

The Need for Redemption,
Genesis 1-11

2011 Victory Lectures
West Virginia School of Preaching

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Genesis 1-11



17th Annual
West Virginia School of Preaching
Victory Lectures
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Genesis 1–11

17th Annual
West Virginia School of Preaching
Victory Lectures

Hosted by:

Hillview Terrace
Church of Christ
Moundsville, West Virginia

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Dedication



It is with a deep sense of honor that this dedication is written for brother Glenn Logston and his good wife Marjorie. These wonderful Christians have served our Lord in His Church for sixty-nine years and are still rendering true service daily. Without such stalwart people the Church for which Jesus died would not be as strong as she is today. It is an honor to have known them for sixty-one years and to have heard of all the good things they have done for Christ and His Kingdom. We will not see their likes again! They deserve much more than this feeble tribute.

Glenn was born to Virgil and Amanda Nutter Logston August 15, 1926. Glenn is nephew to brother Jess W. Nutter noted Gospel preacher who served Christ in the upper portion of the Ohio Valley for fifty years. He was educated in the

public school system in Belmont County, Ohio and graduated from Chester High School in Hancock County, WV. He obeyed his Lord in baptism in December of 1942 and has been a faithful Christian since that time. He served his country in the United States Navy from 1944 through 1946. In 1946 he was married to the former Marjorie R. Asher and they are the parents of two children. Their daughter Glenna is married to Wes Harrison and works as secretary to the President of OVU in Parkersburg, WV. Their son Dr. David Logston lives in Springfield, MO where he practiced medicine.

While living in Chester, Glenn was employed by the Taylor, Smith and Taylor Pottery Co. He left this work to become a full-time Gospel preacher. During this time, in 1946, he began preaching by Sunday appointments. This he did until 1956, when he made the decision to serve Christ as a preacher.

His first work was with the Beaver Street Church in Lisbon, Ohio where he served from 1956 to 1971 when he moved to work with the church in St. Augustine, Florida. The Logstons remained with that congregation until they decided to return to the Beaver Street Church in 1976 where they served again until 1982. From there they returned to the Green Cove Springs, Florida Church where they served from 1982 until 2001, when his health would no longer permit him to do the visiting he felt obligated to do. From 2001 to 2009 the Logstons lived near their son in Springfield, MO before deciding to move back to the Ohio Valley. The Logstons have three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. They now reside in Wellsville, Ohio. They worship with the Church in Chester, WV where Glenn assists brother Frank Higginbotham by preaching when he is away. West Virginia School of Preaching is well-pleased to be able to dedicate this year's Victory Lectureship book to this fine Christian couple.

Foreword

Editing a work such as the one you have in your hand is a formidable and sometimes daunting task. While much of the mechanical process such as spell checking is done by the word processor with a reasonable degree of accuracy, other parts of the mechanical process are not. Proof reading, checking grammar and syntax are not done accurately and therefore must be done the “old fashioned way,” *i.e.* by careful reading and correcting. While, as was said, it is an arduous task, it is at the same time a highly rewarding and satisfying one, because one is exposed to some of the finest thinking and writing being done in “Christendom” today. Reading from the religious world in general, seeing some of the inane thinking and writing done by some of the most heralded modern authors causes a deep sense of appreciation when reading works such as this one is read. That there is depth of research is very evident from the first sentence after, “I am happy to be here.” It is evident that a great deal of time was spent researching, thinking, choosing just the right words and properly ordering them in such a way as to make the understanding process a very simple one. There is a great deal of rich, fine spiritual dining on this plate.

There is a great deal to be learned from some of the best minds and purest hearts to be found. These are superb lectures! The one you will read on the subject of marriage by brother Denver E. Cooper is worth its weight in gold, as the old cliché goes. Here is a man who speaks, not only from the Word of God, but from more than sixty years of experience. Another lecture lays forth beautifully why in the first eleven chapters of Genesis we have the backbone of the reason for the Scheme of Redemption through Christ. Another clearly shows the reasons why God should not be blamed for the evil in this world. Every lecture in the book serves to refresh the mind and establish faith in the words of the Bible!

Two of the finest men dealing in the fields of Apologetics and Christian Evidences have been brought in to fortify faith and give strength to stand up for Christ in a world of sin. Drs. Brad Harrub and Dave Miller are recognized as outstanding proponents of truth and indefatigable foes of error, especially those aimed at destroying faith in the Word of God.

However, this book would not have been possible without the valuable aid of Christians who want to see the truths spoken in this lectureship put in permanent form. Deep gratitude is expressed to proofreaders: Elizabeth Robison, Shirley West, Christie Robison, and Dana Simons, who worked very hard and did the reading very efficiently. Gratitude is also expressed to Julia Sole who did all the layout work on the book so our printer could produce it in its final form. We also express thanks to the good brethren at Gospel Light Printing for the excellent work they do in printing, binding and shipping the book to us on time each year.

No matter what care is taken mistakes and errors will slip past unnoticed. Though this work has been frequently perused and corrections made each time, still human nature cannot find all. The editorial work on this book has been turned over to another. This is the last effort on the part of this editor. The book is heartily commended to you with God's richest blessings. Ω

The Editor

Introduction

The theme for the 17th Annual West Virginia “Victory” Lectures is *A Study of Genesis 1-11*. This passage of Holy Scripture is the foundation of doctrine throughout the rest of the Bible. Jesus taught that no man can build a house on the sand and it not fall (Matthew 7:26-27). So, too, any book that claims to teach spiritual truth cannot stand, except it is given by God. If the foundational chapters, the first eleven chapters of Genesis, are false then the rest of the Bible is false and to be considered as only a document written by fallible men. But the foundation stands sure. Discussion of the Godhead, Creation, Man in God’s Image, Marriage and the Home, Satan, Sin and the Fall of Man, Morality, the Universal Flood, the Dispersion of the Human Race, the Beginning of Nations, Distinctions in People and Language—all these teachings and many others have their beginning in the first eleven chapters of Genesis.

The amazing consistency of doctrine that follows throughout the Bible is proof of Bible inspiration and inerrancy. What is said in these early chapters of Genesis about the Creation of the Universe is in complete harmony with subsequent teaching throughout the rest of the Bible, whether from the Book of Job or the Psalms, or the Book of Acts or Revelation, Genesis 1-11 sets the tone for teaching on this great profound subject. The Psalmist said, “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and the host of them by the breath of His mouth. . . He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:6, 9). Thus, the teaching in the Psalms about Creation is in complete harmony with the tenor of Genesis 1. This is what the reader of the Scriptures would expect from God. He would not expect to read of the worlds being spoken into existence in Genesis 1 and then find the theory of evolution at some later place in the Book. Also one would not expect to find contradiction of doctrine when he reads of the creation of man; that God created humans in his own image and in the beginning they were created male and

female, as Jesus said in Mark 10:6. How could this consistency in doctrine happen if mere mortal men had written the Bible? The thrust of the Bible is revelation, inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility.

But this is not the position taken by the liberals, skeptics and modernists of our day. They do not believe that the Scriptures are inspired, inerrant and infallible. In fact, they believe that the first eleven chapters of Genesis are nothing but ancient superstition, myth and legend. One liberal commentator said, “Obviously the book begins in that misty region of tradition and transmitted myth in which imagination precedes knowledge” (Simpson, Cuthbert A. *The Book of Genesis The Interpreters Bible Vol. I* 460). Brother Edwin Jones (ETSOP&M) makes this statement in his commentary on Genesis:

“The Book of Genesis, especially its first eleven chapters is clearly crucial. In the war that continues to be fought for the Bible, the battle for Genesis is a major campaign. If skeptics and modernists win the battle for Genesis, the war for the Bible will be over. Therefore, all who would be dutiful in the defense of the faith must realize that the defense starts at the beginning with the book of Genesis” (*Studies in Genesis*, iv).

The late and lamented Franklin Camp observed, “If Genesis one is a myth, what about Matthew one?”

Jesus believed in the Genesis account as being historically accurate, reliable and dependable. He accepted the creation account in Genesis 1 and 2 (Matthew 19:4-5). He believed Moses’ account of the Flood (Luke 17:26-28). The apostle Paul based his argument for the subjection of woman to man on the account of the Fall in Genesis 3 (1 Timothy 2:11-15). The apostle Peter bears testimony to the accuracy of the Flood account (1 Peter 3:20). The beloved apostle John is in harmony with the creation account as he says in the Book of Revelation that Jesus is “the beginning of the creation” (3:14). If one is raising questions about the trust-worthiness of Genesis 1-11, he is also questioning

the trustworthiness of God, Christ and the apostles, and the entirety of the Bible. Think on this statement from the pen of Gary Workman:

“Adam is mentioned by name in three Old Testament books (Deuteronomy, Job, 1 Chronicles), and Noah is mentioned in three (1 Chronicles, Isaiah, Ezekiel). There are over 200 references to Genesis in the New Testament, over 100 of which are from Genesis 1-11. In fact, each of these eleven chapters is quoted or alluded to somewhere in the New Testament. And, every New Testament writer refers to this section of Genesis. Even Jesus himself referred to each of the first seven chapters of Genesis, and neither he nor any New Testament writer viewed those narratives as anything other than pure history” (*Difficult Texts of the Old Testament Explained*, 192).

It is our fervent prayer that the teaching found in the lecture book this year will show the harmony of the Bible in all its books and parts; that each chapter will give evidence to increase your faith in the Godhead, and that every word said and written on this lecture program will be as consistent in doctrine as the Bible itself.

Emanuel Daugherty, Faculty, Lecture Committee Member

Table of Contents

Dedication	ix
Forward	xi
Introduction	xiii
Man: Ape-Like Creature or Made in the Image of God? <i>Dr. Brad Harrub</i>	1
The Genesis Flood— Global or Local <i>Matt Thomas</i>	21
Genesis 1–11: Doctrinal Foundations of Bible <i>W. Terry Varner</i>	35
What Does It Really Matter? An Investigation into Theistic Evolution <i>Dr. Brad Harrub</i>	51
The Character and Nature of God <i>Phil Grear</i>	71
The Wonderful Creation <i>Jefferson Sole</i>	79
The Fall of Man <i>J. D. Conley</i>	89

Evolution, Fact or Fiction	105
<i>Dr. Brad Harrub</i>	
Noah’s Salvation and Ours Genesis 6–9; 1 Peter 3:18–2	119
<i>Adam Blaney</i>	
Current Attacks on Genesis 1–11	135
<i>Dan Kessinger</i>	
God’s Grace in Genesis 1–11	153
<i>D. Gene West</i>	
Walking With God	171
<i>J. McAnulty</i>	
The Days of Genesis 1	187
<i>Dr. Brad Harrub</i>	
Sanctity of Life in Genesis 1–11	205
<i>Andy Robison</i>	
In the Beginning	223
<i>Dr. Dave Miller</i>	
Noah’s Ark and Hermeneutics	243
<i>Rodney Nulph</i>	
Man’s Dominion and Stewardship of the Earth Genesis 1:28–30	253
<i>Emanuel Daugherty</i>	
Militant Atheism	267
<i>Dr. Dave Miller</i>	

The Godhead in Creation	283
<i>Dr. Charles Aebi</i>	
The Tower of Babel	297
Eve a Helper for Adam	305
<i>Dr. Dave Miller</i>	
Marriage as God Designed It	317
<i>Denver E. Cooper</i>	
How Then Ought We to Live?	329
<i>Craig Matheny</i>	
Did God Create Evil?	337
<i>Charles Pugh III</i>	
Redemption in Genesis 1-11	357
<i>Terry Jones</i>	
Has God Really Said?	365
<i>Glen Hawkins</i>	
Genesis, Myth or History?	375
<i>Dr. Dave Miller</i>	
Jealousy and Murder	389
<i>Ben Jones</i>	
Jesus in Genesis 1-11	403
<i>Frank Higginbotham</i>	
Scripture Index	437

Man: Ape-Like Creature or Made in the Image of God?

Brad Harrub, Ph.D.



Dr. Brad Harrub serves as the Executive Director and cofounder of Focus Press and as co-editor of *THINK* magazine. He also is a co-host on the television show “Think About It.” and serves as an adjunct faculty member at the Bear Valley Bible Institute in Denver.

Introduction

She’s only in the sixth grade. But already at the tender age of twelve, this young girl has seen the classic image that shows a monkey on one end and a human at the other, with all kinds of transitional creatures in-between. The ape-like creature is shown walking on all fours, and eventually this series shows the creature evolving an upright stance and possessing biped location like modern man. She has also viewed pictures of ape-like men on the cover of news magazines lying around her house. The artists’ reconstructions are in full color, show fine details, and look as if someone walked out into the bush-land of Africa and greeted these alleged “missing links” in person. Given the artists’ images and the important sounding scientific names (most of which she can’t pronounce), this young lady accepts it as true. And little by little, her worldview is reshaped away from a beginning in which God created Adam and Eve to a beginning that had ape-like creatures roaming the continent of Africa millions of years ago. Without her consciously knowing it, that single shift has already begun to erode her faith.

Where did man come from and does it matter? The evolutionary theory demands that man evolved his way up from

some common ancestor, whereas God's Word indicates man was the pinnacle of God's creation. Evolution presupposes that death brought man into the world. The creation model indicates that man brought death into the world. Both cannot be correct. Because of the over-abundance of propaganda supporting creatures like Neanderthal man, Lucy, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus*, many assume that there is no question regarding the origin of mankind. Having viewed images in textbooks, popular magazines, and news accounts, many individuals—including Christians—assume there is no debate. As such, many Christians have tried to mesh the evolution of man into God's Word, never realizing that their compromise is incompatible with the text found in the Bible. (e.g., In Mark 10:6 Jesus said: “But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female.” The indication being that man was around from the beginning of creation.)

In the Genesis creation account, the Bible describes that all land dwelling creatures were created on day six, with man being the pinnacle of God's creation. In chapter 2 of that same book, Moses describes the creation of man and woman in detail informing readers “and the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). In verse 20 of that same chapter we find Adam giving names to “all cattle, to the birds of the air, to every beast of the field,” indicating that he possessed the intelligence to name them and understand instructions from God. The Darwinian theory describes man evolving from some primordial soup, initially carrying a club and living in a cave with not much intelligence. These two theories of origins could not be more diametrically opposed. So which is correct?

The Evidence

Scientific knowledge regarding the origin and antiquity of man is primarily based on fossil discoveries made by anthropologists, such as the world-famous Leakey family. Scientists would uncover fossilized bone fragments and then speculate as to what features the original creature possessed and

precisely where it fit on the evolutionary tree of life. Each new discovery was heralded as a major scientific contribution—no matter how fragmented the fossil, or how few remains were actually discovered. But as more and more fossils were unearthed, many scientists took delight in designating their finds as entirely new species, providing the scientist with the privilege of designating a new scientific name. While being able to name a new “species” of hominid was beneficial to one’s career, the real advantage came in announcing the discovery of the **oldest** upright-walking hominid fossil. The race was on to find the “missing link” that led back to a common ancestor that humans allegedly shared with the apes.

If man evolved from apelike creatures then the fossil record should record the transition from ape to human. Entire books have been written about alleged missing links. But what does the **evidence** really show? While we don't often think of it in this manner, creationists and evolutionists have the exact same evidence or data. The question becomes how we interpret that data and what biases we bring into that interpretation. A fossil can tell a scientist only so much. It can obviously tell scientists that the creature is now dead. But much of what is presented in textbooks and secular magazines goes beyond the true knowledge into the realm of speculation. For instance, fossils do not shed light on how much hair an alleged apelike creature would possess. Additionally, fossils do not shed light on skin color, eye-color, or intelligence.

Given the frequency that alleged missing links are reported in the media, many are lead to believe that there are numerous fossilized remains that support the gradual evolution from apes to humans. The truth, however, is that the human fossil record is still amazingly sparse. John Reader, author of the book *Missing Links*, wrote in *New Scientist*, “The entire hominid collection known today would barely cover a billiard table” (89:802). Lyall Watson, writing in *Science Digest*, further admitted: “The fossils that decorate our family tree are so scarce that there are still more scientists than specimens. The remarkable fact is that all the physical evidence we have for human evolution can still be placed, with room to spare, **inside a single coffin**” (44, emp.

added). While discoveries have been found since these statements were made, the point is still abundantly clear—missing links are still missing.

The saying that “a picture is worth a thousand words” should not be overlooked in this controversy. Often times textbooks or magazines present images that appear as if a photographer walked out into the African bush country and took a picture of these apelike creatures, when in reality the image is simply an artist’s interpretation—usually built from a few bone fragments and a couple of teeth. For instance, the October 2008 cover story of *National Geographic* was titled “The Last of the Neanderthals.” The brutish images of these alleged missing links captivated the eye and painted the story *National Geographic* was trying to sell. Inside that issue staff writer Stephan Hall posed the question of why they vanished and then laid the blame at the feet of modern man. (See <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2008/10/neanderthals/hall-text>). One should not fail to notice that many of the fossils for these alleged creatures come from several different locations, having been collected over a period of years. Bone fragments are then glued together, a scientific illustrator is called in, and speculations and assumptions are made on the general anatomy and appearance of the creature.

