knowledge of God's will. Prayer is not an empty form of mere words and sentences, or vain repetitions. Prayer is a vital force, but it must be founded on God's plan and purpose. (See John 17:9, 20.)

God's purpose was to destroy the wicked; so Abraham does not pray for them. The Jewish Commentary errs here, when it says: "Even the wicked inhabitants of Sodom were his brothers, and his heart overflows with sorrow over their doom." As we shall see, Abraham does not pray for the wicked, but only for the righteous. There comes a time and circumstance when prayer will not avail upon the wicked.

II. ABRAHAM'S PERPLEXING PROBLEM (Genesis 18:23, 25).

Abraham knew that Lot and his family were in Sodom, and perhaps others who knew the true God and worshipped Him. Would God destroy them too?

A. His Interrogation.

"Wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

Abraham could have taken a negative attitude toward Sodom and Lot. He knew they merited punishment. However, he bestirs himself to prayer.

Oswald Chambers says: "It is an insult to sink before God and say 'Thy will be done' when there has been no intercession. That is the prayer of impertinent unbelief - there is no use in praying, God does whatever He chooses."

B. His Interjection.

"That be far from Thee, ... to slay the righteous with the wicked. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Abraham now interprets his own question. He knew there was a great difference between the righteous and the wicked (see Malachi 4:1-3). He remembered Noah and flood.

It is God's righteousness and justice that is here appealed to rather than His mercy. He has absolute confidence in the justice of God no matter how impossible to understand God's ways at times. (See Psalm 37:6-7.)

The Jewish Commentary says: "These words ... make justice the main pillar of God's throne; without it, the whole idea of the Divine totters."

III. ABRAHAM'S PERSISTENT PERSEVERANCE (Genesis 18:24, 26-33; 19:29).

Abraham now makes his great plea for the city. He felt that the righteousness would perish with the wicked if God did not spare the city, thus saving the righteous.

A. By fervent Importunity.

Abraham now pleads with God time after time.

"Peradventure there be fifty righteous" (18:24).

"Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty" (18:28).

"Peradventure there shall be forty found" (18:29).

"Peradventure there shall thirty be found" (18:30).

"Peradventure there shall be twenty found" (18:31).

"Peradventure there ten shall be found there" (18:32).

Six times Abraham earnestly pleads for the city to be saved; and six times the Lord answers "will spare," "I will not destroy." God certainly was a prayer hearing and prayer answering God.

Steadfastness and persistence in intercession is one of the sure marks of reality.

"It is a beautiful scene - Abraham, a stranger in the Land of Promise, communing with God on high, looking down upon a doomed world - and God communing with him, because all the nations should be blessed in him" - *Student's Commentary*.

B. By Human Imperfection.

"I will speak yet but this once," and "this once" was the last time. Abraham interceded six times and stopped. Six is the number of man, and is the number of imperfection - one short of seven the perfect number.

It is doubtful if any believer has ever prayed a perfect prayer. Only Christ and the Holy Spirit can pray perfectly. Here it is true as Paul says in Romans 8:26, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

C. But By Divine Intervention.

"God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow" (Genesis 19:29).

While Abraham's prayer did not attain perfection, yet his heart was blameless before God. So God intervenes for His friend and saves Lot, his wife and two daughters from the infernal city.

So Abraham returns to Mamre to await the doom of the cities of the plain. This we shall see in the next chapter.

CONCLUSION

This lesson presents several very important applications even for us today.

1) The revelation of Imperfection.

Abraham, like all of us, had to learn that he was not perfect before God in his own understanding and ability.

Dependence upon God at all times is therefore a must.

Human failure and Divine perfection and help are constantly seen.

2) The Responsibility of Intercession.

"God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (I Samuel 12:23).

Intercessory prayer is important.

3. The Possibilities of Intercession.

"The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends" (Job 42:10).

Christ and Paul are the two great examples of those who prayed intercessory prayers (John chapter 17; Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21).

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #29 - THE DOOM OF SODOM & GOMORRAH

TEXT: GENESIS 19:1-38.

Introduction:

To the inhabitants of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, there was nothing unusual about the sunset on the evening when two angels came to their gates. Little did these people realize that it would be the last sunset for them and their proud but wicked cities. By the rising of the sun, the Lord rained fire and brimstone upon them; and they were left smoking ruins.

Sodom and Gomorrah were in a group of five cities (Genesis 14:2). Four of these cities fell in this overthrow (Deuteronomy 29:23). Zoar, the smaller of them was spared for Lot's sake (Genesis 29:20-23; cf. Isaiah 15:5; Jeremiah 48:34). These cities were called "the cities of the Plain" (Genesis 13:12; 19:29). Later they were called "the cities which the Lord overthrew" (Jeremiah 20:16). They were neighboring cities (Genesis 19:20; Jeremiah 49:18; 50:40). They were situated in a most fertile and beautiful plain (Genesis 13:10). They must have been very prosperous cities (Ezekiel 16:49, 50; Luke 17:28).

Cities are known for their power, politics, financial institutions, controlling centers of commerce, culture, science and art. Every social, political, industrial, moral and spiritual problem is found in them.

"They wearied themselves to find the door," it says of the Sodomites. The Lord says the same about His people Israel (Isaiah 59:10).

The character and conduct of Lot. Three times it is said that he went with Abraham (Genesis 12:4; 13:1, 5). He pitched his tent toward Sodom (Gen. 13:12). He dwelt in Sodom (Gen. 14:12). He became a citizen of Sodom (Gen. 19:1). He is called "just," and "righteous" (II Peter 2:7-8). His soul was "vexed" with "the filthy conversation of the wicked," and "with their unlawful deeds." The same word translated "vexed" in II Peter 2:8 is translated "tormented" in Revelation 20:10. Lot was

literally burned out of Sodom (Genesis 19:15-20; see I Corinthians 3:15).

I. RECEPTION OF THE ANGELS (Genesis 19:1-11).

These were the two angels that accompanied Jehovah to Mamre as we have seen in the preceding chapter.

A. By Lot - Hospitality (19:1-3).

Lot was sitting "in the gate of Sodom," i.e., the passage beneath the city-wall, where people would congregate in the East to converse, transact business or have disputes adjudicated.

Lot dwelt in a house, whereas Abraham dwelt in a tent. Lot now greets the visitors with all the respectful courtesy given to strangers in the East. So he invites them to wash their feet and tarry all night. But they refuse, preferring to spend the night "in the street" or literally, "in the broad open spaces." But Lot insisted they stay with him, and so they enter his house. He gives them a refreshing drink and unleavened bread. "Feast" is *mishteh* - a drink.

B. By Sodomites - Homosexuality (19:4-11).

We shall now see that the rejection of Abraham's plea was entirely justified. "All the people from every quarter" seem to be addicted with unnatural depravity. Josephus supposes these two men (angels) to have been of beautiful countenances, which excited the lust of the Sodomites, and caused them to assault Lot's house with shameful cries.

The sin here committed by the Sodomites was forbidden by the Law (Leviticus 18:22). It was a sin exceedingly prevalent among the Canaanites (Judges 19:22; Romans 1:27). Under the Law, this sin was punishable by death (Leviticus 18:29).

Lot seeks to protect his visitors, and in turn offers his two daughters to them, a thing unthinkable in our eyes. It has been suggested that Lot thought this was the lesser of two sins; or that the men would not touch his daughters in their unnatural lust for his visitors.

The Sodomites then turn upon Lot (19:9), accusing him of coming to Sodom to judge their actions, and interfere with their customs. Then they seek to break down the door.

Only the supernatural power of the two angels save Lot by pulling him in the house, and "shut the door." They smite the Sodomites with blindness: "so they wearied themselves to find the door."

The sin of homosexuality is: 1) Unnatural. This goes far beyond common sinners, even leaving the natural brute beasts behind. It is utterly offensive in the eyes of God and man. 2) Shameless. Disgusting and repulsive as this wickedness is, instead of shrinking into darkness and doing it in secret, they openly proclaim their filthiness, and would gratify their lust in public. They "glory in their shame" (Philippians 3:19). 3) Violent. The Sodomites were ready to break into Lot's house, and violently lay their hands on his two visitors. These men were ready to trample on all of God's laws and man to accomplish their desire, and "add sin to sin" (Isaiah 30:1).

This sin is growing by leaps and bounds in our own land as well as all over the world. It is one of the outstanding sins of the time, and spells the soon doom that awaits our present world.

II. REMOVAL OF LOT (Genesis 19:12-22).

Lot and his household are now to be saved from the city; for these angels have come to destroy it (19:12-13).

A. Mercifully Warned (19:12-14).

"Son in law, sons, daughters" or any others are to escape immediately for the city is to be destroyed. The cup of iniquity was full for these cities. They are urged to flee from the wrath to come, to escape the city of destruction.

Lot's call to many of his own was only so many idle words. It was a mockery to them.

B. Urgently Hastened (19:15-16).

In spite of the angel's warning, Lot "lingered." Maybe to collect some valuables or merely reluctant to leave were the reasons for Lot's procrastination. So the angels had to lay hold on the hands of Lot, his wife, and two daughters and hastened them on. Still hankering after

Sodom, they had to be literally dragged away by angelic force. So God graciously assists them to escape.