Unfortunately students are never told that most of these “missing links” prominently displayed in textbooks are really “artists’ interpretations.” Oftentimes from just a few bone fragments and teeth, a totally new “missing link” is derived. Even then, many of these have been discredited through the years. For instance, consider the following alleged missing links in evolution’s “Hall of Shame”:

Nebraska Man—This alleged missing link was featured on the front cover of the June 24, 1922, issue of the *Illustrated London News* from an artist’s interpretation of a man and woman. What was the evidence for this missing link? A single tooth received by Henry Fairfield Osborn, head of the department of vertebrate paleontology at New York’s American Museum of Natural History. Osborn was a Marxist and a prominent member of the American Civil Liberties Union, and he believed the tooth would

serve as prominent evidence for a test case for evolution. Osborn felt the best showcase would be a trial held in 1925 at Dayton, Tennessee (and became known as the Scopes “Monkey Trial”). The trial was an arranged affair in an effort to promote evolution, but the tooth was never brought into evidence, as there was dissension among those familiar with it.

Again, this alleged missing link was completely “manufactured” from **one tooth**. An artist engaged in a great deal of creative license and created this creature (and his family) from that single tooth. After much controversy a further search was made at Snake Creek (the site of the original discovery), and in 1927 it was concluded that the tooth belonged to a species of *Prosthennops*, an extinct genus of a wild pig. Although the truth of this discovery did not make front-page headlines, it did appear in *Science* (see Gregory, 579). The 14th edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1929, p. 767) admitted the mistake, revealing that the tooth belonged to a “being of another order.” Creationist Duane Gish observed: “This was the first time a pig made a monkey of an evolutionist” (188).

Pitldown Man—For more than forty years, this fossil find was touted as “the missing link” that connected humans with the apes. Textbooks were published teaching multiple generations that this discovery—from archaeological site in Pitldown, England, between 1908 and 1912—was evidence for evolution. The only problem was that it was a complete **fraud!** Many prominent scientists like Sir Arthur Smith Woodward, Sir Arthur Keith, and Grafton Elliot Smith proclaimed this discovery genuine. So exactly how did these bone fragments fool some the best scientific minds of the time? Perhaps the men were blinded by the desire to be part of a “great discovery.” Forty years after it was announced, it was discovered that scientists had taken a modern human skull and combined it with the jawbone of an orangutan (even filing down the back teeth of the orangutan to make them look more humanlike). They dipped the whole thing in acid to give it an aged appearance and presented it to the world as our “missing ancestor.” Sadly, someone had even buried a tooth fragment from an elephant molar, a tooth from a hippopotamus

and a canine tooth from a chimpanzee fossil to make the Piltdown quarry where this alleged fossil man was discovered appear more significant! In 1953, Piltdown Man was exposed as a forgery and the truth became public knowledge.

***Australopithecus afarensis*—Lucy**

On November 30, 1974, Donald Johansson and graduate student Tom Gray loaded up in a Land Rover and headed out to plot an area of Hadar, Ethiopia, known as Locality 162. There they unearthed a fossilized skeleton that was nearly 40% complete. Dr. Johansson named his discovery *Australopithecus afarensis* meaning “the southern ape from Ethiopia's Afar depression in northeastern Ethiopia.” The creature earned the nickname “Lucy” from the Beatles song “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds” that was playing in the camp the night of the discovery. While there was a great deal of pomp and circumstance offered by the mainstream media when Lucy was first announced, her star does not shine as brightly today. In fact, having over 20 years to examine the fossils, there are several problems wrong with Lucy. For instance:

A. *She has curved fingers and ape-like limb proportions* (see Stern and Susman, 1983, *J. Phy. Anthropol.*, 60:280) that point toward her being an ape.

B. *She has locking wrists—a trait identified in quadrupeds* (see Richmond & Strait, 2000, *Nature*, 404:382-385). Maggie Fox reported in the March 29, 2000, *San Diego Union Tribune*: “A chance discovery made by looking at a cast of the bones of ‘Lucy,’ the most famous fossil of *Australopithecus afarensis*, shows her wrist is stiff, like a chimpanzee’s, Brian Richmond and David Strait of George Washington University in Washington, D.C., reported. This suggests that her ancestors walked on their knuckles” (Fox, “Man’s Early Ancestors Were Knuckle Walkers,” 2000, Quest Section, March 29.).

C. *The microwear on the teeth indicate this creature was tree fruit eater* (see Johanson and Edey, 1981, p. 358). Alan Walker, a professor of anthropology and biology at Penn State University, believes he might be able to reconstruct ancient diets from paleontological samples. In speaking of Alan

Walker's material, Johanson noted:

Dr. Alan Walker of Johns Hopkins has recently concluded that the polishing effect he finds on the teeth of robust australopithecines and modern chimpanzees indicates that australopithecines, like chimps, were fruit eaters.... If they were primarily fruit eaters, as Walker's examination of their teeth suggests they were, then our picture of them, and of the evolutionary path they took, is wrong (Johanson and Edey, 358).

D. *Lucy's rib cage is conical like an ape's, not barrel shaped like a human's* (see Leakey and Lewin, 1992 193-194). Peter Schmid, a paleontologist at the Anthropological Institute in Zurich, Switzerland, received a replica of Lucy and noted,

When I started to put the skeleton together, I expected it to look human. Everyone had talked about Lucy being very modern. Very human. So I was surprised by what I saw. I noticed that the ribs were more round in cross section. More like what you see in apes. Human ribs are flatter in cross section. But the shape of the ribcage itself was the biggest surprise of all. The human ribcage is barrel shaped. And I just couldn't get Lucy's ribs to fit this kind of shape. But I could get them to make a conical shaped ribcage, like what you see in apes (Peter Schmid as quoted in Leakey and Lewin, *Origins Reconsidered*, 1992 193-194).

E. *The semicircular canals of Australopithecines resemble an ape's, not a human's or a transitional creature's* (see Spoor et al., 1994, *Nature*, 369:645-648).

F. *The pelvis of Lucy is not large enough to give birth leaving one to wonder if she is really a "he" ["Lucy or Lucifer?"]* (see Hausler and Schmid, 1995, *J. Human Evol.* 29:363-383).

This doesn't stop textbooks or museums from perpetuating the lie. For instance, at the "Living World" located in the Saint Louis Zoo they have built a shrine to Charles Darwin. As you walk into the "Introduction to the Animals" hall, you are immediately confronted by a life-size animatronic version of Charles Darwin. The area also features a life-size replica of the alleged *Australopithecus afarensis* (Lucy) proclaiming: "This life-sized model shows a likely ancient ancestor of the human family." However, there were never any feet or hand fossils discovered. The question becomes how can they be so sure about what this creature looked like? According to David Menton from Washington University, the statue is "a complete misrepresentation. And I believe they know it is a misrepresentation." When asked how in good conscience they could display a creature possessing feet and hands without fossilized evidence, Bruce L Carr, the zoo's director of education, declared, "Zoo officials have no plans to knuckle under. We cannot be updating every exhibit based on every new piece of evidence. We look at the overall exhibit and the impression it creates. We think the overall impression this exhibit creates is correct." (*St. Louis Post Dispatch*, July 22, 1996, p. 1). In other words, the impression supports evolution—let's just forget what the evidence shows. Donald Johansson admitted:

There is no such thing as a total lack of bias. I have it; everybody has it. The fossil hunter in the field has it.... In everybody who is looking for hominids there is a strong urge to learn more about where the human line started. If you are working back at around three million, as I was, that is very seductive, because you begin to get an idea that that is where *Homo* did start. You begin straining your eyes to find *Homo* traits in fossils of that age.... Logical, maybe, but also biased. **I was trying to jam evidence of dates into a pattern that would support conclusions about fossils which, on closer inspection, the fossils themselves would not sustain** (Johanson and Edey, 1981 257, 258, emp. added).

He went on to state: “It is hard for me now to admit how tangled in that thicket I was. But the insidious thing about bias is that it does make one deaf to the cries of other evidence” (277).

Most young people are familiar with the image that depicts an ape at one end and a human at the other—with all kinds of intermediates in-between. Students are asked to memorize their names and the period in which they allegedly lived. While the pictures sell a convincing story, the facts prove otherwise. Few students learn how many different locations the bones were collected from, how many bone fragments are included, and how many alleged missing links are simply variations of known species. Consider these examples:

Neanderthal Man—Neanderthal man is one of the most well-known of all the alleged missing links. While most people have heard of this alleged creature, many are quite unaware that at the International Congress of Zoology (1958), Dr. A. J. E. Cave said that his examination of the famous Neanderthal skeleton found in France over 50 years ago proved that it was an old man who suffered from arthritis. Consider that most of the Neanderthal fossils have been “discovered” in European countries that don’t get a great deal of sunlight. Humans utilize sunlight to make sufficient quantities of vitamin D. In turn, vitamin D aids in the absorption of calcium to maintain strong bones. A deficiency of vitamin D leads to bone disorders and would reconcile perfectly with the fossils found in that particular region. In fact, most of the alleged Neanderthal fossils are easily explained by skeletal variations (still common in humans today) and bone disorders such as rickets or arthritis. After examining the famous Neanderthal skull, Dr. Cuozzo said, “You must understand that this skull really cries out disease. The teeth are badly decayed, and the bones of the vault of the skull are extremely thick. There are many features that testify...of acromegaly or excess secretion of growth hormone in adulthood...” (1998, p. 72). Bone variation from sickness does not prove organic evolution.

Java Man—This discovery was made by Dutch anatomist Eugene Dubois. In 1887, Dubois journeyed to the former Dutch Indies, working as a health officer. A childhood interest in geology and paleontology led him to search for fossils in Sumatra and Java. Once in Java Dubois supervised the collection of more than 12,000 fossil fragments around the mountain of Lawu. His discovery unearthed fossils from fish to elephants to hippopotami; however, fossils of “early humans” were conspicuously absent. By 1890 Dubois had focused his attention on the banks of Solo near the village Trinil. In a bend of this river, excavators discovered a human-like fossilized tooth in September 1891. After removing about 10,000 cubic meters of dirt, workers uncovered the tooth (September 1891), then later a skull cap (October 1891). The fossilized skullcap was thick and had a cranial capacity revealing that its brains could be only half as big as the brain of a modern human. Initially Dubois believed that the fossils belonged to a large, extinct chimpanzee. A year later he discovered a femur (August 1892) about fifteen meters upstream, and then one more tooth (October 1892). Unlike the ape-like skull, the femur possessed human-like characteristics. Dubois recognized this bone belonged to an upright-walking creature. And he mistakenly attributed the teeth, skullcap, and femur to one individual—an upright-walking specimen of an extinct species he dubbed as *Anthropopithecus erectus* (i.e., the erect-walking, human-like anthropoid). Thirty-five years later, it was revealed that the femur is human and that the skullcap was from a giant gibbon (monkey)!

Rhodesian Man—Found in a zinc mine in 1921, this fossil was displayed prominently in the British Museum of Natural History. The find consisted of the bones of three or four family members: a man, a woman, and one or two children. The fossils were originally discovered and dug out by a mining company, not by an experienced scientist, so a great deal remains unknown about the circumstances of the death and lifestyle of their owners. Upon reaching the British Museum of Natural History, the first staff member to examine the bones was Sir Arthur Smith-Woodward. This was the same scientist who earned fame as the co-discoverer

of what has since become known as one of the most blatant scientific frauds of modern times—Piltdown Man. Museum employees unfamiliar with human anatomy reconstructed this “ape-man.” The hipbones were smashed, and W.P. Pycraft, one of the Museum’s ornithologists (a specialist in birds) and “assistant keeper” of the Museum’s department of zoology, was placed in charge of the reconstruction of Rhodesian Man’s bones. Why would a **bird** specialist be assigned to reconstruct **human** remains? Pycraft fashioned the fossil as stooped over, and scientists named it *Cyphanthropus* (nickname: “stooping man”). The facial bones compelled Smith-Woodward to admit they possessed “very human characteristics” in his own paper written in 1921 for *Nature*. Many years later after the hipbones were re-examined, “Rhodesian Man” was shown to be nothing more than a modern man.

Ardipithecus ramidus kadabba—*The front cover of the July 23, 2001, issue of Time proclaimed somewhat authoritatively, “How Apes Became Humans,” and asserted that a new Ardipithecus hominid discovery reveals to scientists “how our oldest ancestors stood on two legs and made an evolutionary leap.” Named Ardipithecus ramidus kadabba, meaning “the ground root basal ancestor of humanity,” this creature was dated at 5.8-5.2 million years old (using evolutionary dating methods). However, on page 57, staff writers Michael Lemonick and Andrea Dorfman admit that the discoverers of the fossils under discussion, Yohannes Haile-Selassie and his colleagues, “haven’t collected enough bones yet to reconstruct with great precision what kadabba looked like” (1999). One wonders why they would put an image on the cover of Time and also in a two page spread if researchers had not collected enough bones to reconstruct what this creature looked like with great precision? This admission underscores that the majority of what was presented in this article was made up from an artist’s imagination and speculation. So what evidence exists for this alleged fossil man? The scientists admit: “We found these bones over a period of five years from five different locations.” Exactly what did they find? Researchers unearthed a fragment of a right mandible (jawbone), one intermediate hand phalanx (finger bone), a fragmented left humerus and ulna. They*

also found a proximal foot phalanx (toe bone), and a few teeth. Over five years, in five different locations!

The Time magazine article has the toe bone highlighted with the caption, “This toe bone proves the creature walked on two legs.” There are 26 bones in the human foot—yet they have only one. But that one toe bone is all that is needed in order to get this creature upright and walking. Consider an admission made by the authors regarding this single toe bone: “...not only is it separated in time by several hundred thousand years, but it was also found some 10 miles away from the rest” (61). So ten miles away researchers dug up a toe bone and placed it together with this collection of bone fragments. They then had the audacity to proclaim, “This toe bone proves the creature walked on two legs.” Are we expecting logical people to believe this is a missing link? Quote: “If you brought in a smart scientist from another discipline and showed him the meager evidence we’ve got he’d surely say, ‘Forget it; there isn’t enough to go on.’” (David Pilbeam, *The Making Of Mankind* 43)

And this is literally just the tip of the iceberg. A close inspection of the fossil record proves that it relies heavily on speculation and it provides no real support to the idea that men evolved from ape-like creatures. So what does the fossil record show us? I’m going to let writer Jeremy Rifkin describe it, because he characterized it quite well. Rifkin noted:

What the “record” shows is nearly a century of fudging and finagling by scientists attempting to force various fossil morsels and fragments to conform with Darwin’s notions, all to no avail. Today the millions of fossils stand as very visible, ever-present reminders of the paltriness of the arguments and the overall shabbiness of the theory that marches under the banner of evolution. (Jeremy Rifkin, *Algeny*, p. 125).

Racism and the Fossil Record

If the evolutionary theory of “survival of the fittest” is correct, then the animals living today are “the fittest.” In essence, this godless theory teaches we get better over time. Now apply this

theory to mankind. According to evolutionists, mankind evolved out of Africa and eventually migrated to Europe and Asia. **And yet, how does every single form of media portray early “Neanderthal”-like creatures?** Has *National Geographic* ever depicted an “early man” or ape-like creature with fair skin? The common theory being taught in classrooms today is that dark skinned people evolved out of Africa and eventually gave rise to fair skinned populations in Europe and Asia. **A cursory glance will quickly reveal that early man is always depicted with dark skin.** Mankind supposedly got “fitter” and “lost” that color. Allegedly, Caucasians evolved from the Negroid race—thus, fair skinned people are allegedly a more evolved, and thus, superior race.

Now consider that this is the only legalized theory of human origins in public classrooms today. Students all across America are being shown images of dark skinned ape-like creatures that supposedly paved the way for white men. Ironic, is it not, that the ACLU, an organization that is supposed to advocate “individual rights by litigating, legislating, and educating the public,” is defending a theory that undermines the core of their mission. The ACLU is defending an atheistic theory that by its very definition demands that there is an inferior race.

On college campuses all across this country, Charles Darwin’s infamous *Origin of Species* has become a staple of required reading. But how many people are aware of the full title of Charles Darwin’s book? While new editions have deleted the subtitle, Darwin’s original work was titled *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection—or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. The phrase “favored race” implies that there is a race that is not favored. In his second book, *The Descent of Man*, Darwin noted:

At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace the savage races throughout the world.... The break between man and his nearest Allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilized state, as we may hope, even than the

Caucasian, and some ape as low as the baboon, instead of as now between the Negro or Australian and the gorilla (178 2nd ed).

Evolutionist Thomas Huxley, Darwin's famous "bulldog" observed:

No rational man, cognizant of the facts, believes that the average Negro is the equal, still less the superior, of the white man. And if this be true, it is simply incredible that, when all his disabilities are removed, and our prognathous relative has a fair field and no favor, as well as no oppressor, he will be able to compete successfully with his bigger-brained and smaller-jawed rival, in a contest which is to be carried out on by thoughts and not by bites (*Lay Sermons, Addresses and Reviews*, New York: Appleton, 1871 20).

More than fifty years after Darwin released *The Origin of Species*, paleontologist Henry Fairfield Osborn remarked:

The Negroid stock is even more ancient than the Caucasian and Mongolian, as may be proved by an examination not only of the brain, of the hair, of the bodily characters.... The standard of intelligence of the average Negro is similar to that of the eleven-year-old youth of the species *Homo sapiens* ("The Evolution of the Human Races," *Natural History*, 1980, April 89:129; reprinted from *Natural History*, 1926).

While modern day Darwinians would argue that this belief reflects an ancient philosophy, the tenets remain steadfast today. Consider a book released in 2004 titled *Race: The Reality of Human Differences*, in which the authors categorized people according to race, thereby reinforcing the contemporary ideas of racial hierarchy. There can be no doubt; public schools are teaching our children that there is a dark skinned inferior race, as well as a fair skinned superior race. By mandating evolution in

the classroom, we are reinforcing the ideals of racism in the hearts and minds of young people.

Could we have all come from Adam and Eve?

The human genome project demonstrated different populations of humans share 99.9% similar genetic content. We know today that skin color is caused by a biological pigment known as melanin. The amount of melanin in the skin is determined by the genetic endowment of our parents. Knowing this, geneticists have come along and used special letter combinations to designate how much melanin someone has in their skin (e.g., AABB). For instance, a capital “A” and “B” indicate dominant genes— which can produce large quantities of melanin. Whereas a small “a” and “b” indicate recessive genes — which are unable to produce quite as much melanin. Thus, the designation AABB = **darkest** skin possible, and aabb = *lightest* skin possible.

Using this information, we can build a punnet square to tell us the “genes” (and color) of the offspring. So is it possible to take two people (say Adam and Eve) and explain all of the beautiful colors we see around us today?

AABB x AABB = AABB If Adam and Eve were both very dark skinned all of their children would be very dark skinned.

aabb x aabb = aabb If Adam and Eve were both very light skinned then all of their children would be very light skinned.

However, if God had created Adam and Eve with a mixture (AaBb), say a beautiful “mocha” color, the following possibilities would result:

	AB	Ab	aB	ab
AB	AA BB	AA Bb	Aa BB	Aa Bb
Ab	AA Bb	AA bb	Aa Bb	Aa bb
aB	Aa BB	Aa Bb	aa BB	aa Bb
ab	Aa Bb	Aa bb	aa Bb	aa bb

We can get all of these possibilities from just two individuals. And yet eight walked off of Noah's ark. Is it possible to explain the rainbow of colors we see around us today using God's Word? Definitely!

An Imaginary and Fragmented Evolutionary Tree of Life

Organic evolution teaches that all creatures evolved from a common ancestor. As such, textbooks are quick to show elegant pictures of the evolutionary tree of life. In an interview with Jonathan Wells, author of *Icons of Evolution*, he remarked:

One [icon] they will certainly see, because you can't teach Darwinism without it, is the evolutionary Tree of Life. That is the branching trees diagram that supposedly shows how all living things are descended with modification from a common ancestor. That's the root of the tree. So, you see, in any biology textbook you will see a version of this, purportedly showing how all the animals descended from this organism or all the mammals descended from that or all the horses or something like that. These trees are without exception hypothetical. They are really just restatements of Darwin's theory in pictorial form. What you have is a series of fossils or living organisms so you

draw lines between them to show how they are related to one another. That's where the hypothesis starts and the evidence ends" (personal interview).

A close inspection of the fossil record proves that it relies heavily on speculation and it provides no real support to the idea that men evolved from ape-like creatures. The alleged missing links can be easily assigned to one of two categories: ape or man. No amount of artist's interpretation or imagination is going to change that.

Conclusion

Consider the worldview that is currently molding the beliefs of future generations. The constant barrage of speculations that men evolved from ape-like creatures begins very early in life and it never recedes. By early adolescence, most children already have a subconscious image of early man as a dumb, club-carrying, long-armed creature living in a cave. High school science books reinforce this notion with pictures of Neanderthal man, and by college most students have accepted this evolutionary progression of man as fact. As such, man's existence and his status in the universe are placed on a level just slightly above the animals. The current generation views man as little more than an educated ape who arrived here by chance. All of our actions and behaviors are now viewed simply as "carry-overs" from our ape-like ancestors. With fragmentary skulls of the alleged missing links in hand, evolutionists smile as they permanently remove any lingering doubts about a possible Supernatural Creator.

However, when one clears away the smoke and mirrors to closely examine the available evidence and bone fragments that allegedly make up the evolutionary tree of life, it becomes obvious that there are many factors that this theory cannot explain. In teaching our children about the existence of these alleged missing links, we need to remind them that evolution cannot explain:

- How life arose from non-living material
- Why humans laugh or cry or the emotion of love
- The origin of sex and gender (males and females)

- The origin of language and communication
- Why humans help one another (i.e., charity and altruistic acts)
- The origin of the human consciousness

In examining where man came from, it is important to remember the first five words in God’s Word—“In the beginning God created.” For indeed, man’s existence, intelligence, artistic expression, compassion, and sense of morality only make sense in light of the creative activities of an Intelligent Designer. It is apparent from the text of Genesis 1 and 2 that the creation of man differed markedly from that of all other life on earth. A quick examination of the text reveals that a divine conference preceded the forming of man. God said, “Let *Us* make man in *Our* image, after *Our* likeness” (Genesis 1:26, emp. added). Such never is said of the birds, fish, or creeping things. As Feinberg noted:

...[M]an is the apex of all creation. Man’s creation by God comes as the last and highest phase of God’s creative activity.... Now there is counsel or deliberation in the Godhead. No others can be included here, such as angels, for none has been even intimated thus far in the narrative. Thus the creation of man took place not by a word alone, but as the result of a divine decree (1972 238).

Does it really matter whether man evolved from some ape-like creature or was made in the image and likeness of God? It does when we examine the evidence and recognize that we will one day stand before the Creator in whose image we were created. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Brad Harrub holds an earned B.S. degree in biology from Kentucky Wesleyan College, and an earned doctorate degree in anatomy and neurobiology from the College of Medicine at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. He was listed in Who’s

Who Among Scientists and Researchers. He is the author of *Convicted: A Scientist examines the Evidence for Christianity*, *Heart of the Matter*, *Dissecting the Truth*, and the co-author of the books, *The Truth About Human Origins*, *Investigating Christian Evidences*, *Matters of Life and Death*, *Diamonds in the Rough: Nuggets of Truth from God's Word* and has written many tracts and articles for brotherhood journals. He is a popular speaker on Christian Evidences at Lectureships, youth rallies, etc. in over 47 states and five different continents. He conducts over 40 "Truth About Origins" weekend seminars each year. In addition, he was an invited speaker to the International Conference on Creationism, and he has appeared on the television show "Origins."

In addition to his authoring and co-authoring numerous scientific publications in science journals, Dr. Harrub has done mission work in Russia, Ukraine, New Zealand, Ireland, Jamaica and Nicaragua. Currently, he serves as the Executive Director and cofounder of Focus Press and as co-editor of *THINK* magazine, a monthly magazine on Christian evidences. In addition, he is a co-host on the television show "Think About It." Dr. Harrub also serves as an adjunct faculty member at the Bear Valley Bible Institute in Denver. He and his wife Melinda attend the Woodson Chapel Church of Christ in Nashville, TN. They have four children: Will (11), Reese (9), Claire (6), and Luke (3).

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The Genesis Flood— Global or Local

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Introduction

I am grateful to be a part of this fine lectureship. It is my hope that a greater knowledge of the subject of this lecture be obtained, so that a greater faith may be imparted to the hearer, and salvation will come from that faith.

The Bible records in Genesis 6-9 the account of a Great Flood which occurred during the days of a man named Noah. With the exception of the Creation account of Genesis 1-3, and perhaps the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the Flood account has created more controversy than perhaps any other narrative in the Sacred Writings. It has not simply been ignored, but rather has become a lightning rod of sustained, concentrated attacks by many modern geologists and anthropologists who vehemently rebuke the notion that a Global Flood occurred as stated in the Book of Genesis. Many theologians have followed suit, raising suspicion over the authenticity of the Flood account, while believing other acts of Divine intervention in Scripture. Such skepticism has even crept into the minds of many in the Lord's church.

Let us establish that Bible-believing Christians have no quarrel with geologic *science*. It is against the *historical* geologists that we have taken a stand, who have based their understanding of geologic history on the assumption of uniformitarianism. According to Dr. John Whitcomb and Dr.

Henry Morris in their distinguished work *The Genesis Flood*, “Uniformitarianism is the belief that present existing physical processes account for all past changes and for the present state of the universe, denying the possibility of any miraculous suspension or alteration of those processes by their Creator,” (Intro, xx). The doctrine of a Biblical Flood asserts that at least on the occasions mentioned in Scripture, God has directly intervened in the normal processes of the universe, causing significant changes to the earth. Whitcomb and Morris point out that though uniformitarianism is based on the assumption of long ages and gradual changes which contrast Biblical teaching, “such miraculous intervention acquires significance only against the backdrop of a pattern of uniformity,” (Intro xxi). That is, it is the normal processes which make divine intervention particularly special.

By and large, the doctrine of divine intervention has been “thrown under the bus” by the scientific community, primarily because it poses a threat to the doctrine of evolution, which is the crown jewel of uniformitarianism. Whitcomb and Morris arose to meet the challenge,

“The so-called historical geology...has not changed or developed...since the days when its basic philosophical structure was first worked out by such non-geologists as Charles Lyell (a lawyer), William Smith (a surveyor), James Hutton (an agriculturalist), John Playfair (a mathematician), George Cuvier (a comparative anatomist), Charles Darwin (an apostate divinity student turned naturalist), and various theologians (Buckland, Fleming, Pye Smith, and Sedgwick),” (Preface xxvii).

Their point? If non-geologists were allowed to develop the standard for historical geology, then non-geologists ought to be allowed to critique it, especially since it has profoundly influenced nearly every aspect of modern life, and has fostered a nearly universal rejection of the historicity of Genesis, through which it has accosted the foundation of Christianity in general.

Though we will be limited here in presenting all the evidence for and against a global flood, the following will give an adequate framework for understanding the debate, and for concluding that the flood as recorded in Genesis did occur, and that it was global in nature.

Why Does It Matter Whether the Flood was Global or Local?

Why has the Flood become such a hotbed of controversy? Why does it matter? In short, the answer is this. Many in the scientific community have staked their life's research - not to mention their very lives - on a uniformitarian (evolutionary) understanding of historical geology. Thompson notes, "Those who oppose a worldwide Flood have defended publicly the standard geologic timetable inherent in the evolutionary model of origins. They understand all too well that they cannot advocate an ancient Earth based upon the timetable while consistently maintaining a belief in a universal Flood," (8). Dr. Henry Morris spoke even more directly, "The geologic ages concept and a worldwide devastating Flood logically cannot coexist" (116:a, August). Acclamation of one denies the credibility of the other! Moses, the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Lord Himself upheld the flood account as literal.

Morris captured the importance of the debate in one paragraph,

“...the entire structure of evolutionary historical geology rests squarely upon the assumption of uniformity, and the scientific basis of the theory of evolution is almost entirely grounded on the testimony of historical geology. And in turn the theory of evolution has been made the basis of all the godless philosophies that are plaguing the world today and in particular is the spearhead of attack against Biblical Christianity” (44).

I agree with Whitcomb and Morris that “historical geologists attempt to usurp all authority in this profoundly important field of the origin and history of the earth and its inhabitants” by monopolizing a worldview based on uniformity (Preface xxvii). An individual's faith in the inerrancy of the Bible stands or falls

with the validity of the flood account of Genesis. And in turn, an individual's soul will stand or fall with it!

Was the Flood Global or Local?

That all of earth's land mass was once completely covered in water is not the point of contention. Even the highest mountains of earth, among them Mt. Everest (29,035 ft.), are found to consist of a limestone bed of marine fossils. Closer to home, in my own experiences atop the Appalachian foothills of Ohio and Indiana, I have collected marine fossils compacted into rock (a.k.a., limestone) that currently fill a box in my office. There are marine fossils covering the vast majority of Earth's landmasses. The debate is whether the Earth was completely covered as a result of the Flood recorded in Genesis 6-9; and whether it was orchestrated supernaturally by the hand of God during the days of Noah. Dr. John D. Morris describes the nature of the flood:

We now know, of course, that the earth has plenty of water to launch a global flood. It has been calculated that if the earth's surface were completely flat, with no high mountains and no deep ocean basins, that water would cover the earth to a depth of about 8,000 feet. But is there enough water to cover a 29,035 foot mountain? The key is to remember that the Flood didn't have to cover the present Earth, but it did have to cover the pre-flood Earth, and the Bible teaches that the flood fully restructured the earth. 'The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished' (2 Peter 3:6). It is gone forever. The earth of today was radically altered by that global event. That Flood accomplished abundant geologic work. Eroding sediments here, redepositing them there, pushing up continents, elevating plateaus, denuding terrains, etc., so that the earth today is quite different from before. Today even mountain ranges rise high above the sea" (*Did Noah's Flood Cover the Himalayan Mountains?* www.answeringenesis.com).

Biblical Evidence for a Global Flood

What the Bible says about the flood matters for several reasons. *First*, if the Bible doesn't claim the flood was global, then there is no point in defending it as such. *Second*, the Bible gives more detail about this catastrophe than any other ancient source. *Third*, the Bible cannot be discredited by the elite as an invalid book of history, as archaeologists are finding the Bible to be increasingly valuable as a guide to the past, with more evidence of its accuracy being dug up every day across "Bible lands."

The Bible Claims the Flood was Global.

All Biblical writers who refer to the flood uphold it as an historical event. They do not apologize for it or pass it off as allegorical - it was accepted at that time as fact. Guy N. Woods remarked, "The Scriptures, in the most detailed fashion, tell us when it began and ended, how long it continued, and why it came. In no other matters are the Sacred Writings more minute . . . regarding the events described."

Let us look first into what the account of Genesis 6-9 affirms. In these four chapters which contain 97 verses, there are no less than 59 references made to the universality of the Flood! Words such as "all," "every," "whole" are used to describe the earth and its inhabitants which succumbed to the deluge. For example, in 6:3 God said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh, yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." Keil and Delitzsch here point out God's reference to "man" as a genus, being described as "flesh," with whom God had become weary (86). In 6:7, God grieved that he had made man, and disclosed His intention to destroy man and beast, creeping things and birds of the air "*from the face of the earth.*" In 6:12-13 we read, "So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said, "The end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth." All flesh had become corrupt, and the end of all flesh was in view, as well as destruction of the

earth. In order to bring this about, "... all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened" (7:11-12). And in 7:19-20 we read, "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered." It is not hard to imagine how the release of water from beneath the ocean floors, coupled with an outpouring of water from the heavens, would have a global impact.

In the Old Testament, in addition to the Genesis account, the flood is mentioned in Job 12:15, "If He withholds the waters, they dry up; if He sends them out, they overwhelm the earth." The Psalmist also remarks, "The Lord sat enthroned at the flood, and the Lord sits as King forever" (29:10). And again in 104:5-9 the Psalmist describes the general history of the flood!

New Testament writers allude to the first eleven chapters of Genesis no less than seventy times—six of these validating the historicity *and* universality of Noah's flood. In a context of world judgment, the Lord said, "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." (Matt. 24:37-39). He affirmed that the flood "took them all away."

According to Peter, the *extent* of the Flood was directly related to the *reason* for the Flood – SIN! Sin was a universal problem, overcoming all but eight who were faithful to God, and whom God preserved in the ark. Sin is a universal problem today also, which will culminate in a global judgment. In presenting a warning to his listeners of an impending universal judgment, the Apostle Peter compares the final days of this earth to those before the coming of the flood. Mockers of his day charged, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation" (2 Peter 3:3-4). Peter then reminded them of what they willfully wanted to forget, "that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing in water and out of water, by which the

world that then existed perished, being flooded with water...,” (3:5-7). Peter argued that things have *not* continued as they were from the beginning of creation, that there was an abrupt change in Earth’s history, namely, a worldwide flood that wiped out every living thing on earth, except those mentioned in the Flood account, which left the previous world under complete destruction by water. What was the “world that then existed” like? We are not sure. But Peter made a distinction between two worlds, pre-Flood and post-Flood, which is a clue to the massive destruction the Flood brought upon Earth’s surface and to the evidence of a very different world in ancient times. Peter speaks of it being destroyed by a *kataklyzo*, the Greek term for cataclysm, or deluge, which carries the meaning “to wash down.” The earth was suddenly “washed down” in a deluge. He then draws the analogy to the Day of Judgment: “the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men,” (3:7-8). His point is plain: like the earth was destroyed once in judgment by water, it will again be destroyed in judgment by fire – BE READY!

The Genesis flood serves yet another great purpose. Peter said that the flood is a type of Christian baptism! The mode through which salvation comes is analogous to the waters of the Genesis Flood. In 1 Peter 3:20-21, Peter explains that Noah and his family were “saved through water.” Just as the waters separated Noah and his family from the sinful world and lifted them to salvation, even so the waters of baptism are a symbolic grave, separating the believer from the sinful world, and by the grace of God he is “raised” to “walk in newness of life!” (Eph. 2:6; Rom. 6:4). Noah’s faith and obedience worked together in his salvation (Heb. 11:7). Likewise, the believer’s faith and obedience are both necessary for his salvation (Jas. 2:22).