It would seem that Lot had at least four daughters and two sons-in-law. Together with his wife, that would make eight souls in his family that could have been saved. There were eight souls in Noah's family in the days of the Flood. But in Lot's case, only four escaped the city, and three finally survived; his wife becoming a monument of salt.

C. Minutely Directed (19:17-22).

"Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain." They are to flee in earnest, seeing their lives are in great peril; they are to beware of backsliding, since there is no hope whatever in the doomed cities; they are to indulge in no delay, since God cannot destroy them until they are away; and they are to persevere until they reach their destination.

The angels said: "escape to the mountain." But Lot said, "I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die." We get a good understanding of Lot's character in this his request. He wanted to enter another doomed city, Zoar, instead of going to the Lord's place of safety. Lot had lived by sight and not faith; and he continues to do so even now in the moment of peril. Faith will trust God whether we can see the outcome or not.

But God is exceedingly gracious again, and gives Lot his desire. He enters Zoar, but not for long; he finally goes to the mountain with his daughters.

III. RETRIBUTION UPON THE CITIES (Genesis 19:23-29).

The cities are now abandoned to judgment. When iniquity has ripened, God thrusts in the sickle to reap the harvest (Matthew 13:30, 39, 40; Revelation 14:15-20).

A. It was Supernatural.

Whatever the natural forces employed - the "brimstone and fire" - there was the supernatural God behind the scene to direct the judgment. "Jehovah rained down fire from Jehovah."

B. It was Unexpected.

Like in the days of Noah, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah did not heed the message of warning. As it was in the days of Noah, and in the days of Lot, so shall it be at end of the world (II Peter 3:3-4).

C. It was Complete.

Abraham got up early in the morning, looked toward the cities of the Plain, and saw "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (19:27-28). The cities with their inhabitants, the fields with their vegetation, were all engulfed in a sulphurous baptism. So the fair "Pentapolis of the Jordan" was turned into ashes.

D. It was Righteous.

There were not ten righteous in these cities (Genesis 18:32), so the Lord's judgment was a merited one. One can only say of the Lord - "thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest" (Psalm 51:4).

IV. REJECTION OF LOT'S WIFE (Genesis 19:26).

"Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32). Someone has said: "But the sun rose; the valley beautiful; home attractive no signs of danger. Must she leave all; and at once? She paused. That pause was death."

A. Seriously Melancholy.

She was evidently overtaken by the sulphurous storm and transfixed where she stood, wrapped in a sheet of saline incrustation. So near and yet so far! She "looked back." The word means "wistful regard." And she became "a pillar of salt," in a complete and instantaneous judgment. Such columns of fossil salt exist in the region of the Dead Sea.

B. Sincerely Deserved.

Contrary to the angel's instructions, she had looked back. Obedience would have saved her; disobedience proved her ruin. It is felt that Mrs. Lot was not eternally lost; but her temporal destruction was merited and righteously incurred.

C. Solemnly Suggestive.

It teaches the danger in delay, the folly of disobedience, the intensity of judgment against a willful act of self-will. Paul in his letter to the Hebrews has a longer comment on this very truth. (See Hebrews 10:26-31.)

These direct immediate judgments are to be seen in the light of the dispensation in which they are found. God is not today bringing immediate punishment of death upon the disobedient. Nevertheless, His attitude toward willful disobedience is the same.

V. REACTION OF LOT'S DAUGHTERS (Genesis 19:30-38).

Lot and his two daughters apparently did not stay long in Zoar. They went to the mountains to dwell. It says that Lot "feared to dwell in Zoar" (19:30). This may mean either that he thought God would also destroy this city, or that the inhabitants being as wicked as the Sodomites, would contaminate them too.

The daughters, in their cave home, made their father drunk with wine; then they conceived offspring with him - two sons, called Moab and Ben-ammi.

Kalisch comments: "Considering the town in which the daughters of Lot had been reared, the mother of whom they were the offspring, and the example they had received from their father (19:8), we can understand, though we cannot cease to abhor, their incestuous conduct."

Their motive, though wrong, may have been sincere in that they thought that they were now the sole survivors (19:31), or that none of the men of Zoar were fit to be their husbands. The Orientals also entertained strong views on childlessness and the extinction of the family.

Moab, the older son. His name comes from Meab, "from the father" and Ben-Oammi, the younger. His name comes from a word meaning "son of my people." The Moabites and Ammonites settled to the east and south of the Dead Sea. They became bitter enemies of the Israelites. (See Numbers chs. 21-25; Judges chapter 3; I Samuel ch. 11; 14:47; II Samuel 8:2; II Chronicles ch. 20; Isaiah chs. 15-16; Jeremiah ch. 48; Zephaniah 2:8.)

CONCLUSION

Sodom shows that sin's principles are: Defective, Deceptive, Destructive and Dreadful.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #30 - ABRAHAM & ABIMELECH

TEXT: GENESIS 20:1-18.

Introduction:

The following couplet from George Herbert seems so apropos for this lesson:

“Dare to be true, nothing can need a lie;
The fault which needs it most, grows two thereby.”

Abraham now revives an old sin (see Genesis 12:10-20; 20:13). This passage is very difficult to understand in the life of Abraham if it be divorced from human nature in the believer. Many have been astonished that Abraham, a man of faith and fellowship with God, could repeat the sin of earlier years. The continuance and power of the old nature in believers are the most patent and potent facts of universal spiritual experience. That the infection remains in the regenerate is as certain and serious as it is sad.

The believer has two natures that are at constant warfare. It is only when we experientially know and practice Romans 6:11-14 can there be victory.

This experience in Abraham's life is a revelation of “the sin that doth so easily beset us.” There is a striking similarity, but not an identity with the sin recorded in chapter twelve. There were two different places: Egypt and Gerar. Two different rulers: Pharaoh and Abimelech. Two different circumstances: famine and nomadic movement. Two different methods of revelation: plagues on Pharaoh and dreams for Abimelech. Two different reactions on the part of Abraham: silence and open explanation. Two different conclusions: dismissal from the land and invitation to stay in the land.

I. THE RELAPSE (Genesis 20:1-2).

Abraham now removes from "the plains of Mamre" (18:1) to the "south country. ... between Kadesh and Shur in Gerar." There may be a good reason for his move. It may be either for new pasturelands, or to get away from the neighborhood of the terrible scene of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or just the fact that he was a pilgrim in the land.

A. The Hebrew Patriarch.

Abraham is now committing an old sin. "She is my sister." About twenty years had elapsed since Abraham had committed the same sin in Egypt. A sin once committed is not too difficult to repeat, especially if the circumstances are similar.

It was a more serious sin than before because now Abraham had the surety that Sarah would bear a son that very year (18:10, 14), which he did not know earlier. It was a deliberate fraud. This was no sudden impulse, but a predetermined lie (20:13).

B. The Heathen Prince.

Abimelech committed an unconscious act in taking Sarah. It was common for heathen princes to have their harem of wives. It seems that he would never have taken another man's wife if he knew it. Sarah was not quite up in years, but it seems that her beauty and charm had not diminished. Perhaps the promise and hope of a son had rejuvenated her.

The name Abimelech means "Father-King," a title of the Philistine kings (Genesis 21:22; 26:11).

II. THE RESTRAINT (Genesis 20:3-8).

Here is no doubt another attempt of Satan to destroy, if possible, God's purpose in Abraham. But God intervenes on behalf of Sarah, and saves her seed.

A. The Intervention (20:3-5).

God visits Abimelech in a dream by night, and informs him that he is as a dead man because of Sarah. Deadness here has to do with sterility of reproduction.

Abimelech informs God that he acted in ignorance and innocence. Here we see the good character of an unbeliever. God recognized this and informs him about it. So Abimelech had not violated consciously any of his own rules of morality.

God often intervenes by afflictive dispensations to prevent his own from falling further and frustrating His plan.

B. By Instruction (20:6-8).

We not only have restraining grace, but also illuminating grace. Abimelech must restore to Abraham his wife, "for he is a prophet." The word "prophet" is the word nabi, from *naba*, to cause to bubble up; hence to pour forth, applied to one who speaks by Divine afflatus or inspiration (Judges 6:8; I Samuel 9:9; I Kings 22:7). The office of the Nabi was twofold: to announce the will of God to men (Exodus 4:15; 7:1); and also to intercede with God for men (Genesis 20:7; Jeremiah 7:16, 11:14, 14:11). First occurrence of "prophet" in the Bible.

The instruction was quickly followed out as God had told him.

Abimelech's words bear witness to a true knowledge of God and a genuine fear of God, outside the covenant God of Abraham. He must come to Abraham and restore his wife in order to have life.

Note that Abimelech "rose early in the morning." Here is an evidence of the terror the Divine communication had cast over him, and his earnest desire to carry out the Divine commands.