The consistency of these and other Biblical passages attest to the global nature of the Genesis flood.

Extra-biblical Evidence for a Global Flood—Flood Stories are Universal

The account of the Genesis Flood is not the only one of its kind. In fact, researchers have described over 100 flood traditions from Asia, Australia, the Americas, East Africa, Europe, the East Indies and many other places. In his classic work, *Fossils, Flood, and Fire*, Professor Harold W. Clark discussed the fact that flood stories abound in nearly every known culture:

“Preserved in the myths and legends of almost every people on the face of the globe is the memory of the great catastrophe. While myths may not have scientific value, yet they are significant in indicating the fact that an impression was left in the minds of the races of mankind that could not be released.” (45).

Many ancient flood accounts have been “seasoned” with their own details, and their heroes given preferable names. But after the details are stripped away, Thompson notes that there is almost complete agreement on the main points of the accounts. He lists them as follows: “(a) a universal destruction by water of the human race and all other living things occurred; (b) an ark, or boat, was provided as the means of escape for some; and (c) a seed of mankind was provided to perpetuate the human race” (21). F. Furman Kearley summarized it well, “these traditions agree in too many vital points not to have originated from the same factual event” (11).

Fossil Evidence of a Global Flood

It may seem that bone fossilization is a common occurrence, since fossils of different land dwelling animals may be found all over the world. But in fact, fossilization is very rare. Fossilization requires *rapid burial* in just the right conditions in order to preserve a carcass or plant. The normal process of decay claims the vast majority of flesh and bone as it is exposed to carnivores, scavengers, insects, worms, even oxygen. Evolutionary scientist James Powell wrote concerning this subject,

“[I]n the winter after the great Yellowstone fires of 1988, thousands of elk perished from extreme cold coupled with a lack of food. Late the following spring, their carcasses were strewn everywhere. Yet, only a few years later, bones from the great elk kill are scarce. The odds that a single one will be preserved so that it can be found 65 millions years from now approach zero. At best, we can expect to find fossil evidence of only a tiny fraction of the animals that once lived. The earth’s normal processes destroy or hide most of the clues” (Prologue xi).

Human fossil remains are *extremely* scarce, making up an infinitesimal portion of the earth’s fossil record. In a 1981 article from the *New Scientist*, John Reader wrote: “The entire hominid collection known today would barely cover a billiard table,” (89:102). A year later, Lyall Watson, in the same publication, stated: “The fossils that decorate our family tree are so scarce that . . . all the physical evidence we have for human evolution can still be placed, with room to spare, inside a single coffin,” (1982, 90[5]:44). As for dinosaur bones, only about 2100 articulated bones exist (two or more aligned in same position as in life). This may explain why we do not find many instances of human fossils in the same layers as dinosaur fossils - we do not have very many fossils!

However, sometimes large numbers of animals are found grouped together in what appears to be massive graveyards. These fossil graveyards are evidence of a rapid, cataclysmic burial. Most of the fossils are marine. In *The Young Earth*, John D. Morris wrote:

“Ninety-five percent of ... fossils are marine invertebrates, particularly shellfish. Of the remaining 5%, 95% are algae and plant fossils. Ninety-five percent of the remaining 0.25% are other invertebrates including insects. The remaining 0.0125% of fossils include all vertebrates, mostly fish. Ninety-five percent of the few land vertebrates consist of less than one bone . . . The

fossil record is best understood as the results of a marine cataclysm that utterly annihilated the continents and land dwellers,” (70).

I concur with Morris, as do Lyons and Butt who noted, “How interesting to learn that evolutionists explain many of the largest dinosaur graveyards in the world as having been caused by a flood (though they are quick to include words such as “seasonal,” “flash,” “regional,” and the like)” (220-221). Yet, they will not collectively consider a global flood.

The “Geologic Column”

The Geologic “Column” is upheld by many modern geologists as the “authority” and “cornerstone” for interpreting geologic history. It is also known as the Geologic “Time-table.” The column refers to the layers of sedimentary rock, while the timetable refers to the estimated age of the rock. Such a bottom-up progression from very old to very recent, with its respective interpretation from simple to complex implies the theory of organic evolution. Many so-called “facts” today find their interpretation from the geologic column. But it is critical to note that the column we see on paper is not the column of the field. It is an *assumption* based on evolution which leads to circular reasoning. This has been acknowledged for a long time, as geologist R.H. Rastall of Cambridge University conceded in 1956,

“It cannot be denied that from a strictly philosophical standpoint geologists are here arguing in a circle. The succession of organisms has been determined by a study of their remains embedded in the rocks, and the relative ages of the rocks are determined by the remains of organisms that they contain” (168).

In other words, modern geologists date the fossils by the rocks and the rocks by the fossils.

There are many problems with the column. We will mention just a handful. *First*, the rock layers are not uniform at all. Much

of the strata of the Earth is “out of order,” even inverted. And in some cases the fossils appear to be inverted. According to the uniform theory, which requires much time, the sequencing of rock formation on a worldwide scale should be gradual, consistent, and relatively unchanged based upon the rate of current natural processes in motion today. This is not what we see today. But the geologic column has been given a bulletproof vest, its apparent discrepancies being explained by “folding,” “faulting,” or erosion rather than deposition.

Second, sedimentary rocks have been formed through a process of erosion, transportation, deposition, and lithification (hardening). Deposition is the means by which we believe the flood to have laid down the layers of sedimentation, followed by lithification. There is evidence that this has happened on a massive scale in many places of the world. The Grand Canyon is one such place. The Colorado River which runs through it is not an adequate explanation for the “grand” size of the canyon. Brad Harrub notes, “There are over 900 cubic miles of dirt missing from the end of the river.”(46). It is not found downstream, as would be expected in normal erosion, but is altogether missing. The Mississippi River deposits about 300 million cubic yards of sediment into the Gulf of Mexico each year! The Grand Canyon, therefore, is best explained as a giant “washout,” the receding waters of the flood having carried far away its massive amounts of sediment.

Third, and perhaps one of the sharpest daggers to the heart of the geologic column is the presence of polystrate fossils. Polystrates are fossilized trees which extend through several layers of the geologic column, which layers allegedly have been laid down over very long periods of time. The presence of a fossil embedded in multiple layers suggests that the tree was buried rapidly, and that the layers were thrust suddenly into place, creating the right conditions to fossilize the tree in its original upright position. Of course, water and sedimentation of this magnitude point to a very great flood.

Fourth, coal and oil formations give the uniformitarian theory serious challenges. Coal, or “bottled sunshine,” is fossilized carbon-rich plant material. It is formed when large amounts of

foliage are rapidly buried, then “pressurized” and “preserved” as coal. It is usually found many feet below the earth’s surface, and is abundant all over the world. It was once thought that many years were required to form coal. But as recently as the Mount St. Helens volcanic explosion in Washington State in 1980, organic plant material has begun the process of coalification. If the conditions are right, coal can form relatively quickly.

What’s more, how did seams of coal find their way hundreds of feet beneath the surface of the earth? The flood provides an excellent explanation. Ante-deluvian plant life was uprooted in the turbulent waters of the flood, buried in a layer beneath the surface of the deep, and covered by layers of silt and sediments as the waters calmed and eventually receded. The near-universal coal seam points to a universal cataclysm.

Some other areas of study where evidence may be pursued are Anthropology and Racial Distribution, Population Statistics, Erosion Statistics, Oceanic Ridges and Basins, Volcanic and Seismic Upheavals, Fossilization and Geologic Strata, Fossils and Decay Rates, Tectonic shifting, Radiometric and Isotopic Dating Methods, Petroleum Geology, etc. These provide deeply satisfying studies when done in light of the Genesis Flood.

Conclusion

In view of the above facts, we conclude that the theory of uniformity, which claims that understanding the present is the key to the past, would not have been in operation during at least two periods of earth history, the Creation and the Flood! Therefore the Bible, and not the present, is the key to the past! I would suggest to the skeptic before he dismisses the Biblical-literal viewpoint as unworthy of notice, that he give it more careful and unbiased analysis. He will find: 1) that the Bible teaches a catastrophic worldwide Flood; 2) that it states in no uncertain terms that it destroyed every living thing which moved upon the earth, including every human, except for Noah and his family, and a representative pair (or pairs) of each kind of animal and; 3) if an honest inquirer is true to both the Bible and the science of geology, the major facts of geology and other sciences can be satisfactorily fitted within this framework. The Genesis Flood

account poses no threat to the facts of science. Nor does it pose a threat to the credibility of the Bible. But it does stand as a formidable obstacle to the acceptance of the historic geologic timetable of evolutionary biology. Affirmation of the one denies the credibility of the other. Which interpretation of history is accepted as most plausible has a direct bearing on the mind of man, the happiness of man, and the destiny of man. Man will stand or fall with their acceptance or rejection of the credibility of the Bible. Souls are at stake.

May these and other evidences provide an immovable foundational stone upon which people of faith may stand shamelessly in support of the Bible and record of Earth history. If we are a Bible-believing people, then let the Bible speak for itself, and let us fearlessly study the sciences in light of its marvelous revelations. Finally, let us heed the warnings of the Biblical record of the Flood, and be found ready at the second Great Judgment upon the world, for “*as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be,*” (Matt. 24:37). Only it will be fire next time! Ω

Biographical Sketch

Matthew R. Thomas was raised in Seville, Ohio, and became a Christian at the age of 14 while attending the West Good Ave. Church of Christ in Wadsworth, Ohio. Matt is married to Monica, and has three children, Kolton (19), Taylor (16), and Emelia (13). He and Monica graduated from Ohio University in 1991, and attended WVSOP four years later, where Matt graduated in the second graduating class. He worked with the Blackburn Hill Church of Christ in Athens, Ohio, for 12 years as a campus minister to Ohio University and Hocking College. He currently resides in Carroll, Ohio, and is the evangelist for the Pickerington Church of Christ.

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Links:

Institute for Creation Research, www.icr.org/articles
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Genesis 1–11: Doctrinal Foundations of the Bible

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Introduction

The first book of the Bible is aptly named, *Genesis*. The late Rex A. Turner says of the book of Genesis, “Its presence defies the imagination and mental capacity of any mere uninspired man” (101). The late James D. Bales summarizes the value and importance of the book of Genesis.

Genesis is an ancient book which sets forth truths and events which are far more ancient than the book itself. If the truths, which include the events and their meaning, are out of date, man is out of date. If Genesis is not relevant, man is irrelevant, since with the destruction of Genesis and its truths, man destroys his own birthright as a human being with dignity and value. (Bales, 1977 13)

The theme of this year’s lectureship is: “*The Need for Redemption, Genesis 1-11.*” Our lecture will emphasize the importance of Genesis 1-3 as the basis for *all* doctrinal foundations. We emphasize *only* seven obvious biblical doctrines—Theology, Anthropology, Bibliology, Harmartiology,

Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology. These do not stand alone but are interrelated giving consistency of thought to the whole. We have omitted, because of space restraints, other major biblical doctrines, actual or implied, found in Genesis 1-3—Angelology, Ecclesiology, Pneumatology, et al.

Theology

Theology is the study of God. God is (Gen. 1:1). How important is God in life? “More consequences for thought and action follow from the affirmation or denial of God than from answering any other basic question” (Adler 2:543). God is the one self-existing and self-sufficient, “I am that I am” (Ex. 6:24) and without God there would be nothing.

Religious thought categorizes God in various terms:

- *Theism* is the belief of the one self-existing and self-revealing God “who is essentially eternally omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly free” which “explains everything else” (Swinburne 19).
- *Trinity* or *Godhead* (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9) is the belief of the one self-existing and self-revealing God manifested in three persons (Matt. 28:19). In Genesis 1:1, God (*Elohim*) is plural. The plurality of the Godhead is affirmed by, “Us . . . Our” (Gen. 1:26). The oneness of the Godhead is affirmed by, “His . . . He . . . He” (Gen. 1:27). “The Old Testament teaches God is one. . . . The New Testament teaches the existence of the Father, the Divine Son, and the Divine Holy Spirit” (Bales, 1977 86).
- *Monotheism* is the belief in the one self-existing and self-revealing God and Creator. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). Swinburne states that God is responsible “not merely for the existence of all other objects, but for their having the powers and liabilities they do” (11).

God possesses unlimited attributes or essences, all of which help us to understand God; each is infinite and absolute. Bales

writes, “We cannot completely define God, because we cannot completely understand God. . . . [O]ur concept of God must be limited, for man is the finite being and God is the infinite being. . . . If we cannot understand man, why should we expect to completely understand God, the eternal Spirit?” (1974 5-6).

Theism, Trinity, or Monotheism is taught in the first verse of Genesis, “In the beginning God” (1:1) and is consistently taught through the Bible. Monotheism is hostile to Polytheism. Polytheism resulted from the evolution of man’s corrupting “the glory of the incorruptible God” and worshiping the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:20-26).

Monotheism teaches that God is different from His creation. God is *in* the world, but He is *not* the world. God is separate from the world. “[W]hat is unique about the Bible is that it maintains monotheism as the only viable principle of thought” (Oswalt 64).

Some proponents of Polytheism argue that Polytheism, and not Monotheism, was the original religious climate. W. Robertson Smith (1846-1894), Julius Wellhausen, (1844-1918), and others strongly advocate that Monotheism evolved from Polytheism. An inspired Bible teaches Monotheism was followed by Polytheism. Henry M. Morris writes, “the people first knew the true God, then rapidly corrupted that knowledge into pantheism, polytheism, occultism, and idolatry, with all the evil practices these encourage” (263). However, Christopher A. Rollston of the Emmanuel Christian Seminary, a graduate school of the Independent Christian Churches in Johnson City, Tennessee, advocates Monotheism evolved from Polytheism.

[A]ncient Israelite religion was not originally monotheistic. Rather, during the centuries of the Old Testament period, monotheism developed gradually. . . . [M]onotheistic faith of Israel was a final product of a long process of development and revelation. . . . During antiquity, polytheism was the norm. . . . Early Israelite religion arose within . . . a pantheon of deities. Gen 6:1-4 appears to be a crucial remnant of that early belief. . . . [S]ome ancient Israelites believed that Yahweh had a consort of some sort: 'Asherah. . . . Evidence for pure monotheism

in Israel appears in the late 7th and 6th centuries BC. (95, 97, 104, 108, 111, italics in original)

If Rollston's argument is true, then we have a complete contradiction to Genesis 1-3 as well as the remainder of the Bible. Genesis 1-3 teaches God from the very beginning revealed Himself to man, was in fellowship and communion with man, and progressively revealed the fullness of His will and purpose of mankind (Bales, 1977 50). Rollston is in error in reference to the Israelite religion as more than once Israel apostatized from monotheism into idolatry.

BUT, "IN THE BEGINNING GOD" (Gen. 1:1)! Monotheism! Theism! Trinity!

Anthropology

Anthropology is the study of man involving his origin, purpose, and destiny. Genesis 1-3 serves as the biblical foundation of all teaching regarding man. Unlike all other creatures, who apparently were created in sufficient numbers to begin populating the Earth (Gen. 1:21), God created Adam and Eve, a single pair forming divine marriage, with the command to multiply and replenish the Earth (Gen 1:27). This biblical doctrine is taught clearly in Genesis 1:27-28; 2:7, 16-18, 21-25; 3:20 and in the New Testament, "For we are also His offspring" (Acts 17:28).

Toward the close of the sixth day of creation, the human race was created. MacArthur's writes:

All of creation up to this point has been merely a prelude to what would happen at the end of day six. The creation of the human race was the central object of God's creative purpose from the beginning. In an important sense, everything else was created *for* humanity, and every step of creation up to this point had one main purpose: to prepare a perfect environment for Adam. The human race is *still* at the center of God's purpose for the

entire material universe. . . . God created man to glorify Him and to enjoy Him forever. (157, italics in original)

The question of anthropology is, “*What is man?*” After God created all other life forms, God created man. *Only* of man is it said, God is “the Father of spirits” (Heb. 12:9). Man was created in “the image and after the likeness of God” (Gen. 1:26-27). Leupold summarizes man as “a creature of nobility and endowed with phenomenal powers and attributes, not the type of being that by its brute imperfections is seen to be on the same level with the animal world” (92-3).

Man was created a mortal being, his body capable of dying, and with an inner, immortal soul. Man was created innocent, free of sin, but he was not righteous as righteousness results from obedient faith (Turner 141). Man is made in the “image of God” (*imago dei*) [with intellect and conscience] (Gen. 1:26-27; cf. Col. 3:10). The phrases “image of God” and “likeness of God” are identical in meaning and are typical parallel expressions in Hebrew. Man is described as “spirit and soul and body” (1 Thess. 5:23) and is so interwoven with God that at death his body returns to dust of the earth and his spirit to God (Gen. 2:7; Eccl. 12:7). Such interrelatedness places great dignity on each individual, incurring the responsibility to live accordingly with God and fellowman. Made in the image of God differentiates man from animals. Man is prohibited from taking the life of his fellowman, but is allowed to kill and eat animals (Gen. 9:1-6). This prohibition is never stated of other creatures.

Man made in the image of God gives the *why* God expresses an interest in and care for us. Job was puzzled *why* God “should magnify him” (Job. 7:17) or *why* God considered such a weak mortal to be the object of His interest (Umbreit 156). David likewise wanted to know *why* God was “mindful of him” (Ps. 8:2) and took “account of him” (Ps. 144:3).

All things related to man’s origin was planned “before the world [time] began” (Titus 1:2). After all things were created “God blessed” man (Gen. 1:28); i.e. describing God’s design for him (cf. Eccl. 5:17; 1 Tim. 6:18). God gave man dominion over all creation, “but the earth has He given to the children of

men” (Ps. 115:16; cf. Gen. 1:26, 29-30; 2:15, 19; Ps. 8:6). The Genesis account of the origin of man is *Simple*—it is direct, positive, immediate, and complete. The Genesis account is *Sublime*—man is the crown of creation with all created things designed to make the best possible life prior to eternity. The Genesis account is *Sufficient*—man is the result of “Adult Creation” with immediate intelligence, language, and dominion. Adult Creation does not need the theory of evolution as a vehicle for explaining man’s origin. The Genesis account of man’s dominion eliminates evolution’s theory of survival of the fittest. In addition, God made man so as “to enter into relationships . . . with responsibility and answerability” (Marshall 54). **BUT**, man marred his innocence with sin (see below, *Harmartiology*).

Bibliology

Bibliology is the study of the Bible. God has spoken (Gen.1:1). God spoke all things into existence *ex nihilo*; i.e. out of nothing. “He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:9). Nine times God’s creative activity is described by the words, “God said” (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 29). The creation account is consistent with God’s nature and reflects His inherent goodness. God culminated His Creation with “every thing that He made . . . it was *very good*” (Gen. 1:31, emp. added). God “upholds the universe by the word of His power” (Heb. 1:3, ESV); i.e. God continues to function in the universe through His laws of nature.

The crowning apex of creation is man (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7; Ps. 8) to whom God uniquely revealed Himself in the volume called “the Bible” (see above, *Anthropology*). The Bible is from the “one lawgiver” (James 4:12) and is inspired, inerrant, and authoritative (1 Cor. 2:1-16; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Ps. 119); thereby, giving man a *biblical worldview* designed to guide life and prepare man for eternity (Gen. 3; 4; 6; 10; Rom. 12:1-2; 1 John 5:3). Since men must give an account to God (Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10), they “must make sense of their lives—and deaths” facing “innumerable questions about how we should live” (Schaefer 40).

By *biblical worldview*, we mean the philosophy of life shaped by God's revelation revealing the origin, purpose, and destiny of man (Rev. 4:11). Emanating from God whose "understanding is infinite" (Ps. 17:5), the *biblical worldview* is the authoritative standard by which all men are amenable (Gen. 2; 3; John 17:2; Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 14:12; Rev. 20:11-15). Immediately after the fall of man, "God began working out that plan, and revealing it gradually to man" (Deaver 91). The Bible is the *canon* serving man as "a measuring rule; hence metaphorically a rule or standard" (Abbott-Smith 230). The *biblical worldview* is revealed in the Bible only—*sola scriptura*—by which all men are to live and will be judged (John 12:48; Rev. 20:11-15). God's *biblical worldview* has governed man through three progressive dispensations—Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian—and culminating with Christianity as God's ultimatum for all mankind (Heb. 1:1-2).

Any rejection and/or deviation from the *biblical worldview* will result in catastrophe for men both in this present life and in eternity. The catastrophic evidence is seen in the fall of man in Genesis 3. Such rejection results in unbelief, apostasy, rebellion, atheism, etc. A *worldview* is not from our sovereign God, but is a set of beliefs developed by man in various academic philosophies, sciences, and culture (Cosgrove 20). Read the article in the October 2011 issue of *Sufficient Evidence* in which Rolland Pack ably argues that Christian ethics "includes duties and goals set in an absolutist context sensitive to individual cases and personal choice with a foundation in human nature created in the image of God and in a reasoned account of general and special revelation" (3). "[T]he way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).

Harmartiology

Harmartiology is the study of sin. When God finished creation, He said, "it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). There was no sin. In Genesis 3, sin entered the world (Rom. 5:12) when man violated God's *biblical worldview*. "This was not the ORIGIN of sin, but the ENTRANCE of sin into our world" (Deaver 93, emp. in text).

What is sin? Sin is an improper relationship with God to whom we are subject (Gen. 2; 3; John 17:2). The Greek word *harmartia* has been defined as containing the sense of missing the mark, of having an aim and failing to achieve it. Sin has been described as darkness, debt, disobedience, evil, error, rebellion, an unethical act, etc. However, the Bible defines sin as “*lawlessness*” (1 John 3:4, emp. added), “*unrighteousness*” (1 John 5:17, emp. added), and “So whoever knows the right thing to do and *fails to do it, for him it is sin*” (James 4:17, ESV, emp. added). While sin describes the improper relationship between God and man, it describes the battle between God and Satan, Satan and man, good and evil, right and wrong, and light and darkness (Gen. 3:15).

The biblical doctrine of sin depends upon the historicity of Genesis 1-3. If we deny the historicity of Genesis 1-3, we destroy and discard *how* sin entering the world through Satan’s temptation and Adam’s disobedience to God. “[B]y one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21-22). The denial of the historicity of Genesis 1-3 eliminates the amenability of man and the veracity of Scripture.

Genesis 1-2 pictures a *perfect world*; that is without sin. Genesis 3 pictures an *imperfect world* because of sin and its attendant doctrines. Genesis 3 refutes all evolution. Evolution cannot explain the origin of sin and its attendant doctrines.

The historicity of Genesis 3 is necessary as it serves as the foundation of the biblical worldview. MacArthur states, “It is the foundation of everything that comes after it. Without it, little in Scripture or in life itself would make sense” (195). Genesis 3 is the judgment chapter relating Genesis to all other biblical books. Genesis 3 sets forth the testing of Adam’s faith. As God’s gardener, Adam was commanded to enjoy fruit from every tree “except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:15-17). The violation of God’s command carried “a penalty, to be put to a violent death” (Brown 559-60). God allowed Adam and Eve to be tested by Satan, a fallen angel, known as “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out [heaven] into the earth” (Rev. 12:9). Satan deceived

Eve and Adam ate of the forbidden fruit knowingly (Gen. 3; 1 Tim. 2:14) having to choose between his wife and God. He seduced Eve and with Adam's fall both came under the sentence of immediate death (See below, Soteriology). There were other penalties as the consequence of their sin (Gen. 3:16-19): a continual battle between good and evil (Gen. 3:15); difficulty in childbirth; woman is subject to her husband (Gen. 3:16); man to labor and toil in obtaining his food (Gen. 3:17-19), and the ground was cursed (Gen. 3:17-19).

Satan's seduction and Adam's sin result in "enmity" (Gen. 3:15) "between your [Satan's] seed [plural] and her [woman's] seed [singular]" (Gen. 3:15). (See below Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology). It is "God who will not suffer this enmity to die down: 'I will put.' God wants man to continue in undying opposition to this evil one and He rouses the enmity Himself" (Leupold 165). How? Through the *biblical worldview* which begins to unfold the history of man and culminating in the judgment.

God cursed the ground, for Adam's sake, saying, "[C]ursed is the ground for your sake; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till dust you are, and to dust shall you return' (Genesis 3:17-19, emp. added)." This text in some way states that one "of the consequences of man's transgression and fall was that God promised a curse on earth" (Bales, 1975 58). The ground was cursed causing agrarian work to be hard labor with the constant removal of thorns, thistles, weeds, etc. What is involved in the cursing of the ground (Gen. 3:17-19)? I do not know unless one toils intensify in growing crops, weeds, thorns, and thistles. (The idea of *intensification* is the result of a discussion with Charles C. Pugh III]. As with Bales, we do "not claim to know the extent of this curse, but it is his [Bales and this author's] conviction that the truth of it is confirmed by what has happened in nature" (Bales, 1977 58).

Christology

Christology is the study of Christ and all attendant doctrines pertaining from His pre-existence to His final state of eternity. God in Genesis 1-3 implies many Christological doctrines. For instance, Christ's deity is implied by the plural word "God" (*Elohim*) in Genesis 1:1, as well as, the plural pronouns "Us" and "Our" in Genesis 1:26-27.

Genesis 3 is the pivotal chapter of what was declared as "very good" (Gen. 1:31) to the sad history of man in sin (Gen. 3). With man's sin marring his innocence, man is doomed to the sentence of death (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-19). No sooner had man sinned than God gives a ray of hope by promising a Savior and Victor over sin and Satan (Gen. 3:15; 1 Cor. 15:55-57; Heb. 2:14-15), though Genesis 3:15 is addressed to Satan.

Hope is given man in the prophecy of the *Protoevanglium* (the first gospel) of the Old Testament, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; It [He] shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). The battle for man's redemption (see below, Soteriology) begins with the implication, confirmed by the progressive *biblical worldview* from both testaments of the Virgin Birth. Remove this implication and "there is no possible fulfillment of these prophecies" (Hanke 22), or any other Messianic prophecy. Genesis 3:15 gives historicity and veracity to the argument.

Genesis 3:15 is the first Messianic prophecy and involves the Virgin Birth, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection of Jesus. The woman's "seed" is a singular, masculine pronoun. "He," referring to the woman's "seed," would come by a woman *alone*, without the seed of man. The unfolding of the *biblical worldview* enables the identification of the "seed" as Christ. Jesus was "born of a woman [Mary]" (Gal. 4:4), who was enabled to conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:34-35) and apart from the seed of man. Mary was a virgin and progressive prophetic revelation states that God would enable "a virgin to conceive, and bear a son" (Isa. 7:14; 9:6), or a "woman shall compass a man" (Jer. 31:22) who will give birth in Bethlehem of Judea (Micah 5:1). The "seed" was not of "many; but as of one . . . which is

Christ' (Gal. 3:16). Woman (Eve), tempted by Satan, brought sin into the world, but woman (Mary) also brought the Redeemer (Ramsey 209). Coffman states forcibly, "Now, the only 'seed of woman' ever known upon earth was and is Jesus Christ our Lord" (67).

Soteriology

Soteriology is the study of salvation and all its attendant doctrines. Salvation of man is *key* to understanding the *biblical worldview*. Sin separates man from God (Isa. 59:1-2); salvation is the answer to sin. Man sinned (Gen. 3) and God is the "God of salvation" (cf. Gen. 3:15; Ps. 18:46; 38:22; 51:14; 88:1; Luke 3:6; Acts 28:28; 1 Peter 1:10; Jude 3; Rev. 7:10). With sin paralyzing man, God by His grace promised salvation to man (Gen. 3:15; Titus 2:11). God's grace planned man salvation "before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20; Matt. 25:34; Eph. 1:4; Titus 1:2; Rev. 13:8; 17:8). Soteriology is set forth within God's vehicle of the *biblical worldview* and progressively unfolds from Genesis 1 culminating in Jesus Christ in Revelation 22:21.

Genesis 3:15 sets forth the age-long conflict between Satan and Christ, "He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel (ASV)." This references both the crucifixion and the resurrection. When Jesus was crucified Satan was certain he had foiled God's soteriology for man. In the resurrection, Jesus was victorious [defeated] over Satan using the very tool that he kept men in bondage, fear, and death (Heb. 2:14-15). Jesus rose as the Victor over "death and *hades*" (Rev. 1:18). Progressive revelation enlightens the meaning of Genesis 3:15.

The promise of God's grace and the defeat of Satan occur before God's statements to Adam and Eve. *First*, God said to Satan, "you shall bruise His head" (Gen. 3:15), references the crucifixion. The crucifixion shows God's holiness, justice, mercy, love, and truth; however, at the same time, the crucifixion portrays, symbolically, the horribleness of sin. At His crucifixion, there were three hours of darkness testifying to the horror of the hour (Luke 23:44-45). "Sin is blacker than hell and worse than Satan; for, had there been no sin, there would have been no hell,

and there would have been no Satan. And had there been no sin there would be no Calvary” (Winkler 384).

In the crucifixion, Jesus “bore our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24; cf. Isa. 54:4-5) and “through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. 2:14-15). Jesus became our sin-offering, as God “made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us” (2 Cor. 5:21; cf. Isa. 53:10). The cross is essential, with absoluteness, for man’s victory over sin and hope of eternity with God.

Adam and Eve should have instantly died for their sin, but God’s grace is seen in His mediating life by sacrificing animals serving as a symbolic testimony of their cleansing from sin. God’s grace was manifest through the “substitutionary sacrifices of innocent animals that were slain and their blood applied as a ‘blood sacrifice’ against the sin” (Turner 145). Genesis 3:21 states: “And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them.”

Adam’s faith is implied, “Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living” (Gen. 3:20). Eve is representative of “the woman” whose “seed” would eventually defeat Satan and offer salvation to man.

Second, God said to Satan, “He shall bruise your head” (Gen. 3:15, ASV), references Jesus’ resurrection. It is a victory statement by God as “Man had brought sin into the world, but Man (the “seed of the woman”) would one day bring about the destruction of the Evil One” (Pfeiffer 22). God raised Jesus up (Acts 2:32; 3:15, 26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34, 37; 17:31; Col. 2:12). The defeat of Satan is brought to its consummation in the resurrection (cf. Rom. 1:4; Heb. 2:14-15). The New Testament exalts the resurrection as the removal of death’s sting, giving “us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:57). “Death has no more dominion over Him” (Rom. 6:9). Without the resurrection of Jesus, we have no promise of our future resurrection (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 4:13). His resurrection gave us a lively hope that is incorruptible, undefiled, and fades not away (1 Peter 1:3-4). The cross and the resurrection

are essentials in the content of soteriology. The resurrection of Jesus is a blow to Satan from which he can never recover (Turner 144). The virgin birth, crucifixion, and the resurrection show “what it behooved Jesus Christ to be and to do that he might save us” (Warfield 167).

Eschatology

Eschatology is the study of all attendant doctrines of the last things. The definition is not quite adequate as eschatology also addresses the life of man before the end (*telos*). Brower writes that eschatology “is Trinitarian in shape, Christcentric in focus, creation-affirming and future orientated, describing the way God’s good purposes in history correspond to God’s ultimate reality” (459). To say it another way, eschatology is the *biblical worldview* brought to its culmination by God at the judgment and destruction of the world (2 Peter 3).

Genesis 3:15 implies a coming, final, ultimate judgment on Satan (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 20:10), man (Genesis 3:16-18; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 10; Rev. 20:10-12), and the earth (Gen. 3:17-19; 2 Peter 3). As Christ initially is the center of God’s promise (Gen. 3:15) so He is the center of the end (Heb. 9:27-28; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; John 5:28-29; Eph. 1:20-23; Philip. 2:10-11). Jesus is the Alpha and Omega (Rev. 21:6; 22:13).

For those who live the *biblical worldview*, their end is heaven and eternity with God (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 21:1-7); whereas, those disobedient to the *biblical worldview*, their end is everlasting punishment in hell and separation from the presence of God (Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 21:8; 20:12-15).

Summary

We have attempted to set forth seven major Bible doctrines found in Genesis 1-3. Our effort has been done with briefness, while, at the same time, suggesting further study by the reader. It is the case that Genesis 1-3 serves a foundational to understanding man’s redemption. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Married 50+ years to Lillie L. Garrison of Littleton, WV. Four children: Steve, a Mortician at Master's Funeral Home, Mannington, WV; Scott, Administrator of the Vocational Schools, Marshall County, Moundsville, WV. Serving in his 19th year as Delegate in WV House. Stuart, one of the Dean of Students at Harding University, Searcy, AR; and Sara Perry, 2nd Grade teacher at Fort Gibson, OK. 11 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

Preached 55+ years of which 43 years were in located work at Shadyside, OH, Dunbar, WV, North Canton, OH, and Harmar Hill, Marietta, OH. Left located work in 1997. Presently serves as an elder and evangelist at West Union, WV.

One of the four founders of West Virginia School of Preaching located at Moundsville, WV, along with Wirt Cook, Emanuel Daugherty, Charles C. Pugh III. Have taught as many as five classes and is presently teaching three (3) classes.

Serve as Research Coordinator for the Warren Christian Apologetics Center, Vienna, WV.

Hobbies: Hybridizing iris since 1968 and presently have 30 iris on the international market. Enjoys library research, building a library, gardening, hunting, and fishing.

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What Does It Really Matter?

An Investigation into Theistic Evolution

Brad Harrub, Ph.D.