III. THE REBUKE (Genesis 20:9-16).

This is now the second time a heathen king rebukes Abraham. The first was by Pharaoh, and now by Abimelech. The world knows when a saint fails, and often becomes God's instrument of correction.

A. By Interrogation (20:9-10).

"Then Abimelech called Abraham and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee..." (20:9).

It was indeed humiliating for a heathen king to rebuke God's servant.

"Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done."

B. By Explanation (20:11-13).

Abimelech now attempts to justify his conduct toward Sarah, and he does it in three statements:

1. He thought "the fear of the Lord is not in this place."

We see how mistaken Abraham was in this matter. Abimelech was a God-fearing man.

2. Sarah was really his sister - half sister (20:12). They had the same father, but not the same mother. But she was also his wife. A half-truth in God's sight is a lie when the motive is wrong. In this case the wife aspect takes precedence over the sister aspect.

3. It was an old compact made some 30 years before (20:13). This makes his sin all the worse. It was not a hasty decision on the part of Abraham, but an old arrangement made with his wife when they came among the Canaanites.

The fear of man is always a present danger to the believer.

C. By Restoration (20:14-16).

Abimelech now gives gifts to Abraham as he restores his wife to him. Those gifts were a kind of acknowledgment and propitiation for the wrong done. He wished the event covered and forgotten. The gifts were five in number - "sheep and oxen, and menservants and women servants, a thousand pieces of silver." "Behold, I have given thy brother." This a bit of irony on the part of Abimelech.

"Behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all others." This is a figure for justification. Silver shekels were used as a basis for the atonement gift (Leviticus 15:5). So this gift of silver was an atonement or veil to all the domestics and of all with whom she might mingle. Abraham was to be her protection, hiding her as a veil.

We see here the manifest moral superiority of a heathen man. However, the morality of Abimelech will not save him, nor will this sin of Abraham damn him.

IV. THE RESULT (20:17-18).

Abraham now becomes an intercessor. He is a prophet. A prophet not only foretells truth and forthtells it, but also prays.

God had shut up the fruitfulness of the household of Abimelech so that they bare no children. God now restores to them the blessing of life through Abraham. So God protected Sarah and removed the curse from Abimelech. So God had protected the promised seed by preventing conception and procreation.

CONCLUSION

1. The possibility of a believer's sin. One would think that Abraham would be immune from such a sin. Note the aspects in Abraham that led to his sin: fear of man, lack of faith in God, and the lie.
2. The persistence of sin in believers. Here is an evidence that believers still have the old nature. It will often, like in Abraham's case, bring us into trouble and sin.
3. The protection against sin in saints. In spite of his sin, Abraham had a standing with God that gave him prestige with Abimelech. God used Abimelech to reprove Abraham, and Abraham to restore Abimelech.
4. Scripture impartially relates both the vices and virtues of its saints.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #31 - BIRTH OF ISAAC, BANISHMENT OF ISHMAEL, BOND WITH ABIMELECH

TEXT: GENESIS 21:1-34.

Introduction:

Abraham, the Father of Faith, now comes to the time when God fulfills His promise of an heir (Genesis 12:2; 13:15-16; 17:2, 6-7, 8, 15, 16). This is now the first substantial result of God's covenant with Abraham. The child, which had only been the object of prophecy, is now the son of reality. He had been only present to the eye of faith, but now he is present to the eye of sight.

This chapter marks a very important point in Abraham's life; an important epoch in the history of God's purposes for mankind. Isaac, the son of promise, has come. All God's purposes for Israel and the nations were wrapped up in him.

There is always freshness and fruitfulness in God's dealing with His people. There can be nothing stagnant in their experience of faith. Faith must move on to fruition; it must move upward and onward to its consummation in God. Growth and fruit should constantly characterize our life of faith in God.

I. DIVINE REALIZATION - ISAAC (21:1-8).

God now fulfills His divine promises - "as he had said" and "as he had spoken."

A. By Supernatural Progeny (21:1-2). (See Romans 4:16-21; Hebrews 11:11-12.)

When human ability had ceased, then God takes over (Luke 1:36-37). Nothing can ever be greater than to experience a Divine realization in life - something that God has done supernaturally for us.

"Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son." Everything here suggests the supernatural - "the Lord visited Sarah," "the Lord did unto Sarah," "of which God had spoken."

Paul speaks of this supernatural birth in Romans 4:17:
"Even God, who quickeneth the dead."

Not only the birth itself, but also "at the set time" it was accomplished. This reminds of Galatians 4:4 in the birth of Christ - "when the fulness of time was come." God keeps His time when all things are accomplished. His promise stands sure. We can fully put our trust in Him.

B. By Sincere Presentation (21:3-4).

Abraham could not bring this child into the world without Divine intervention. So now Abraham accepts his supernatural child and presents him in faith.

"Abraham called the name of his son, Isaac." The word means, "laughter." God Himself had named the child (Genesis 17:19). It is with joy he accepts God's gift, the promised seed. It is not without significance that his name is Isaac. Both Abraham and Sarah had laughed before his birth (Genesis 17:17; 18:12).

"And Abraham circumcised his son." This was according to God's command (Genesis 17:12-13). This put Isaac into the Abrahamic Covenant. The number eight stands for resurrection ground.

C. By A Spiritual Phenomenon (21:5-8).

"Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck?"

Abraham had waited twenty-five years since he first received the promise of a son, until it was now born (see Genesis 12:4 and 21:5). Here is a remarkable instance of faith and patience. It was God's word that gave him strength to beget, Sarah to conceive, and Isaac to come forth.

Sarah had laughed before in unbelief (Genesis 18:12); now she laughs in faith (Genesis 21:6). Sarah now recognized God's power in providing this son and invites all others to rejoice with her. God never blesses an individual for that one only. His blessings are manifold and multiplied to others. God said in the beginning that he would bless Abraham with a posterity that would bless all nations. Mary, in her song (Luke 1:46-56), expresses the same thought; that her blessing would reach out to multiplied others.

Many, according to the Scriptures, were nursed by their own mothers, as was Isaac. This often took place over a period of from two to three years. It was felt that the longer a child was nursed, the stronger it would get. When Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a feast (Genesis 21:8). Weaning a child is in the East still made the occasion of a family feast.

Isaac is in many respects a type of Christ:

- Both births were predicted beforehand (Luke 1:35; Genesis 18:14).
- Both were born at a set time (Galatians 4:4; Genesis 21:2).
- Both were named before birth (Luke 1:31; Genesis 17:19).
- Both were supernaturally born (Luke 1:35; Genesis 21:2).
- Both brought great joy (Luke 2:9-10; Genesis 21:6).

II. DIVINE REJECTION - ISHMAEL (Genesis 21:9-21; Galatians 4:22-31).

The scene now changes. A profound sadness enters into the life of Abraham. He had a son by the name of Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, Hagar. A crisis now comes. Abraham must deal with Hagar and her son.

A. The Cause (Genesis 21:9-13).

"Sara saw the son of the Egyptian mocking." The son of the bondwoman now begins to mock at the son of the free woman. Paul suggests in Galatians 4:29 that "persecution" meant murder. So not only mockery, but also murderous intention was in his heart.

"Cast out this bondwoman and her son" (Genesis 21:10). Sarah demands nothing less than expulsion, for she says that her son shall not be heir with Ishmael. Thus jealousy, anger and malice bear their sad fruit.

Abraham grieves over this situation (21:11) for he had come to love Ishmael. For seventeen years, Ishmael had been the joy and delight of his life. An only child for so long would naturally be Abraham's pride and joy.

But God comes upon the scene (21:12-13) and gives Abraham a twofold instruction. First, he must listen to Sarah,

because in Isaac was his seed to be called. And, second, he is promised that Ishmael would live and become a great nation.

"Whatever stands in the way of the purpose of God must be cast out." - Morgan.

B. The Course (Genesis 21:14-21).

Abraham, as always, obeys God. He arises early, prepares bread and water, and sends Hagar and Ishmael away to the wilderness of Beersheba. This was a drear, desolate and lonely place. A home with Abraham behind them; Egypt before them.

The water is finally gone, they are faint and dying of thirst. Thirst in "the dry land where no water is." The lad moaning with thirst and exhaustion is placed under a desert shrub to die. Hagar, within hearing, sat down and wept.

But God had promised Abraham that Ishmael would live; so, He comes on the scene. God tells Hagar that God heard the lad's cry. He then provides a well of water; their thirst is quenched and they are revived.

So the lad grew, became a bowsman, and received a wife from Egypt. He lived in the wilderness of Paran. Because he was Abraham's son, God protected him, heard his prayer and made of him the founder of the great Arabian nation.

Ishmael was the son of Abraham, but he was also the son of a slave, and a slave could only produce a slave, and not an heir. Thus Ishmael must give way to the son of the free woman, who was heir according to promise, and not according to natural flesh.

In commenting upon this passage, Paul in Galatians 4:22-31 calls this "an allegory." It is a parabolic illustration of the "Two Covenants" - the Old and the New.