Introduction

“In the news this morning, scientists have discovered a 50 million-year-old bird fossil. This fossil could reveal secrets of how birds evolved from dinosaurs. And in other news, reporters have discovered that the leading political candidate actually believes in creationism. American scientists have said electing this official would move America back 10,000 years.” Putting down his coffee cup, the man grabs his coat and briefcase and heads for the door. He knows his friends at the office will point out this latest evolutionary discovery as proof that they are right. His mind starts churning as to how everything really could have happened. He wonders: Is there room for evolution? He definitely believes that God created the heavens and earth. But lately, he wonders if maybe God created everything and then stepped back and allowed evolution to progress the earth to the condition we find it today. Surely all of those news media and scientists couldn’t be wrong, could they? As he closes the door to his car, he remembers a verse in the Bible that says, “With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter 3:8). So maybe his friends were not completely wrong. In fact, maybe today is the day he sides with them and their evolutionary beliefs.

News stories like these are common occurrences in the mainstream media. So common, in fact, that many individuals have bought into the lie that one can be a Christian and embrace evolution. Many God-fearing individuals are completely convinced that Christianity is compatible with evolution. Having spent literally years studying science and Darwinism, the first

point that should be made is that the words *science* and *evolution* are not the same. While the apostles of Darwin speak of evolution being “science,” the fact remains that evolution is a **theory** to explain a process of change. Science, on the other hand, is defined as an area of knowledge that is an object of study. Ironically there are now staunch evolutionists trying to propose that in this situation a theory holds more strength and authority than a fact. Their rationale is that a fact only gives credence to one area—whereas a theory encompasses a broad field of truth. While this may tickle the ears of some, to men who have truly been trained in science this is nonsense. What I’ve learned through the years is that the evidence demands a Designer, and real science often points back to that Designer. So even though the mainstream media commonly portrays a battle between science and the Bible, the fact remains that God is the author of science—they go hand-in-glove.

The real battle is whether the Bible and evolution can coexist. Sir Arthur Keith was given the honor of writing the preface to the 100th anniversary of Darwin’s *Origin of Species*. In his preface he acknowledged, “... The conclusion I have come to is this: the law of Christ is incompatible with the law of evolution.... Nay, the two laws are at war with each other....” Having spent years surveying the evidence, I have to concur.

Christians must realize the truthfulness of Keith’s statement. The two really are at war. One cannot embrace both and hope to harmonize them together. Michael Ruse wrote a book titled *Can a Darwinian be a Christian?* in which he espoused, “Can a Darwinian be a Christian? Absolutely! Is it always easy for a Darwinian to be a Christian? No, but whoever said that the worthwhile things in life are easy? Is the Darwinian obligated to be a Christian? No, but try to be understanding of those who are.” He then went on to conclude, “There are plenty of resources open to the Christian who would **move towards science and away from a literal reading of the early book of Genesis**” (2000, p. 217, emp. added). Again, Ruse here is using the term *science* in reference to evolution. But his message is clear—Christians should abandon the Bible in favor of Darwinian evolution.

Can a Christian Be an Evolutionist?

Given the popularity of the subject, the average person might be quick to assume that evolution is a proven fact. For instance, in the July 29, 2002 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, Thomas Hayden ranks its reality right up there with death and taxes. In explaining “how evolution works, and why it matters more than ever,” Hayden stated, “It’s an everyday phenomenon, a fundamental fact of biology as real as hunger and as unavoidable as death” (2002, 133[4]:43). The message from the secular world is crystal clear: You can question everything else (including your religion), but you cannot question evolution.

Darwin’s new apostles have done such an effective job of selling this propaganda that many “Bible-believing” Christians have jettisoned their beliefs of the events in the opening chapters of Genesis. Many of the new “evangelicals” consider God to be the initial Creator, but then evolution brought us to where we are today. They place their allegiance in science and then try to massage God’s Word to fit the evolutionary theory. Even many New Testament Christians have bought into this lie. The term given to such “believers” is theistic evolutionists. The word “theistic” originated from the Greek *theos*, meaning “God.” Theistic evolutionists therefore believe in the existence of God, but they also have bought into the lies of evolution. As Mark Jennings commented, “Theistic evolution states that God did create and develop the universe and its components, but that He did it by evolutionary processes” (Jennings, p. 3). Theistic evolutionists rationalize their beliefs by declaring, “Yes, God created the heavens and the earth,” but then God used evolution to bring about the universe and earth as we find it today.

Given this scenario, theistic evolutionists are stuck with the task of trying to find a place to squeeze millions (actually BILLIONS) of years into the creation account. The only three places they can squeeze that time are: (1) before the creation week, (2) during the creation week, or (3) after the creation week. Most evolutionists and scholars realize the problem associated with putting vast amounts of time **after** the creation week—as it would mean humans have been here for billions of years. But what about the other two options? As a result of their need to

account for the vast amount of time required by evolution, theistic evolutionists commonly cling to the

Gap Theory, Day-Age Theory, or Progressive Creationism in an effort to explain their beliefs.

The Gap Theory

The Gap Theory is not a newcomer on the scene; Thomas Chalmers of Edinburgh University in Scotland first introduced it in 1814. While gap theorists do not all agree on a strict definition of this theory, the commonly accepted version claims that God created everything—as mentioned in Genesis 1:1—and then there was a massive “gap” of time in which this creation fell under destruction. And then in Genesis 1:2 we read about God recreating the earth. This would mean that plants, animals, and even man existed prior to Adam. Many blame this initial destruction on Satan, who they claim rebelled and was cast out of Heaven. This allegedly brought about a war between Satan and God that resulted in the destruction of the planet, which they claim left the earth “waste and void” (Genesis 1:2). Thus, they would say that everything following is a “re-creation” of the original.

Gap theorists defend their beliefs by focusing on two Greek words: *bara* and *asah*. They claim that the word *bara* (which is used in Genesis 1:1, 21, 27) means “to create.” Thus, they believe there was an original creation, and then God recreated it following everything being destroyed and left “waste and void.” Thus, we are told that the original creation was “created” (*bara*), and then all references after that refer to things being “made” (*asah*), i.e., “made over”.

Problems with the Gap Theory

The biggest realization obvious to an unbiased observer is that there is no other Scripture that supports the idea of this pre-Adamic creation. Regarding the words *bara* and *asah*, Scripture refutes this as well, since God’s Word uses the words interchangeably. For instance, in Genesis 2:4 Moses wrote, “This

is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were **created**, in the day that the Lord God **made** the earth and the heavens.” (see also Genesis 1:26-27; 1:21 and 1:25; 1:16 and Psalm 148:5). Second, Moses indicated as he was handing down the Ten Commandments that everything was created in six days. “For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, **and all that is in them**, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it” (Exodus 20:11, emp. added). This clearly indicates that **everything** was created in six days. Additionally, Paul describes Adam as “the first man” (1 Corinthians 15:45), ruling out any possibility for men living before Adam.

One should also remember that in Genesis 1:31 the totality of God’s creation was pronounced “very good.” Had Satan and his followers rebelled in a prior creation, this statement would have been false. Additionally, an earlier creation would indicate that sin and death had entered the world prior to Adam. However, the Bible is clear that sin and death entered mankind through the sin of Adam (see 1 Corinthians 15:21; Romans 8:20-22; Romans 5:12). In his book *Creation or Evolution?*, D.D. Riegle wisely remarked, “It is amazing that men will accept long, complicated, imaginative theories and reject the truth given to Moses by the Creator Himself” (1962, 24).

So how would one explain the phrase “waste and void”? The phrase “waste and void” literally means “**empty and formless.**” These words indicate the earth was not a graveyard of destruction under a curse of judgment. As John Whitcomb wrote in his article “The Gap Theory” published in *And God Created*, “It was simply empty of living things and without the features that it later possessed, such as oceans and continents, hills and valleys—features that would be essential for man’s well-being... [W]hen God created the earth, this was only the first state of a

Series of stages leading to its completion” (Whitcomb 2:69-70).

The Day-Age Theory

Not being able to adequately defend the Gap Theory, many individuals try to squeeze millions (or billions) of years into the creation week. This belief system is commonly referred to as the Day-Age Theory, in which each day of the creation week is suggested to be eons of time. Many people who claim to be Christians view the Day-Age Theory as a way to insert geologic time into the Biblical text, thus allowing them to embrace evolution as a fact. However, the point should not be missed that this is merely a compromise. As John Klotz noted in his book *Genes, Genesis, and Evolution*, “It is hardly conceivable that anyone would question the interpretation of these as ordinary days were it not for the fact that people are attempting to reconcile Genesis and evolution” (1955, p. 87). If anything, the pressure to embrace evolution has grown even stronger in the past fifty years. (A full refutation follows the section on Progressive Creationists).

Progressive Creationists

A new group is trying to blend some of these beliefs together. These professed Bible-believers do not necessarily want to defend organic evolution as correct; nevertheless they accept evolutionary dating methods and must therefore reconcile the old ages. These “progressive creationists” (as they generally prefer to be called), convinced that such dating methods are correct and that the earth is ancient, must then find a way to inject geologic time into the Genesis record. The word *progress* is from the Latin *progredi* (*pro*-forward + *gradi*-to step) meaning to go forward, proceed, or advance (Traupman, 246). As the name contends, progressive creation affirms a creation by a supernatural intervention by God in natural history—it is a hybrid of the Day-Age Theory and Theistic Evolution. As such, this theory contends that God may have worked also through existing material and natural processes to come to the end result we see today. Progressive Creationists also believe that creation is progressive—that is, it proceeded forward in a step-like manner. The last defining characteristic of Progressive Creation is that it happened over unlimited time. Millions of years are inserted by

changing the meaning of “day” in the creation account from a single 24-hour rotation of the earth to a long, indefinite period of time and then having God step in and progress creation at various intervals. Thus, believers speculate that creation could have occurred over six literal solar days, or over billions of years. This lack of definition of time allows Progressive Creationists to embrace both the Biblical account and scientific evidence, which supposedly alleges that the earth is much older than 10,000 years.

Having already proven that the Bible is inspired, let’s take a minute and look at the facts:

Fact #1 –God Created Everything

Genesis 1:1—“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Psalm 33:6,9—“By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth...For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”

Psalm 19:1—“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork.”

Acts 4:24—“So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: ‘Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them.’”

Acts 17:25—“Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.”

Colossians 1:16—“For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”

Hebrews 1:2—“...Has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.”

John 1:1-3—“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”

Fact #2 God Created Everything in Six Days

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

Exodus 20:11—“For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

Exodus 31:15-17—“Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.”

Joshua 10:14 (after Joshua’s “long day”)—“And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the Lord heeded the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel.”

The words *evening* and *morning* are used together in the Old Testament with the word *day* (*yom*) over 100 times in non-prophetical literature. Each time the word *day* refers to a literal, 24-hour day.

[Also consider that the green flowering plants were created on day 3. Many of those flowering plants required pollination in order to reproduce. If each day were millions of years, how did the plants survive millions of years until the flying insects came along on day 5? Additionally, the sun is not created until day 4, and yet the plants are already in place. If each day were millions of years, how could the plants survive while waiting on the formation of the sun?]

Fact #3 The Bible Indicates that Man Has Been Here Since the Creation of the World

Mark 10:6—“But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female.’”

Matthew 19:4—“And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female.’”

Romans 1:20— “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.” [The apostle Paul declared that from the creation of the world the invisible things of God have been: (a) clearly seen; and (b) perceived or understood. Thus, someone had to be there to do the seeing and perceiving “from the beginning” of the creation! Evolution teaches that man is a relative new comer on the scene.]

Fact #4 The Bible Indicates Adam Was Indeed the First Man

1 Corinthians 15:22—“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

1 Corinthians 15:45—“And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.’” [This first Adam referencing the Adam God made during the creation week, whereas the

second Adam refers to Jesus Christ. Consider the dilemma posed when one takes the position that the first Adam was merely a myth—what does that do to the second Adam? Paul referred to both as real individuals.]

Romans 5:12-14—“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world and **death** through sin, and thus **death** spread to all men, because all sinned—(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come...” [Paul in writing to the Christians at Rome indicated that Adam brought death into the world].

1 Timothy 2:13—“For Adam was first formed, then Eve.” (c.f. Genesis 2)

Fact #5 The Bible Gives the Genealogy from Adam (literal man) to Christ

The genealogy from Adam to Noah’s sons is listed in Genesis chapter 5.

The descendants of Noah’s son Shem to Abraham are listed in Genesis chapter 11.

The genealogy from Abraham to Christ is given in Matthew 1:1-17 (Joseph’s family line).

The genealogy from Christ to Adam is given in Luke 3:23-38 (Mary’s family line).

Jude 14 references Enoch as the seventh from Adam **as specified in Genesis 5:18**, indicating there are no gaps in the first seven families.

Fact #6 The Bible Demonstrates the Need for Redemption and a Savior (first mentioned in Genesis 3)

Genesis 3:15—“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

1 John 5:11-13—“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

Hebrews 6:19-20—“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

Colossians 2:13-14—“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

Fact #7 New Testament Writers Believed that Genesis 1-11 Was Historically Accurate

In the New Testament alone, there are at least 200 quotations from—or references to—Genesis. In fact, there are over 100 citations or direct references in the New Testament to the first 11 chapters of Genesis. And every one of those 11 chapters, (except chapter 8) is referred to somewhere in the New Testament.

- a. Every New Testament writer refers to the early chapters of Genesis (Genesis 1–11).
- b. Jesus Christ referred to each of the first 7 chapters of Genesis.
- c. All New Testament books except Galatians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and 2 and 3 John refer to Genesis 1–11.

Reference	Topic	Genesis Reference
*1. Matthew 19:4	Created male and female	1:27, 5:2
*2. Matthew 19:5–6	Cleave to his wife; become one flesh	2:24
*3. Matthew 23:35	Righteous Abel	4:4
*4. Matthew 24:37–39	Noah and the Flood	6:1–22, 7:1–24, 8:1–22
*5. Mark 10:6	Created male and female	1:27, 5:2
*6. Mark 10:7–9	Cleave to his wife, become one flesh	2:24
*7. Mark 13:19	Since the beginning of the creation which God created	1:1, 2:4
8. Luke 3:34–36	Genealogies: Abraham to Shem	11:10–26
9. Luke 3:36–38	Genealogies: Noah to Adam to God	5:3–29
*10. Luke 11:51	Blood of Abel	4:8–11

Reference	Topic	Genesis Reference
*11. Luke 17:27	The flood came and destroyed them all	7:10–23
12. John 1:1–3	In the beginning ... was God	1:1
*13. John 8:44	Father of lies	3:4–5
14. Acts 14:15	Who made the heaven and the earth	2:1
15. Acts 17:24	God made all things	1:1–31
16. Romans 1:20	The creation of the world	1:1–31, 2:4
17. Romans 4:17	God can create out of nothing	1:1–31
18. Romans 5:12	Death entered the world by sin	2:16–17, 3:19
19. Romans 5:14–19	Death reigned from Adam	2:17
20. Romans 8:20–22	Creation corrupted	3:17–18
21. 1 Corinthians 6:16	Two will become one flesh	2:24
22. 1 Corinthians 11:3	Head of the woman is man	3:16
23. 1 Corinthians 11:7	In the image of God	1:27, 5:1
24. 1 Corinthians 11:8	Woman from man	2:22–23
25. 1 Corinthians 11:9	Woman for the man	2:18

Reference	Topic	Genesis Reference
26. 1 Corinthians 15:21–22	By a man came death	2:16–17, 3:19
27. 1 Corinthians 15:38–39	To each ... seeds of its own (kind)	1:11, 21, 24
28. 1 Corinthians 15:45	Adam became a living being	2:7
29. 1 Corinthians 15:47	Man from the earth	3:23
30. 2 Corinthians 4:6	Light out of darkness	1:3–5
31. 2 Corinthians 11:3	Serpent deceived Eve	3:1–6, 13
32. Ephesians 3:9	Created all things	1:1–31, 2:1–3
33. Ephesians 5:30–31	Cleave to his wife, become one flesh	2:24
34. Colossians 1:16	All things created by Him	1:1–31, 2:1–3
35. Colossians	Created in His image	1:27
36. 1 Timothy 2:13–14	Adam created first	2:18–23
37. 1 Timothy	Woman deceived	3:1–6, 13
38. 1 Timothy 4:4	Everything created by God is good	1:10–31

Reference	Topic	Genesis Reference
39. Hebrews 1:10	In the beginning God made heavens and earth	1:1
40. Hebrews 2:7–8	All things in subjection under man	1:26–30, 9:2–3
41. Hebrews 4:3	Works were finished	2:1
42. Hebrews 4:4	Rest on the seventh day	2:2–3
43. Hebrews 4:10	Rest from His works	2:2–3
44. Hebrews 11:3	Creation of the universe	1:1
45. Hebrews 11:4	Abel offered a better sacrifice	4:3–5
46. Hebrews 11:5	Enoch taken up	5:21–24
47. Hebrews 11:7	Noah’s household saved	7:1
48. Hebrews 12:24	Blood of Abel	4:10
49. James 3:9	Men in the likeness of God	1:27, 5:1
50. 1 Peter 3:20	Construction of the Ark, eight saved	6:14–16, 7:13
51. 2 Peter 2:5	A flood upon the ungodly, eight saved	6:8–12, 7:1–24
52. 2 Peter 3:4–5	Earth formed out of water and by water	1:6–7

Reference	Topic	Genesis Reference
53. 2 Peter 3:6	The world destroyed by water	7:17–24
54. 1 John 3:8	Devil sinned from the beginning	3:14
55. 1 John 3:12	Cain killed his brother	4:8, 25
56. Jude 11	The way of Cain	4:8, 16, 25
57. Jude 14	Enoch, the seventh generation from Adam	5:3–24
58. Revelation 2:7	Tree of life	2:9
59. Revelation 3:14	Beginning of the creation of God	1:1–31, 2:1–4
60. Revelation 4:11	Created all things	1:1–31, 2:1–3
61. Revelation 10:6	Who created heaven ... and the earth	1:1, 2:1
62. Revelation 14:7	Who made the heaven and the earth	1:1; 2:1, 4
63. Revelation 20:2	The serpent of old, who is the devil	3:1, 14
64. Revelation 21:4	No more death, sorrow, crying or pain	3:17–19
65. Revelation 22:2	Fruit of the tree of life	3:22
66. Revelation 22:3	No more curse	3:14–19
67. Revelation	The tree of life	2:9

[Adapted from Dr. Henry M. Morris, *The Remarkable Birth of Planet Earth*, San Diego: ICR; and Walt Brown, *In the Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood*, Center for Scientific Creation, Phoenix, AZ]

The Bible clearly indicates that God created man on day 6, and the first man was Adam—and that mankind has been here from the beginning of creation. It also indicates Adam is in the genealogical line with Jesus. It also teaches the necessity for the redemption of man (through Jesus) in the Garden of Eden because of man's sin. It is also obvious that New Testament writers viewed the accounts in Genesis to be real and historical occurrences.