Sarah is representative of: 1) The covenant of Promise (Galatians 4:23-24). This was confirmed by God long before the Legal Covenant was added (Galatians 3:16-18). Sarah was not divorced from Abraham when he took Hagar to wife; but was still his wife, and also after Hagar was dismissed. 2) The "Mother-City" of the spiritual seed of Abraham (Hebrews 11:10; 12:22; 13:14; Revelation 3:12). This is the metropolis of the "Holy Nation," the heavenly

Jerusalem, which is the city of the living God. Into the citizenship and freedom of this city (Galatians 4:31; 5:1) all the spiritual seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:7, 29), those as the stars of heaven (Genesis 15:5), enter by a birth "from above" (John 3:3, 7).

Isaac is representative of: 1) The children of promise (Galatians 3:7, 29; 4:28), the "children" promised and given to Christ (Psalm 22:30; Hebrews 2:13). 2) Those born "after the Spirit," (Galatians 4:29), those "born from above" (John 3:5), and who consequently are brought into relationship with God (John 1:12-13), and heaven (Hebrews 3:1; 2:10; 9:15). 3) Those who enjoy the liberty and freedom of sonship, who are no longer merely bondservants (Galatians 4:4-7). They have received the adoption of sons.

4) Those who are not only sons but also heirs of God (Galatians 3:29; 4:7; I Peter 1:4).

Hagar is representative of: 1) The conditional legal covenant. This proved a yoke of bondage (Galatians 4:24; 5:1; Acts 15:10). It was powerless to give life that could produce fruit for God (Galatians 3:21; Romans 8:3). It but revealed the exceeding sinfulness of sin (Romans 7:13). It proved and left man guilty before God (Romans 3:19). 2) Mount Sinai in Arabia. This answereth to Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children (Galatians 4:25). This was the Old Covenant, enacted at Sinai, and had its center at Jerusalem. This Jerusalem expressed in the worst manner its contempt for Christ, the Son and Heir of promise (Luke 13:34; 19:41-44). It was in a three-fold bondage: a) to the tyranny of Rome (John 19:15; Matthew 22:17-21); b) The tyranny of the Law (Acts 15:10); c) The tyranny of sin (John 8:34; Romans 6:16; 7:23).

Ishmael is representative of: 1) The mere "natural man," the one born after the flesh (Galatians 4:29). This is the intractable, obstinate enemy of every man, and every man his enemy (Genesis 16:12; Romans 7:24). It is but flesh (John 3:6), and cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (I Corinthians 15:50). Therefore Ishmael could not be Abraham's heir, not being born of Divine promise. 2) The "Jerusalem which now is" (Galatians 4:25). These have been persistent persecutors of the "Seed according to promise" (Acts 7:52; I Thessalonians 2:14-16).

III. DIVINE RECOGNITION - ABIMELECH (Genesis 21:22-34).

Between great times of crises in human experience, there are days of the more uneventful and ordinary. Abraham had just gone through a serious struggle, and is later to encounter another serious test from God. But in between, comes this experience in the daily round. One can often master a serious situation in life and utterly fail in that which is more simple and ordinary. In this episode, we shall be able to consider some of the elements of Abraham's life and character.

Abraham is now to meet the prince of Philistia. He who had met with God and conquered is able also to meet with the prince of this world and conquer.

A. Their conversation (Genesis 21:22-26).

Abimelech was the King of Gerar, who together with his chief captain, Phichol, pay a visit to Abraham. Their visit begins with a remarkable statement: "God is with thee in all that thou doest." Abraham's prosperity and favor with God revealed to this king that God was with him in all things. So Abraham's daily life was a genuine witness for God.

I think we shall see in this episode a partial fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham: "In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Some day the nation Israel will have the faith of Abraham.

1. Abimelech's striking request (21:23). Realizing the presence of God with Abraham, this heathen prince is desirous of peace for himself, his posterity and his land. He reminds Abraham of past kindnesses. Abimelech realizes the mighty power of Abraham, and the blessing that would ensue with a friendly covenant.

"Now therefore swear to me ... I will swear." The verb "to swear" is derived from the Hebrew numeral seven. The septenary number therefore became sacred, and oaths were confirmed either by seven sacrifices (21:28-30) or by seven witnesses or pledges.

2. Abraham's searching response (21:24-26). "I will swear ... and Abraham reprov'd Abimelech." Abraham is willing to enter into any kind of covenant that will make for peace and prosperity to his heathen neighbor. However, peace can only come when all former misunderstandings

have been cleared. There was a serious obstacle in the way for a peace covenant. Abimelech's servants had violently taken a well from Abraham. Water was extremely important to nomadic life in a land that was semi-desert. It meant a great loss.

Abimelech makes a satisfactory explanation by stating that the thing was entirely unknown to him; he neither knew about it, nor did he have anything to do with it.

Thus small things can often cause misunderstandings. If cleared immediately, they will save a multitude of sorrow and suffering.

B. Their Covenant (21:27-34).

Abraham begins immediately, without further argument, to make a covenant with Abimelech. He recognized an honest heart, and an upright soul in this heathen prince.

1. How Peace is Established (21:27-32).

The usual covenant presents are given to Abimelech, namely sheep and oxen. The seven ewe lambs of the flock are placed by themselves as a special gift. These were to witness to the fact that Abraham had dug the well.

The covenant is thus made and the place is called "Beersheba." It means "the well of the oath," or "The well of the Seven." Seven wells have been identified in the region of Beersheba.

This oath has a dispensational aspect in that it reveals Abraham's title to the land, and ultimately to his people. It also shows Abimelech's recognition of this fact.

2. How Peace is Enjoyed (21:33-34).

Abraham then plants a grove, or better, a tree, probably a tamarisk beside his tent. "Blessed are the peacemakers," and "beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that publisheth peace" (Matthew 5:9; Isaiah 52:7).

Abraham now receives a new name for God: "**Yehovah el olam**" or, the Lord God of the age. Abraham's people are God's age people. Abraham is reminded of God's unchangeableness and dependableness. "Jesus Christ the

same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8), is the New Testament expression of this name for God's earth people. Upon this basis, peace is secured. This revelation comes only to the man of God. This God is age-abiding Vindicator of the faith of treaties, and the Infallible source of peace and rest.

Abimelech and Phichol returned into the main land of Philistia, and Abraham continues to sojourn in their land.

Because Jehovah, the God of the Age, is their God, Israel will have the dominion and glory of The Promised Land with Christ as The King.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #32 - THE TRIAL & TRIUMPH OF FAITH

TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-24. (HEBREWS 11:17-19; JAMES 2:21-23; HEBREWS 6:13-20)

Introduction:

- 1) Key chapters. Certain chapters in the Bible may be considered as key chapters because of their contents; such chapters in the Old Testament as Genesis 3, 12 22, 49, Exodus 12, Leviticus 16 and Isaiah 53. Along with Isaiah chapter 53, this is no doubt one of the greatest chapters in the Old Testament Scriptures. Here God demands a human sacrifice as the highest token of one's faith; and a type of redemption, resurrection and restoration. This solemn scene points directly to Calvary where God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son are given in The Supreme Sacrifice.
- 2) The spiritual history of Abraham was marked by four great crises, each of which involved the surrender of something which was naturally dear to him:
 - a. Called to separate himself from his native land (Genesis 13:1-18).
 - b. Called to give up Lot (Genesis 13:1-18)/
 - c. Called to give up Ishmael (Genesis 17:17-18).
 - d. Called to offer up Isaac (Genesis 22:1-14).

This last test was the severest of all; but he was prepared for it.
3. In Abraham's Day, the sacrifice of the firstborn was a common practice among the Semitic races; and was regarded as the most pleasing service which men could perform to their deities. It was the giving of their firstborn for their transgression, the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul (see Micah 6:7). This horrible practice was done by the Jews in the dark days of Ahaz and Manasseh (see II Kings 23:10; II Chronicles 28:3; 33:6); and the cases of Jephthah (Judges chapter 11), and Mesha, king of Moab (II Kings 3:27).

4. A problem and answer. Some have found a problem here, and even criticized God for demanding a human sacrifice. God told Israel later that they could not sacrifice their sons and daughters by means of fire (Deuteronomy 18:9-12; Psalm 106:36-38). Several things are to be noted in Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac:
 - a. He was commanded by God, His Creator, to sacrifice, not by Satan, the demons, nor evil men.
 - b. He sacrificed to God and not to idols.
 - c. God did not intend that Isaac should be slain.
 - d. Abraham believed in God's power to raise up Isaac immediately (note Genesis 22:5, and Hebrews 11:19).

It is said that during the Napoleonic wars, the Emperors of Prussia, Austria and Russia were discussing the relative absolute and unquestioning obedience of their soldiers - each claiming in this regard the preeminence for his own soldiers. To test the matter, they agreed that each would call in turn the sentinel at the door and command him to leap out at the window. First the Prussian monarch called his man. "Leap out of the window" was the order. "Your Majesty," said the soldier, "It would kill me." He was dismissed. The Austrian soldier was called. "Leap out the window," commanded the Emperor. "I will," said the man, "if you really mean what you say." He was dismissed and the Czar called his man. "Leap out of that window," he said. Without a word in reply, the man crossed himself and started to obey; but, of course, was stopped. Were these Emperors guilty of murder? No, because their purpose was not to sacrifice their soldiers, but only to test their loyalty and obedience. So God's purpose must be seen, not in His command alone, but in all the story.

5. The Grand Climax, and the crowning crisis in the history of Abraham now takes place. Every needful preparation had been made for it in the life of Abraham. His "ups and downs" had matured him in faith and obedience. The father and son relationship here is most moving and momentous. Abraham, the father, is seen in the maturity of faith, the fortitude of hope; and Isaac as the obedient son, loving and submissive. Fifty years previous to this time, in a daring act of faith, the Father of the Hebrews set out at the call of God for a land he had never seen. For twenty-five years he waited for the fulfillment of the promise of an heir. At last he came.

Isaac was supernaturally born, Ishmael sent away, and this was now the heir. Twenty-five years more and the son, supernaturally born, becomes a young man. He is now to be sacrificed at God's command.

I. THE GREAT TRIAL (Genesis 22:1-10).

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham" (22:1).

The word "tempt" here can better be translated "test or trial." God tries us to bring out the best; Satan tempts us to bring out the evil (James 1:12-15). Life is a succession of trials, for character is only possible through discipline. In all our lives, there comes the supreme test to which all others are secondary and preparatory. Such was now Abraham's test.

God had just richly blessed Abraham with this son, and given him a singular blessing in contact with a heathen king. It was "after these things" that the test follows. Severe tests often follow times of great blessing. The Lord was tempted after His baptism (Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:1). It is an honor to be tried by God. He did not try Lot; Sodom did that. God proves the man who is proof against Sodom. (See Deuteronomy 8:2-3; 15-16.)

God now calls Abraham by name, and Abraham in turn answers, "Behold me" (see verses 7, 11).

A. The Request of God (22:2).

The request of God is both singular and severe. Let us see it in some forceful interrogations.

1. Whom? "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." God is most minute and specific in order that Abraham may not be mistaken as to the person. "Son, only son, Isaac, lovest." God makes His will sure, and often painfully plain.
2. When? "...take now." The Hebrew is peculiar here. The imperative "take" is followed by the Hebrew particle nah, which means, "I pray thee." God was speaking to Abraham as friend to friend. When God speaks, He demands immediate action. Abraham could have paused to argue, Lord, after waiting all these years for an heir, after nursing him to manhood, after sacrificing Ishmael, etc., etc.

3. Where? "...and get thee into the land of Moriah; ... upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of..." A land and a mountain of God's own choosing. Moriah is identified with the Temple Mount (II Chronicles 3:1). This might well have been the place where Christ, centuries later, was sacrificed by God as The Lamb of God.
4. What? "...and offer him there for a burnt offering." To make a supreme sacrifice. No substitute at this time for Isaac from the flock. No gift of money or material will do. "...and offer him there." It literally says, "lift him up."
5. Why? That is a child's question. Faith never asks that question, only fear. The creature does not question the Creator, the finite does not interrogate the Infinite, the relative does not reason with the Absolute.

B. The Response of Abraham (22:3-10).

The response of Abraham is most remarkable.

1. It was Prompt. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning." Abraham reasoned not, nor staggered; but was prompt, deliberate and determined. This is not a God and sinner trial, but a Father and Son trial.
2. It was Preparatory. He exhibits even here his faith in God's word. He immediately makes all preparation for the journey and the sacrifice - "his ass, two young men, Isaac, wood, fire, knife."
3. It was Prudent. Evidently he told no one of his purpose, no not even Sarah and Isaac. They might have hindered the execution of the plan. He conceals it from the young men. They could not go all the way to the top of the Mount. They would not understand. This is a Father and son deal. Who could ever understand the death of Christ on the cross except the Father and Son.

"...the third day ... saw the place." Three is a number of Heavenly perfection. What an agonizing three days it must have been!

"...that we may worship and return again unto you." The plural pronoun "we" is in the original. Here is triumph of faith in God's power (Hebrews 11:19).

Isaac bore the wood, Abraham the fire and knife. What a perfect picture of Christ and the cross; God and the fire and knife.

"God will see for Himself the lamb." This Abraham's response to Isaac's "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

"...came to the place ... built an altar ... laid the wood ... bound Isaac ... took the knife." Isaac is entirely submissive to his father. Jesus said, "not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). The Executioner is Abraham, who took the fire and the knife. The fire represents the holiness of God and the knife the justice of God (Hebrews 12:29; Matthew 27:46).

When everything is ready, inspiration draws a veil over the last tender scene as Abraham breaks the news to his son.

"And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." Abraham now dies to the Aesthetical, all natural affection: the Ethical moral code, "Thou shalt not kill," to reason, whose logic says this is sheer foolishness, and to all religion that rejects a bloody sacrifice.

II. THE GLORIOUS TRIUMPH (Genesis 22:11-14).

Abraham's faith now comes to a glorious triumph; not perhaps as Abraham anticipated, but according to God's purpose and plan.

A. By Divine Prohibition (22:11-12).

"Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad." At the right moment and not before, God intervened and stayed the hand of Abraham. Abraham was prepared to give God his best, his only son, Isaac. Faith can do no more than give the best in implicit obedience to God, and God requires no more than we are capable of giving.

Faith was the root of his obedience, and obedience was the fruit of his faith.

B. By Divine Provision (22:13).

"...the ram offered for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." The Divine intervention issues out into Divine substitution.

A thorn-crowned ram now becomes the servant of Omnipotence, which Abraham offered in the stead of his son.

Centuries later in the offering of Christ there was no substitute provided. He took our place (Romans 8:32; I Corinthians 5:7; II Corinthians 5:21).

C. By Divine Presence (22:14).

"...Called the name of that place *Jehovah Jireh* - The Lord will see, or provide. *Jireh* is derived from *raah*, to see. Another rendering is "to provide" (Deuteronomy 33:21; I Samuel 16:1, 17; Genesis 22:8).

By combining these two thoughts suggested, we grasp the stupendous truth that the God of vision is the God of provision.

So this mount of sacrifice bears the testimony to the presence and provision of Jehovah God. This was the secret and assurance of Abraham's faith.

God looked down upon Calvary and saw His Son, and provided a sacrifice completely adequate for all our sins.

In this simple, yet profound experience, we see: The simplicity of faith - took God at His word; the strength of faith - never once the least emotion of fear; the source of faith - the power of God to raise the dead; and the secret of faith - "Here am I" - implicit obedience.

III. THE GRACIOUS TESTIMONY (Genesis 22:15-19).

Abraham's victory of faith is now to be rewarded by a confirmation of the promises already made to him (Hebrews 6:13-15).

This is the second time that the angel calls unto Abraham out of heaven. The first call was to arrest the consummation of the taking of Isaac's life; this second call was to declare Divine satisfaction with Abraham's complete surrender to

God's will, and to renew the promise of a numberless seed, and the blessing of the nations.

"By myself have I sworn." One translator has "by my word," another "by my name." But it is all equivalent to by himself. So God by promise and oath pledges to Abraham and his seed these blessings (Hebrews 6:17-18).

"Abraham's perfect obedience brings heaven's measureless reward. Supreme sacrifice is crowned with rapturous blessing. God has purposes so gracious and promises so generous that the grandest similes are required to express them. The form, as well as the contents of promise, is exuberant. Elect to unexampled suffering, Abraham was also elect to unexampled blessing" - (George Henderson).

The world has yet to see and experience the fullness of the promises made to Abraham and to his people.

"Because thou has obeyed my voice" (22:18). Obedience coupled with faith in God's Word has exceedingly great and everlasting blessings.

So after complete acceptance of the Word of God, self-sacrifice, faith instead of sight, withholding nothing, and perseverance to the end, Abraham returns with Isaac to "his young men" and to Beersheba, to the well, the grove and the oath he made with Abimelech.

"When he returned to Beersheba, a holy light lit his countenance, flashes of glory broke forth through the veil of the mortal body, so the people of the place (though ignorant of what had transpired) concluded that Abraham had seen God, and a proverb went abroad that land, 'On the mount of Jehovah shall be seen'" - (V. Gelesnoff).

IV. THE GLAD TIDINGS (Genesis 22:20-24).

Abraham now is told news from home concerning his relatives. This is now given here because the next episode in the life of Abraham and Isaac is to get a bride from among his people. So these verses lead up to Rebecca.

Huz is also identified as "Uz." Uz is connected also with Aram (Genesis 22:21; 10:23). Job is described as of the land of Uz, and his friend Elihu is called a Buzite (Job 32:2).

For nearly half a century, Abraham had been a wanderer in the land of Canaan. This may have been the first contact he had with his former home and relatives of Haran.

"And Bethuel begat Rebekah." This statement and news leads right into chapter twenty-four. So no passage of Scripture, however meaningless it may seem to us, can be said to be entirely useless.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we would like to add some choice statements from Oswald Chamber's "NOT KNOWING WHITHER":

"In the life of Abraham we deal with the failures and triumphs of the life of faith."