Conclusion

G. Richard Culp summed it up well when he wrote, “One who doubts the Genesis account will not be the same man he once was, for his attitude toward Holy Scripture has been eroded by false teaching. Genesis is repeatedly referred to in the New Testament, and it cannot be separated from the total Christian message” (160-161). He went on to say, “We stand either with God and His teaching of Creation, or we stand with the evolutionists in opposition to Him. The issues are sharply drawn. There can be no compromise. You are either a Christian or an evolutionist, but you cannot be both.” I completely agree.

The two models are at complete odds with one another. In the Biblical account of creation, man starts out as the pinnacle of God's creation and, through sin, falls. The evolutionary account is completely opposite, having mankind start from some amoeba and then after millions of years we evolved our way to the top. There is nothing similar in these two accounts. Consider also that if man truly did not fall as described in the creation account, then what need would there be for Jesus Christ to redeem man? Robert

Taylor put it well when he said:

Surely evolution will not have to reverse itself and concede that it reached its zenith with the birth of the Christ child a long, long time ago. Surely this colossal system will not have to concede that it is less able now to produce a greater than Jesus than it did produce two thousand years ago. If evolution is not now able to produce a greater than Jesus, then it seems the system has ceased to be evolution and has become devolution, at least in one sense? (Taylor, *Gospel Advocate*)

Today, this theory appears more like “devilution” than devolution.

While men may occasionally grab 2 Peter 3:8 and claim that a day is a thousand years to God, they have done so by taking that passage out of context. Would we argue that Jesus was in the tomb for 3000 years? Or what about Jonah in the belly of the big fish? Was that also three thousand years? As Guy N. Woods pointed out, 2 Peter 3:8 simply means that time does not affect the performance of God’s promises or threats (Woods, 1976, p. 146). The context is when Jesus will return, not how long it took to create the heavens and earth.

Honest Bible scholars will admit that only four books in the Bible do not refer back to the opening chapters of Genesis as real and historic: Jude, Philemon, 2 and 3 John. Does this fact mean all other books in the Bible should be cut out or not trusted? Paul in writing to Timothy reminded him, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). Can a Christian be an evolutionist? **Absolutely not**—indeed the two are at war with one another! A true New Testament Christian realizes the two are incompatible. Ω

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The Character and Nature of God

Phil Gear



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Introduction

Americans have ceased to be impressed with God. Actually many believe God should be impressed with us; after all, we have been to the moon, cured diseases, and invented the internet. Surely we have impressed Him with all we have accomplished. Few societies in history have been guiltier of worshiping “the creature rather than the creator” (Rom. 1:25). We seem to forget we went to a moon He created, healed a body He designed, and invented an internet that contains only a minute fraction of what He knows. Who do we think we are? And we definitely have lost sight of who He is.

He is an “unknown God” (Acts 17:23) to far too many people. Many know little about Him, and so have invented Him as they want Him to be. They have devised a God who does not judge, demand, or expect anything from us. He comes running at our bidding to do what we tell him to do. He serves us, and not *vice-versa*.

The Psalmist has identified the problem in Psalm 50. We have cast His words “behind” us (vs. 17). We have associated with and accepted immorality, and deceived ourselves into believing God will do nothing about it (vs. 18-20). The root problem is, “You thought that I was altogether like you” (vs. 21). We have invented a God in our own image who allows us to do

whatever we want without reprovng us. We have custom designed God into what we want Him to be.

We must have a good understanding of the character and natur of God as revealed in the Scriptures. A comprehensive and growing realization of who God is will keep us from reducing Him to an idol. We see God’s character and nature revealed in the story of Noah (Genesis 6-9).

God’s *Power* Demands Our Respect

The first sentence in the Bible introduces us to the awesome power of God. “In the beginning God *created*...” (Gen. 1:1). We cannot fathom the sheer power necessary to merely speak the universe, with all its complexity and order, into existence. The creation of the earth alone is an impressive display of God’s creative capability. But should we not also be struck by the power necessary to destroy the earth? We have long feared the destructive consequences of full-scale nuclear war. But God did not need to split the atom to destroy the earth; He did it with water. We are familiar with the destructive ability of floods, but we cannot imagine the power displayed in the Biblical flood. “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights” (Gen. 7:11-12). This resulted in A flood of such catastrophic proportions that it forever altered the face of the earth, including the death of all but eight members of the human race. It is no wonder that Noah’s first act on leaving the ark was to worship humbly the God who had displayed such power (Gen. 8:20).

It is impossible to overstate the power of God. “God has spoken once, twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God” (Psa. 62:11). Who are we to challenge that power? Nebuchadnezzar learned to appreciate that power. “All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, What have you done?” (Dan. 4:35). God has the sovereign power to do as

He pleases. Whatever He does is “according to his good pleasure which He purposed in Himself” (Eph. 1:9).

This power demands our utmost respect! Americans need a good, healthy dose of the fear of God. We must learn that He is to be served “with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28-29). We demand the right to make our own decisions, and then tell God He must accept them. We have forgotten who He is, and who we are.

What is the greatest display of God’s power? The creation? The flood? Actually it is the defeat of Satan and the redemption of the human soul. God had designed His plan to save man from before the beginning of time, and Satan is completely incapable of stopping Him. From the moment man needed a scheme of redemption, God began to carry out His plan, and Satan was powerless to interfere. God had already determined He would send the seed of woman to “bruise” Satan’s head (Gen. 3:15). Our God is powerful enough to do what He wants, including fulfill our need for redemption.

God’s Holiness Demands Our Repentance

When discussing God’s character and nature, many would begin with His love, but holiness must come first. His holiness made the flood necessary. “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart” (Gen. 6:5-6). So God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth” (Gen. 6:13). The holiness of God could no longer tolerate the depths of sin to which man had sunk.

Most prefer to ignore the holiness of God. They accept His power, because they want a God strong enough to do whatever they tell Him. They gladly talk of His love, even though they have wrongly conceived of it. But they strenuously reject His holiness because it is so closely tied to His wrath. But the Bible refers to His wrath and fury more often than to his love and

tenderness. We have a distorted view of God if we do not see both His good and severe sides (Rom. 11:22; Heb. 10:31).

Over one hundred times the Bible refers to God as “The Holy One.” “You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness” (Hab. 1:13). So when God “saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,” (Gen. 6:5) He could not ignore it. God, by His holy nature, cannot excuse sin even among His own children. How could He act as though they had not sinned? How could He act as though sin were righteousness? How could a God of complete purity and holiness not loathe that which is impure and vile? So He allowed those of Noah’s day ample time to repent, but finally his patience was exhausted (1 Peter 3:20). They must face His wrath. “God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day” (Psa. 7:11).

God’s holiness was most clearly demonstrated at the cross. Sin is always costly. It cost Adam and Eve the Garden of Eden. It cost those of Noah’s day their lives. It cost Lot his wife. It cost Moses the land of Canaan. All these were tragic circumstances, but consider what sin cost God! How repulsive sin must be to God if He was willing to give His Son’s life to atone for it! But He had to do it if He were to be both “just and justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Rom. 3:26). Many look at the cross and rightfully see the love of God. But we must never fail to see the cross as the greatest testimony of the holiness of God.

God’s holiness demands our repentance. Seriously contemplating His holy, sinless nature should cause us to understand the need for our change of will. In Isaiah’s vision of the glory of God he heard angelic beings fly around the throne of God singing, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.” Isaiah’s immediate reaction was to cry out, “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (Isa. 6:1-5). Isaiah saw himself in comparison to the holiness of God, and knew immediately of his own sinfulness. We are too quick to tell ourselves we are not as bad as some other people. But focusing on the holiness of God gives us a true picture of ourselves, and that should drive us to our knees in repentance.

God's Love Demands Our Response

If the holiness of God forces us to think of His wrath, His love invites us to think of His patience, grace, and mercy. What tremendous comfort is found in the eternal, matchless, awesome love of God. Where would we be without this? An all-powerful, all-holy God without love is terrifying. If His power and holiness are unaccompanied by love, then hell awaits us all (Eph. 2:4-5).

His love was displayed in His patience in the days of Noah. "When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls were saved through water" (1 Peter 3:20). What if the powerful, holy God had not had the loving patience necessary to wait for the completion of the ark? Surely the moral situation in the world did not improve during the time Noah was working on it. But God restrained Himself until the ark was complete. Then He took Noah and his family into the ark and kept them safe. When it was over He lovingly promised that this type of destruction would never happen again (Gen. 8:21-22; 9:11-17).

When we contemplate the love of God we think of a love that is: (1) undeserved—nothing in us caused Him to love us (1 John 4:19), (2) everlasting (Jer. 31:3), (3) infinite (Eph. 3:18-19), and (4) unchanging (Rom. 8:35-39). The supreme demonstration of that love was His Son's blood on Calvary (John 3:16). When we remember that Calvary occurred because of our sins, how can we not be overwhelmed by His love? "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

If the holiness of God will not bring you to your knees, then maybe His love will. Love demands an object, and we are the object of God's love. Ponder being loved by the all-powerful, all-holy God! It would be mind-boggling if He just thought about us, or was aware of us, but think of "his great love with which He loved us"! (Eph. 2:4). His was a love so great that He sent His only begotten Son to an excruciating death on our behalf. How can we not be humbled at that thought?

God's love demands our response. Many who talk of God's love do not even know the God of love. But Noah did. He

responded obediently to God's loving promise of protection from the flood by preparing the ark as he was commanded. "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Heb. 11:7). Noah responded to God's love with the only acceptable way—obedience.

God, who saved Noah and his family from the flood, wants to save us from eternal punishment. We have the same responsibility as Noah—humble obedience that displays our love (John 14:15). Anything less is to reject the love of God, and we do that at our eternal peril.

Conclusion

God's power, holiness, and love are all displayed in the great flood, but even more so on Calvary. His power demands our respect, His holiness demands our repentance, and His love demands our response to God's eternal plan. Our desperate need for redemption is fulfilled in the character and nature of God. Ω

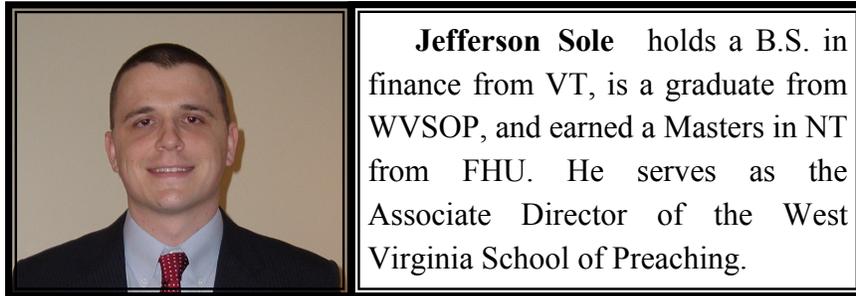
Biographical Sketch

Phil was born in Parkersburg, WV and graduated from Harding University in 1974. He has worked with churches in Sissonville, Prosperity and Farmington, WV and with the church in Cambridge, OH. Since 2000 he has been with the East High Street church in Springfield, OH where he also serves as one of the Elders. He holds Gospel meetings and has worked with various Christian youth camps. He has made mission trips to Italy, Cuba, and Scotland. He and his wife make annual trips to Cost Rica, and are planning a second trip to Peru. He also serves on the Board of Trustees of Midwestern Children's Home. Phil married the former Darleen Jones and they are the parents of two daughters—Amy Andrick (husband Luke) of Galloway, OH and Katie Gilchrist (husband Jack) of Hermitage, PA. They have three grandchildren—Joanna Andrick, Emily Andrick, and Andrew Gilchrist. He has preached the Gospel for more than thirty-six

years and has appeared on several lectureship programs in West Virginia and Ohio.

The Wonderful Creation

Jefferson Sole



Introduction:

In Genesis 1:1-31 Moses, an inspired man of God, recorded in simplicity the creation of the universe. Since it was written, mankind has been stirred to either prove or disprove the biblical account of creation. This has caused some that support the creation account to overstep the truth in an attempt to “prove” that Genesis 1:1-31 is a trustworthy account. Others have tried to support partially the creation account while still accepting various hypotheses conjured up by intellectuals today. For instance, some have tried to set forth a case in which the “Big Bang Hypothesis” is not in opposition to the Scripture. However, this cannot be accomplished without sacrificing Moses’ inspired words. If Moses, an inspired man of God, was incorrect about the creation, did God provide him false information? If so, are there more inspired writers that were led astray by God? Others, perhaps a majority, reject the account recorded in Genesis 1:1-31 entirely and contend that scenarios are possible by which the material world today has evolved from a lower, spontaneous form of life (Hypothesis of Evolution). Hypotheses such as these remove the need for a Creator and leave men responsible to direct their own paths (Jer. 10:23). If truth be known, attempts to prove or disprove the creation with worldly wisdom reveals a far greater problem within mankind than simply a disagreement over the “facts.” It reveals that mankind, as it has done in the past, has falsely elevated itself to that of a god. The wisdom of God is no

longer adequate for some (1 Cor. 1:18-31); instead, they must uncover something new to reveal the truth behind the existence and purpose of mankind. They contend what God has revealed is insufficient (Deut. 29:29), incomplete (Gal. 1:6-10; 2 Tim. 3:16-17), and untrustworthy! The words that God spoke to Job, who had finished questioning the Lord, reveal the arrogance that man displays when he calls into question the words of God. The Lord answered Job:

Who *is* this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; *and* caused the dayspring to know his place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay *to* the seal; and they stand as a garment. And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken. Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all. Where *is* the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkness, where *is* the place thereof, That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths *to* the house thereof? Knowest

thou *it*, because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days *is* great? (38:2-21)

Need we revisit how wonderful the works of God were from the beginning? Need we be reminded again of the weakness of man compared to the Almighty God? Indeed, we must! Mankind must be reminded until they are willing to confess as Job did, "... I uttered that I understand not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not" (Job 42:3). Therefore, it is of benefit to consider the wonderful creation by comparing the accomplishments of God to the accomplishments of men. From the creation account, let us consider: 1) the ingenuity of God vs. the ingenuity of man, 2) the perfection of God vs. the perfection of man, 3) the power of God vs. the power of man.

The Ingenuity of God vs. the Ingenuity of Man.

Thomas Alva Edison is considered to be one of the greatest, if not the greatest, inventors in American history. He obtained 1,093 patents in America and several more in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany which is the most issued to any individual in America. Edison's most notable and impressive inventions include the first practical light bulb, phonograph, and improvements to the telegraph, telephone, and motion picture technology. There is no debate; Thomas Edison was a genius and deserves the recognition that he continues to receive for his ingenuity and creative passion. With that said, compared to the ingenuity of God his accomplishments are meager and unimpressive. Though some of today's scientists believe in a type of organic evolution they still affirm that there are over 250,000 types of vegetation. Even if one accepts that figure as a starting point, God created over 228 times the number of complex processes in one day (day three of creation) than America's greatest inventor did in a lifetime (84 years). If one were to include God's creation ("invention") of the animal kingdom (day five and six) which consists of over a million species according to scientists who perpetuate the doctrine of evolution, then the ingenuity of mankind's greatest inventor is so insignificant that a comparison to God's ingenuity seems laughable. Is mankind in a

position to question God? How wonderful is the ingenuity of God based simply on the *number* of his inventions.