"Whenever I want to debate about doing what I know to be supremely right, I am not in touch with God."

"This mountain is not the mountain of sacrifice, but the mountain of proof that Abraham loved God supremely" (see verse 12).

"God never fits His word to suit me; He fits me to suit His word."

"God never tells us what He is going to do, He reveals Who He is."

"The best measure of a spiritual life is not its ecstasies, but its obedience. 'To obey is better than sacrifice.'"

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #33 - ABRAHAM: THE MOURNER & MERCHANT

TEXT: GENESIS 23:1-20.

Introduction:

The previous chapter records for us the great crisis in Abraham's life - the offering of Isaac. Isaac is 57 years old at the death of his mother (compare Genesis 17:17 with 23:1). It is thought that Isaac was about 25 years old when Abraham took him to Mt. Moriah to sacrifice him. So since that event some 25 plus years of apparent uneventful life had passed. Nothing is recorded of these years.

Now another crisis comes to break the monotony and to speak of the mortality of human nature. Death enters Abraham's home, and takes Sarah. Death is no respecter of persons. This universal enemy of all mankind comes also to the man of God's choice and Israel's father. Since the day of Adam's fall, death has been reigning in the world. When Christ arose, He conquered death and became "the first-fruits of all that sleep." The Old Testament relates the end of no other woman's life so particularly as it does the end of Sarah's life.

OUTLINE:

- A-1. Death of Sarah (23:1-2).
 - B-1. Purchase of burying place (23:3-16).
 - B-2. Possession of burying place (23:17-18, 20).
 - A-2. Burial of Sarah (23:19).
- I. THE MOURNER (Genesis 23:1-2).

Sarah dies at the age of 127 years. The Hebrew literally reads, "a hundred years, and twenty years, and seven years." Sarah stands out in Scripture as the only woman whose age is given. She is also the only woman whose name is mentioned in Hebrews (Hebrews 11:11).

A. His Trial (23:2a)

"And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan."

Sarah was ten years younger than Abraham (Genesis 17:17); and yet died 48 years before him. Human life is very uncertain; the younger can go before the older.

Kirjath-arba means "the city of Arba." According to the Jews, the city of four, because Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried there. It is also called Hebron (see Joshua 14:15; 15:13; Judges 1:10; Genesis 35:27).

There are few incidents recorded of Sarah's life. But any obituary must include three things worthy of recording:

1. The Mother of Isaac (Genesis 21:2). Isaac was the promised seed and heir. It was to him and through him that all the promises would be fulfilled.
2. The Mother of the Hebrews (Genesis 17:16). The whole Jewish race with its twelve tribes, its northern and southern kingdoms, its kings, etc., all came from Sarah.
3. The Model Woman (Hebrews 11:11; I Peter 3:6). A woman of modest adornment, moral beauty and Godly subjection is worthy of emulation. We are told that she died in faith (Hebrews 11:13), a faith that saw and greeted from afar the promises of God.

B. The Tears (23:2b).

"And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her."

"To mourn." The Hebrew word indicates the loud wailing still usual in the East as a manifestation of grief.

Sarah died at Hebron, and it would seem from the passage that Abraham was away when she died. He may have had two establishments with separate flocks and herds: one at Beersheba (22:19), and the other at Hebron (23:2).

This is the first instance in Scripture of a man's tears. They were neither idle, nor unmanly, nor morbid, but the genuine and rightful expression of Abraham's deep sorrow on the death of his wife.

There is the record in the Gospels that Jesus wept twice: over Lazarus (John 11:35), and over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). The love of Christ for Lazarus as well as Jerusalem brought tears. So it is in Abraham's life. The tears reveal his affection for Sarah, the Princess, his wife and mother of Isaac.

"The unspoken memories of a lifetime were in those tears. Faith in God does not lead to stoical indifference in the presence of sorrow, although it restrains us from sorrowing as others who have no hope. It neither eradicates nor reproves sorrow, but tempers and hallows it and binds up the broken heart." - George Henderson.

II. THE MERCHANT (Genesis 23:3-20).

From death Abraham now turns to duty. His dead one must be buried. He must find a fitting place to put the body of his dead wife.

These verses reveal to us some early traits in business transaction. There is nothing careless about Abraham's business dealings.

A. His Petition (23:3-6).

"I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight."

"Abraham stood up," or "rose up." This verb is used because the mourner sat and slept on the ground (see II Samuel 12:16; Lamentations 2:10).

Abraham now comes to the children of Heth or the Hittites, and requests a place to bury Sarah. He is acknowledged as a "mighty prince," and promised a burying place.

"A stranger and a sojourner," is a proverbial phrase describing one whose origin is foreign, and whose period of residence uncertain.

This is the first reference in the Bible to burial; and shows reverential concern on the part of the Patriarch to honorable burial of his dead one. Burial is the Jewish method of disposal of the dead. Cremation has always been repugnant to Jewish feeling, and is in total variance with the law and custom of Israel.

Abraham's faith is here revealed in this request. He intended to stay in the land of Canaan, and not return to Mesopotamia.

B. His Purchase (23:7-16).

"That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a buryingplace amongst you" ... "...and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant."

Abraham reveals first of all perfect courtesy in reply to the offer of the people of the land - "Abraham bowed down himself" (23:7, 12). Abraham's greatness is here revealed in his humility. Our Christianity should not decrease, but rather increase natural politeness.

Abraham desired "the cave of Machpelah." It was a common practice to bury in caves. The word Machpelah means "double," possibly because it consisted of two stories.

When Abraham offered to purchase the cave for the sum of its worth, then Ephron, the owner said, "Nay my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee..." (23:11). There is here, according to Eastern custom, an excessive amount of courtesy in the transaction; but a large sum was in the end required. This was an expression of conventional politeness, neither intended nor taken literally. Ephron wanted the full amount of its worth.

Abraham shows his business integrity by weighing out to Ephron the four hundred shekels of silver, which was "current money with the merchant" (23:16). Thus everything was done legally in the presence of witnesses. The only land that Abraham had title to was paid for; and this in the face of the fact that God had promised it to him and his seed.

The "four hundred shekels of silver" are typical of redemption. Silver is the symbol of atonement (Exodus 30:11-16; 38:25-27). 400 shekels = 10 x 10 x 4. Four is the earth number, the number of creation; while ten is the number of perfection in the Divine order. It stands for completeness, marking the entire round of anything. So the number 400 is the number of full responsibility

intensified and in relation to creation as a whole. Christ has purchased the field, the world (Matthew 13:44) with his redemption, and creation will ultimately be delivered from its bondage of corruption and death (Romans 8:21-22).

C. His Possession (23:17-20).

"And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth."

These verses (23:17-20) might well be the words of the deed of assignment which was drawn up at the purchase. Contracts of this kind, dating from very early Semitic times, have been discovered in large numbers.

The sale was duly witnessed to - "in the presence of the children of Heth" (23:18). (See Jeremiah 32:12.) For many generations, the children of Israel were to have no point of fixity save the sepulchre of the Patriarchs.

The Cave of Machpelah is regarded today with immense veneration by the Mohammedans, who built a large mosque over it, and until recently excluded both Jews and Christians from viewing it. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Jacob, Rebekah and Leah were all buried here.

So Abraham, having by purchase, made the field and the cave his beyond all dispute "buried Sarah his wife" (23:19). Death severs the most cherished companionships. Yet there is One who has conquered death, broken the scepter of the King of Terrors, and brought death and immortality to light. Jesus Christ, our Lord, is the Prince of Life and the King of Glory.

CONCLUSION

There are some lessons that we should see from this Old Testament Scripture:

- 1) Sorrowing Love. The expression of love in sorrow is as natural as it is inevitable and beautiful. It would be entirely unnatural if death were to come without eliciting sorrow.
- 2) Faithful Service. There is also the call in our sorrow to render the dead one what they in life would have us do. It is thus we can best keep their memory. Service always prevents

sorrow from becoming dissipated in idle regrets and mere remembrance.

- 3) Blessed Hope. All that Abraham ever owned in this Promised Land was a grave. It was indeed a meager piece of land compared with the whole. Abraham believed in the resurrection, and a better country (Hebrews 11:14). This strengthened him as nothing else. The anticipation of resurrection and restoration were the hope and comfort of these patriarchs.

A Dispensational Foreshadowing: Isaac is certainly a type of Christ (Galatians 3:16). Sarah may be considered as a type of Israel, of whom after the flesh Christ came (Romans 9:5). As Sarah's death followed the sacrifice of Isaac, so the national death-state of Israel, the nation, comes after the accomplished sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The Book of Acts gives historically the setting aside of that nation, though not without the forecast of repentance and restoration. And all this makes way for the coming of a faithful remnant, the Bride of Christ, as seen in the next chapter, Genesis 24.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #34 - A BRIDE FOR ISAAC

TEXT: GENESIS 24:1-67.

Introduction:

- 1) Sarah, Isaac's mother is now dead and buried (23:1-2; 19-20). Abraham is old and well stricken in years (24:1). Isaac is yet without wife and posterity (24:3-4).
- 2) "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Genesis 21:12). This is now the key to this chapter. All now depends upon Isaac. With him rests the continuation of the promised posterity, ultimately bringing Christ in the world (Hebrews 11:17-18 indicates this). Abraham well understood the peril of the situation.
- 3) Four main characters play their parts in this remarkable Old Testament love drama - Abraham, Isaac, Eliezer, the servant, and Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham.
- 4) Old Testament Typology. Many commentators have seen rich typology in this chapter, and rightly so. Some reject it as too fanciful. But there is a sane typology that reveals truth. The four main characters are typical:

ABRAHAM: Type of God the Father. "Made thee a father of many nations, like unto Him whom he believed, even God" (Romans 4:17). Here Abraham is a type of God the Father.

ISAAC: Type of Christ, the Son of the Father (Hebrews 11:17-19).

In Genesis chapter 22, Isaac is a type of the death and resurrection of Christ.

In Genesis chapter 23, Isaac is hidden for a time. Nothing is recorded of him.

In Genesis chapter 24, he emerges again to take his bride.

ELIEZER: Type of the Holy Spirit. His name means "The Helper of God" (John 16:13-14). He is the administrator of the will, way and word of Abraham (Genesis 15:2). All the

possessions of Abraham and Isaac were at his command. He was the steward in the house of Abraham.

REBEKAH. Type of the Bride. She was of Abraham's kin, nation and religion. Thus a faithful remnant, mainly from Israel, will ultimately constitute the Bride of Christ. (See Revelation chapter 21.)

It is significant that the typology here follows immediately upon the account of the burial of Sarah, which is a type of the setting aside of Israel (the "casting away" of Romans 11:15), until that time when "God shall graft them in again" (Romans 11:23, 25, 26). As Sarah was buried in that cave until the resurrection, so Israel, as a nation, lies buried among the nations of the earth until the time of their national and spiritual resurrection and restoration (Ezekiel 37:11-14).

- 5) This search for a bride for Isaac had its beginning in the heart of Abraham, humanly speaking (24:3-9). But behind this human beginning, there is the Divine beginning in God (24:14, 44). Isaac becomes a beautiful type of Christ, God's well-beloved Son (Colossians 1:13), Whom He hath appointed heir of all things (Hebrews 1:2); and into whose hands the Father has given all things (John 3:35); and who can therefore say that all that the Father hath is His (John 16:15). Rebekah did not seek for Isaac; she was sought for Isaac. All this blessing was planned for her (John 15:16).
- 6) "The Lord had blessed Abraham in all things (24:1). This sums up the whole of his life and experience. (See Proverbs 10:22; Psalm 37:22.)
- 7) An epitome of the story as told by George Henderson: "This is one of the most charming love stories in the Bible. It records how, at the command of his master, the unnamed servant went forth to seek a bride for this master's son who had figuratively died and risen again. It describes how he came in touch with the woman who was divinely chosen for the well-beloved son; and how, with tales of Isaac's wealth and glory, he sought to detach her heart from the scene in which he found her. It tells of how the chosen bride was willing to leave all and to go to a land and a person that were known to her only by report, and of how that person came part of the way to meet her. It narrates, finally, how that one received her into his home and destiny."
- 9) The latter part of verse twenty-seven suggests the outline of this chapter - "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the

house of my master's brethren." Here we have the Servant's Dedication, His Direction and His Destination.

I. THE SERVANT'S COMMISSION (Genesis 24:1-10).

After the death of Sarah, Abraham makes preparation to get a bride for Isaac. His procedure marks some definite steps in faith.

The unnamed servant here, "his eldest servant" is no doubt the servant or "the steward Eliezer of Damascus" (Genesis 15:2). This servant was so dedicated to his mission that he could say later on, "I being in the way."

A. Faithfulness to Divine Purpose (24:1-4).

"Thou shalt not take a wife of the Canaanites ... But to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac."

Later in history Isaac gave the same admonition to his son Jacob (see Genesis 28:1).

The Canaanites were of that evil seed - the "giants in the earth" that came after the flood (see Genesis 6:4). These Canaanites were mixed with the Nephilim, or "Fallen ones." Abraham did not want his seed mixed with the evil seed (see Companion Bible, Appendices 23 & 25). Marriage with the Canaanites was strictly forbidden (Exodus 34:11-16).

He was to go to "my country, and to my kindred" (Genesis 24:4). Verse ten tells us "he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor." Mesopotamia - from the Greek *mesos*, 'middle,' and *potomos*, 'river.' The Hebrew ha Aram-Naharaim, i.e., 'Aram' (or ancient Syria) of the two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. Here in the city of Nahor lived his relatives.

"...Put thy hand under my thigh" (Genesis 24:2). According to the Biblical idiom, children are said to issue from the 'thigh' or 'loins' of their father (see Genesis 46:26). The oath is again mentioned in Genesis 47:29. The formality of placing the hand upon the thigh was taken to signify that if the oath were violated, the children who have issued, or might issue, from the 'thigh' would avenge the act of disloyalty.

B. Faithfulness to Divine Power (Genesis 24:5-9)

"The Lord God of Heaven, ... He shall send His angel before thee."

The servant interrogated Abraham as to the woman's unwillingness to come to Canaan. Should he then bring Isaac to Haran? Isaac was under no circumstances to leave the Promised Land; and if the woman would not come, the servant would be free from the oath.

The seed of Abraham is to be distinguished from all the nations and must not be extinguished by the nations! For this reason, Abraham takes every precaution to prevent it by his dogmatic prohibition.

C. Faithfulness to Human Preparation (Genesis 24:10).

"...Took ten camels ... for all the goods of his master were in his hand."

This servant took with him a rich dowry. He gave golden earrings, bracelets, silver and gold jewels, and raiment for Rebekah, and her brother and mother 'precious things' (Genesis 24:22, 53).

The servant must be prepared to convince the bride-to-be of the attractiveness of Isaac's person, the sincerity of his passion, and the reality of his possessions.

So he took the journey, which would be about 500 miles.

II. THE SERVANT'S CONQUEST (Genesis 24:11-55).

The servant is directed by the angel of the Lord and reaches his destination. The leading of the angel of the Lord gave both protection and progress on the journey. So he came "to the house of my master's brethren."

A. As Seen In Eliezer's Prayer (24:11-14).

Eliezer comes "by the well of water." This would be the natural place for a stranger to come who sought information concerning an inhabitant of the city.

He asks in the name of the "God of Abraham" - **Jehovah Elohe.**

He asks for a sign (24:14). He asked for a damsel carrying a pitcher to the well; and upon asking for a drink, not only gave him a drink but also watered the camels. This was contrary to custom. (See the custom in Genesis 29:10.) The maiden on her own initiative suggested water for the camels.

To this day there is but one drinkable well of water at Haran, and the women still fill their water-skins at it. It bears every mark of great age and wear.

B. As Seen in Rebekah's Person (24:12-28).

"And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her; and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up" (24:16).

"And she said, drink my lord: ... And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking" (24:18-19).

She was very fair and beautiful to look upon. She was a "virgin." The word here is **Bethulah**, which means "a virgin." The word translated "virgin" in verse 43 is "**almah**," which means, an unmarried woman of marriageable age. So it was a virgin that was chosen for Isaac.

Rebekah was a woman of goodness, beauty and purity. Here is also willingness, energy and service.

So Rebekah fulfilled perfectly the prayer of Eliezer both in her personal beauty and personal service.

Then Eliezer gave her presents, "a golden earring" or nose ring, "and two bracelets" (24:22). Then Eliezer worshipped God in gratitude for His great goodness to his master Abraham (24:27).

C. As Seen in Rebekah's Parentage (24:29-55).

"Whose daughter art thou?" (24:23, 47). Three times in this chapter it is said of her that she "was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother" (24:15, 24, 47). These names are enough to establish the family as being of Abraham's people. This was the uppermost thought in Eliezer's mind, "Whose daughter is she?"

"Brother's daughter" in verse 48 should read "kinsman's daughter." "Brother" is here used as in Genesis 14:14, 16; 29:12, to denote "nephew."

"Then Laban and Bethuel answered." We note that Laban answered first before his father in disrespect of him (24:50). In verse 55 it says "And her brother and her mother said" (24:55). Here again Laban speaks first. We might expect mention of the father instead of the mother. He was in all probability quite satisfied to let Rebekah go immediately.

The brother and mother suggested that Rebekah "abide with us a few days, at the least ten" (24:55). "A full year or ten months" is justified by the Hebrew idiom. Rebekah's mother was no doubt loath to part with her, as they may never see her again.

III. REBEKAH'S CONSENT (Genesis 24:56-60).

"Wilt thou go with this man" And she said, I will go" (24:58).

The family called Rebekah to ask her if she was willing to go to Canaan. They found that Eliezer had done a marvelous job of persuasion. He had spoken of the great blessing in wealth of his master (24:34-35). So they gave Rebekah their blessing and wished for her a large posterity.

So Rebekah is sent away with her nurse, who name is Deborah (Genesis 35:8).

The Holy Spirit, God's Servant, makes the glories and riches of Abraham's greater Son, Jesus Christ, the great desire, not only of the coming Bridal group, but also members of the Body of Christ.

IV. REBEKAH'S COMING (Genesis 24:61-67).

"And the servant took Rebekah and went his way" (24:61).

Isaac now comes from the well "**Lahai-roi**" which means "The well of him that liveth and seeth me" (Genesis 16:13-14). Isaac had come to a field to "meditate," or better "to mourn," presumably for his mother. But this sadness was to be turned into joy for "the camels were coming" to bring his bride.

So Isaac receives his father's choice for him and brings her into his mother's tent. He is now comforted. Note the order of the words here: "took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her." In modern life love would come first, then the taking, and then the wife.

CONCLUSION

There are three tests for a true bride:

- 1) Would she respond to the Steward's request for refreshment? (24:14). See Philemon 20. Obedient response to the call of God (Romans 6:17).
- 2) Was there room where she dwelt for the Steward and his retinue to lodge? (24:23). Compare Luke 2:7 with Genesis 24:25. See Revelation 3:20.
- 3) Was she willing to leave her people? Was she willing to take the long journey to Canaan? (24:5, 8, 57, 58). "Whosoever will," (compare Isaiah 1:19 with Psalm 110:3 and Revelation 22:17). See John 5:40.

DISPENSATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

THE PRIMAL REGENERATION: GENESIS CHAPTERS 4-50

Lesson #35 - ABRAHAM'S LAST DAYS

TEXT: GENESIS 25:1-10.

Introduction:

- 1) In the Jewish Commentary on The Pentateuch [*Pentateuch & Haftorahs*], edited by Rabbi J. H. Hertz of England, there is this splendid summary of Abraham's life:

"This chapter concludes the Biblical account of the first of the Patriarchs. It is difficult, indeed, because of our lifelong familiarity with the story, rightly to estimate the nobility and grandeur of the personality revealed in these chapters.

He was the pioneer of the monotheistic faith. Undazzled by the heathen splendour of a Nimrod or a Hammurabi, he broke away from the debasing idol-worship of his contemporaries, and devoted his life to the spread of the world-redeeming truth of the One God of Justice and Mercy. He forsook home and family to brave unknown dangers because the voice of God bade him do so; and, throughout his days, he showed that faith in God must manifest itself in implicit and joyful surrender to the Divine will. He set an example to his children to sacrifice the dearest things in life, and, if need be, life itself, in defence of the spiritual heritage entrusted to their care. While he preached renunciation in the service of God, he practiced lovingkindness and truth towards his fellow men. Witness his magnanimity in his treatment of Lot; his fine independence in the refusal to accept any of the spoils won by the men of his household; his benevolence in the reception of strangers; his stand for justice, when pleading for the doomed cities; and his all-embracing human pity, which extended even to those who had forfeited all claim to human pity. Finally the closing stage of his life shows his anxiety that the spiritual treasures he has acquired should be transmitted unimpaired through his son to future generations. Verily, he is the prototype of what the Jew should aim at being. 'Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn....look unto Abraham

your father,' is the Divine exhortation addressed to Israel (Isaiah LI, 1-2)."

- 2) Typical and Dispensational aspects: Sarah is like the Old Covenant, having waxed old and vanished away (Hebrews 8:13). In Christ, the Jewish covenant of works has terminated. The Jewish exclusivism is now over. This makes room for Keturah, the Gentile, to appear with her sons. Isaac has been slain and raised to life again, a type of the death and resurrection of Christ. He takes a bride, Rebekah; and brings her into his mother's tent to enjoy the promises and blessings. Israel will be saved in a future day by Christ, her Bridegroom, and enjoy the new marriage covenant, and over Jerusalem and all the land there will be nuptial glory (Isaiah 4:5). When Israel is saved and back in the land, then the nations typified by Keturah and her sons will be raised up as children to Abraham and receive inheritance with Israel.
- 3) Thirty-five years of Abraham's life are passed over in the first eleven verses of chapter 25. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born (Genesis 21:5); Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah (25:20); and Abraham lived to be 175 years of age (25:7). Thirty-five years in eleven verses. Moses took thirteen chapters (Genesis 12-24) to tell us of 65 years of Abraham's life, and now only eleven verses for 35 years. The reason suggested is that the covenant that God made with Abraham has now been completed with him; having been signed, sealed and confirmed by an oath. A burial place in the Promised Land secured; a wife for the covenant son obtained; and so all that God can do for Abraham has been done. So the events of these last 35 years add nothing to the Covenant.

I. HIS FINAL DEEDS (Genesis 25:1-6).

We come now to the final scenes in Abraham's life. He had been a rich and full life; and yet lived in all simplicity.

A. He Takes Another Wife (25:1-4).

Keturah, which means, "incense," now becomes Abraham's wife. She is called a "concubine" (Gen. 25:6; I Chronicles 1:32). Some think she was Abraham's concubine before Sarah's death. But it seems from the text that she became his wife after Sarah's death. She did not have the same position as Sarah, nor did her children have the same privileges as that of Isaac.

From this union, there were:

Six sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, Shuah.

Seven grandsons: Sheba, Dedan, Ephah, Ephher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah.

Three great-grandsons: Asshurim, Letushim and Leummim.

Before the birth of Isaac, it was said of Abraham that he was old and beyond the power of procreation (Genesis 18:11-12). So God must have renewed Abraham and made possible, not only the coming of Isaac, but also all these sons by Keturah.

B. He Distributes His Wealth (25:5-6).

To Isaac he gave the bulk of his possessions (25:5). He became the chief heir, according to the previous Divine arrangement (Genesis 15:4).

To the children of his concubines he gave gifts (the sons of Hagar and Keturah). He established them, and then sent them all away from Isaac into the "east country."

Abraham is here an example of one who provided for the well being of his family, and the peace of his children after he was gone. The Arabs are sometimes called "Children of the East" (Judges 6:3; Job 1:3).

II. HIS FEARLESS DEATH (Genesis 25:7-8).

Abraham had experienced the Divine goodness and mercy for 175 years. He had God's covenant established with himself and family, beheld Isaac born, married, and, the father of two promising sons, and seen Sarah taken from him in death. So there was nothing more for him but to depart in death.

He died 75 years after the birth of Isaac, and 35 years after Isaac's marriage to Rebekah (Genesis 21:5; 25:20). His grandfather Nahor lived to be 148 years, his father, Terah, 205 years, his son, Isaac, 180 years, and his grandson, Jacob, 147, and his great grandson, Joseph, 110 years. So Abraham was buried in a ripe old age as God had said (Genesis 15:15). He lived to see his grandsons, Esau and Jacob, who were 15 years old when Abraham died (25:26).

"Then Abraham gave up the ghost" (25:8). There is no word for "ghost" in the original. The verse literally reads: "And Abraham expired and died in a good old age and satisfied, and he was gathered unto his people."

So Abraham died matured and mellowed in age, satiated and satisfied with life. "Gathered to his people" is a figure of speech, a Hebrew euphemism, in which an unpleasant experience is given a pleasing expression. Abraham was buried in Canaan; his fathers in Haran and Ur.

Abraham died, expired or breathed out his spirit. So did Isaac (Genesis 35:29); Jacob (Genesis 49:33), David (Psalm 31:5), Christ (Luke 23:46). This expression is taught by many to mean the continuous immateriality or immortality of the soul. But this idea has to be read into the text.

III. HIS FRATERNAL BURIAL (Genesis 25:9-10).

"And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him."

Isaac as the chief heir takes precedence; but Ishmael, rather than the sons of Keturah, is associated with him at his father's funeral. It is not known whether the sons of Keturah were present.

At the tomb of their father, Isaac and Ishmael leave their family differences and personal feuds. Death is often a great healer, and does what nothing else can do. It is the duty of surviving children to see their parents remains deposited in the grave.

The place of burial was "the cave of Machpelah," which Abraham bought as a burial place for Sarah, himself and his posterity. (See Genesis 23:16-20.) This cave had several attractions for Abraham; it was in the Promised Land; it was his own purchased tomb; and it contained the remains of Sarah.

As Isaac and Ishmael buried their father, so Esau and Jacob buried their father Isaac (Genesis 35:29).

CONCLUSION

- 1) In three different places, we read that Abraham was the friend of God - II Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23. In John 15:14, Jesus says that obedience is the condition of friendship with God. In John 15:15, he says the privilege of friendship with God is an intimate understanding of God's plans and purposes. As Abraham is said to be the friend of God three times he must have fulfilled the condition and enjoyed the privilege. One can easily trace through Abraham's life and see the times of obedience and the times of special revelation from God.
- 2) In a final review of Abraham's life, we see three outstanding truths:
 - a) His Faith In God. He took God at His word from the beginning in Ur until his death.
 - b) His Faithfulness to God. He is rightly called "Faithful Abraham" (Galatians 3:9). He proved his faith in God by his faithfulness.
 - c) His Fellowship. His faith and faithfulness led to a spiritual experience of friendship and fellowship with God.