In addition, God's ingenuity is far superior to man's ingenuity when the use of *raw materials* is considered. Thomas Edison's and the entirety of mankind's ingenuity are bound by the raw-materials that God has supplied in the creation. In fact, Edison used a carbonized bamboo filament to create the first practical light bulb. It is said that he discovered this raw material by examining threads from a bamboo-fishing pole on the shore of Battle Lake. Edison, as great an inventor as he was, would have created nothing without the ingenuity of God. In contrast, God did not have or need raw materials. "In the beginning" God created both heaven and earth from nothing (Gen. 1:1). F.F. Bruce correctly stated, "The visible, material universe came into being by pure creation – out of nothing. It was not fashioned from preexisting material..." (125). God continued this unimaginable feat throughout creation when he produced light (Gen. 1:3), firmament (Gen. 1:7), plants (Gen. 1:11-12), greater and lesser lights (Gen. 1:15-16), and animals (Gen. 1:20-21, 25), from no preexisting source. Is mankind so bold to question the One that can make something out of nothing? How wonderful is the ingenuity of God when *raw materials* are considered!

The ingenuity of God is proven to be far greater than man's when *time and effort* is considered. Thomas Edison is credited as the first to bring together men of differing technical backgrounds to cultivate ideas. Countless hours were spent analyzing and modifying their inventions. In many cases the unveiled inventions lacked functionality and needed to be improved before they would have any practical use. For instance, Humphrey Davy, an English chemist, invented the first electric light bulb in 1809 by connecting two wires to a battery and attaching a charcoal strip between the other ends of the wires. Sr. Joseph Wilson Swan improved upon Davy's invention when he created a light bulb that lasted 13.5 hours in 1876. Still, in order for the light bulb to be of any practical use many modifications would have to be made. Then Edison, in 1879, used a carbon filament that burned for 40 hours which gave promise to the idea of an electrical lighting source. Still considered to be impractical, he later

discovered a bamboo-derived filament in 1880 which burned for 1200 hours. In 1991 Philips brought a light bulb to market that could burn for 60,000 hours using magnetic induction. Finally, after 185 years, a light bulb was created that was long lasting and undoubtedly useful. While the light bulb is impressive, God spoke into existence the sun, another form of incandescent heat, in one day (day 4 of creation) that provides light for the entire earth, and has burnt and will burn until the coming of our Lord.

Another telling example of the greatness God's ingenuity when *time and effort* is considered is demonstrated in flight. On the fifth day of creation God spoke into existence birds of all kinds (Gen. 1:21) that took flight "...above the earth in the open firmament of heaven" (Gen. 1:20). Leonardo da Vinci was enthralled by flight and supposedly made the first real contribution to the study of flight in the 1480's. Within the numerous drawings of Leonardo there were over 100 sketches that illustrated his theories on birds and mechanical flight. Otto Lilienthal was also captivated by the flight of birds and published a book on aerodynamics in 1889 after a long, tireless study of birds and how they fly. As a result of his studies, he designed a glider that was capable of flying one person for long distances, relatively speaking, for the time in which he lived. After more than 2500 flights he was killed when he lost control of his glider. Orville and Wilbur Wright ("Wright brothers") picked up their research where Lilienthal left off. They began experimenting in 1899 with the use of Lilienthal's book and their own study of birds in an effort to create the first flying machine. They noticed that birds created "lift" by using air that flowed over the curved surface of their wings. After the observation of birds in flight, they began to warp and change the contour of the wings they manufactured to create a flying machine. Their research eventually led to success. On December 17, 1903 the flying machine they created ("Flyer") was successfully piloted to an altitude of 10 feet. Twelve seconds and 120 feet later, Orville Wright emerged from the "Flyer" as the first individual to achieve flight. What God effortlessly created in one day and with much more impressive results mankind had finally achieved after 423 years of drawings, experimentation, and painstaking effort.

Edison once said, “Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration,” and while this is true with regard to man’s ingenuity, God perspired not. Is mankind so bold to question He that needs neither time nor effort to achieve greatness? How wonderful is the ingenuity of God when *time and effort* is considered.

The Perfection of God vs. the Perfection of Man

The perfection of God is another aspect of the creation that, when compared to mankind, demonstrates overwhelmingly the wonderfulness of God’s creation. Six times within the creation account (Gen. 1:1-31) it is repeated “God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25) and on the sixth day after His creation was completed “...God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good.” (Gen. 1:31). The meaning of the Hebrew word translated “good” “denotes the beautiful along with the good, even as the Greek word *kalo* denotes the good along with the beautiful” (Lange, 165). The word “good” is used in several different ways within the Word of God. Depending upon the context “good” may be used in reference to one’s character (i.e. moral goodness) (Psa. 25:8), God’s providential scheme (Gen. 50:20), or in a purely utilitarian sense (James 1:17). In Genesis 1:1-31 Moses seems to be using “good” in the utilitarian sense, that is to say, “a thing is ‘good’ because it is useful – it fulfills the purpose for which it was designed” (Jackson, “Reflections of the Goodness of God”). When God reflected on the entirety of His creation he concluded that it was “very good.” There were no missteps, imperfections, or unintended consequences. All that God had created was fulfilling its divine purpose. Creation was indeed perfect. Clarke commented:

Superlatively, or only good; as good as they could be. The plan wise, the work well executed, the different parts properly arranged; their nature, limits, mode of existence, manner of propagation, habits, mode of sustenance, &c., &c., properly and permanently established and secured; for everything was formed to the utmost perfection of its nature, so that nothing could be added or diminished

without encumbering the operations of matter and spirit on the one hand, or rendering them inefficient to the end proposed on the other; and God has so done all these marvelous works as to be glorified in *all*, by *all*, and through *all*. (39)

To think that our God had the capability to create the entire universe and all that it entails without even one mistake is surreal. It is surreal because we are familiar with our own abilities that often leave a project incomplete, imperfect, unimpressive, and with unintended consequences. The Hoover dam has long been recognized as one of mankind's greatest accomplishments. Located in the Black Canyon of the Colorado River this man-made dam was completed in 1936 to control floods, provide irrigation water and produce hydroelectric power. While ultimately considered a success, the construction of this massive dam that used over 3,250,000 cubic yards of concrete came with several unintended costs. The monetary cost of 49 million dollars (over \$700 million today) was not the only cost; rather, the dam was also constructed at the cost of several human lives. In December 1922 a surveyor named J.G. Tierney drowned looking for the most opportune site for the Hoover dam. During construction the unexpected temperatures between June 25 and July 26 of 1931, which averaged 120 degrees, claimed the lives of sixteen workers and riverbank residents. In addition 42 individuals died from carbon monoxide poisoning that the construction company claimed was pneumonia to avoid paying compensation to the families of the deceased. By the time construction was completed over 112 people died during the construction of the Hoover Dam. In contrast, God separated the waters with no unintended consequences (Gen 1:9-10). It behooves this writer to consider the effort put forth on this manuscript only to realize the extent to which it will be refined, edited, and manipulated before being printed. Even still, perfection will not be attained. Undoubtedly there will be words left unsaid, a comma misplaced, or a sentence left incomplete. What this writer could not achieve on a simple manuscript, God achieved in the creation of the entire universe. Who is mankind to

question the Almighty God? Does Richard Dawkins display the perfection of God? How wonderful is the creation of God displayed by His *perfection!*

God's Power vs. Man's Power

Thus far we have witnessed the wonderful creation by comparing God's ingenuity and perfection to mankind's. Within these comparisons the power of God is forthrightly displayed. Yet there is one aspect of the creation that demonstrates with overwhelming clarity the greatness of God's power and, consequently, the wonderfulness of His creation. Physicists, through an effort to understand our world, have uncovered many truths about God's creation. One of those truths is the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics. Without getting too technical, the 2nd Law of thermodynamics deals closely with the concept of entropy (i.e. measure of disorder or decrease in usable energy). The law reformatted states: *In any closed system, the entropy of the system will either remain constant or increase.* This is why bridges, dams, roadways, and planes are always in constant need of repair. All that mankind has invented and will invent in the future will slowly begin to lose its luster until its use or benefit is diminished or repaired. This should not be a surprise to the Christian; instead, a verification of what was affirmed by the Word of God (Matt. 6:19-20). While God created the universe to be subject to this law, He also created something outside its subjection, namely, the eternal human soul. On the sixth day of creation Moses recorded, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:26-27).

What does it mean to be created in the image of God? Obviously, it does not mean that our physical bodies were fashioned in the likeness of God, for God is spirit (Hos. 11:9; Jn. 4:24; Lk. 24:39). However, we were fashioned in His likeness in several other ways (See: Jackson, "Soul and Spirit - What's the Difference?"). First, we were given the ability, unlike animals

that rely on instinct, to make rational decisions. We have the “free-will” and ability to reason (Isa. 1:18) and then make choices from our understanding (Acts 17:2, 17). Second, mankind was given the unique ability to understand “right” from “wrong.” In other words, even where the Word of God had never been proclaimed mankind still has a limited, nonetheless important, moral aptitude (Rom. 2:14-15). Third, it is apparent from the Scripture that we were given an immortal soul (2 Cor. 4:16; Prov. 20:27), a soul that will live on for eternity after our bodies fall victim to the 2nd law of thermodynamics (Heb. 9:27). While God is the only being with immortality derived from no other source, mankind was given an immortal soul by God. Could mankind ever achieve the creation of the immortal? Ought mankind be so bold to call into question the Almighty God? Absolutely not! How wonderful is the creation of God as displayed by His *power!*

Conclusion

The creation, as recorded in Genesis 1:1-31, was a wonderful act performed by an awesome God. Though it is difficult to fully appreciate the awesomeness of God and the wonderfulness of His creation, hopefully our appreciation has grown by comparing the abilities of God to man. Particularly we have considered the ingenuity of God vs. the ingenuity of man, the perfection of God vs. the perfection of man, and the power of God vs. the power of man. The conclusion is quite simple; the creation was a wonderful act by an awesome God. An awesome God that need not entertain the frivolous questions of men or feel threatened by their arrogance but simply reply, “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psa. 46:10). Ω

Biographical Sketch

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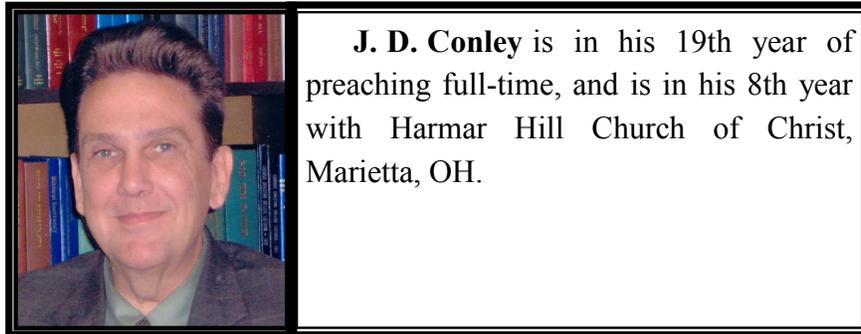
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The Fall of Man

J. D. Conley



The best thing about fall in the Ohio Valley is not the crisp air or the colorful foliage, but the WVSOP Victory Lectures. This marks the seventeenth year of this great spiritual feast and I am honored to speak on the program. I sincerely thank every precious soul who has worked so diligently to make this series of lectures possible. Only eternity will reveal the untold good this lectureship has accomplished for the cause of Christ, over the collective years. Through its various recordings (viz. the book, CD's and DVD's) this series of lessons on the first eleven chapters of Genesis will perpetually speak. Thus, this study of God's book of beginnings will virtually have no end. Since man's greatest need is redemption, it is my prayer that *this* lectureship, will enjoy a matchless degree of success in penetrating the hearts of lost souls around us. May our Creator, the heavenly Father, bless this combined effort.

Introduction

The fear of falling is innate. This is why man possesses a fear and loathing of, and for, heights. The mere *thought* of slipping off a lofty perch is terrifying for most. Even those who leap out of airplanes with parachutes, or launch off bridges with bungee cords, have to first overcome their natural fear of heights. They can experience, even enjoy the plummet, only because of the

chute or cord strapped to them. Without that assurance, such activity would never be considered, much less attempted. Apart from the confidence of returning safely and softly to terra firma, no right thinking person would dream of deliberately falling.

Yet, millennia before parachutes or bungee cords were ever envisioned, man deliberately fell. It was then, and continues to be the most horrific fall he has ever taken. This fall shattered not his physical bones, but his spiritual framework. The impact splattered not his blood, but instead necessitated the shedding of blood far more precious than his own. The deafening thud first heard and felt in Eden reverberates even today. Nonetheless, it was a fall he doubtless believed he would enjoy and survive. He was terribly mistaken! Tragically it was a plunge he foolishly took at the behest of a false assurator. Because of this spiritual spill mankind has been broken and bent ever since. As this wording of this chapter states, it was not just *a* fall it was *the* fall. It was the genesis of the moral deterioration of the race and the desperate need for redemption. How sad that the first man and woman seemed to be bereft of any inborn fear of falling spiritually thereby hurting not only themselves, but their loving Creator. Such dread and hesitancy did not seem to even enter their minds. Let's examine *the* fall in eight distinct stages:

The Height

Implied in the phrase, "The Fall of Man" is a certain loftiness. In order to fall a degree of altitude is needed. To put it in atmospheric terms man is in the stratosphere of God's creation. Man is the apex, the very pinnacle and zenith of His creative handiwork. As David penned in a psalm that extols God's creative work he affirms man's status, ***For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou maddest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet'***(Psalm 8:5-6). Regarding man's status/height, the scriptures say that *God made* him a *little* lower than the angels. Not only this, but that He crowned man with glory and honor giving him dominion over the rest of creation. Therefore if man is made a little lower than angels and has dominion over the works of God's hands, he must

necessarily be the apex of God's creation here on earth. Additionally, since man is made in the image of God, (Gen.1:26) he soars high over everything and anything else God created. The fact that God gave man a soul (Gen.2:7) also denotes his unique elevation above all other creatures, this puts man in a class all by himself. Man is from the Sublime not the slime.

“God crowned him with honor. He raised him to a level unoccupied by fowl life, aquatic life or animal life on land. Man is unique; he is not an evolved animal as both atheistic and theistic evolution teach...Deity conferred on humanity a gloriously high honor that sets man distinctly apart from all other forms of created life on earth" (Taylor, 22).

It's intriguing to contemplate just how far and to what extent man's dominion would have reached had he had not fell. Speaking of man's dominion the writer of Hebrews looks back on the eighth psalm quoting it, ***Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus...***"(Heb.2:8,9a). Perhaps (and I do mean that word), when God created man it was His intention to have him exercise even greater control over the creation. But man fell due to sin. Now man deals with a somewhat diminished reign over the creation, even though he still dominates. Could this be what the writer of Hebrews means by ***But now we see not yet all things put under him?"*** Man exercises dominion by his superior intelligence over the animal kingdom. But man, because of the brute strength of some animals, has difficulty in his mastery of them. It would be interesting to know prior to the fall of man if he possessed superior physical strength over the animal kingdom. I don't know that he did. But it would be odd to think that God would vouchsafe man in the Garden of Eden if he were in danger, or inferior in any way to the animals that lived there. When Adam named the animals, (Gen.2:19-20) he apparently did not feel threatened or in any physical danger when what he called the "lion, tiger and bear" paraded past him.

This fall cost Adam and Eve everything. Their relationship with God, their innocence, their perfect home, and their access to the tree of life which made possible perpetuity of physical life. Perhaps they even lost more than this, things of which we are unaware. All of these blessings and privileges came to an abrupt halt. Their lives would never be the same. Although we have not inherited the sin of this first couple, we too, at one time or another, made the deliberate choice to sin and also fall, (Rom.3:23; 5:12). Each and every time man chooses to sin he falls as far as he can. This fall is more deadly than jumping out of a airplane without a parachute or from a bridge without a bungee cord. The fall results in the awful aftermath of spiritual death.

What were the circumstances that brought about the spiritual topple and plummet of

God's most noble order of creation? Man obviously fell from his spiritual pedestal because he freely chose to do so, yet he had some encouragement. Therefore, it is not surprising that the next stage in the fall of man can be termed:

The Sleight

The serpent who fooled Eve was slippery in more ways than one. The Scriptures credit him with being intelligent, intrusive, industrious, cunning, crafty, wily, deceptive, extremely persuasive and on the prowl for the people of God, (cf. Job 1:6-11; Eph.6:11; 2Cor.11:14; 2Tim.4:10; 1Pet.5:8). Being aware of this, the apostle Paul voiced his concern for the Christians at Corinth this way, ***But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ***'(2Cor.11:3). The peerless apostle states that the first woman was beguiled by means of Satan's subtlety. In other words, she was deceived by the Devil's ability to effectively misrepresent truth. He was then, as he is now, the master of subterfuge. By inspiration Moses provides the following detail regarding Satan's deceptive powers, ***Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made...***(Gen.3:1). Thus when Satan slithered up next to Eve he was anxious to exact every ounce of

poisonous influence he could upon her. But his approach would not be head on, he had an angle, he *always* has an angle. His method of operation is often not easily detected. His ability to attack our flanks is one of his *“devises”* of which we are to be cognizant (2Cor.2:11). Nevertheless, Adam and Eve had been explicitly warned by God **“Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”**(Gen.2:16-17). But Satan comes along with an angle. He begins by planting doubt in the woman's mind, **“Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden”**(Gen.3:1)? I appreciate the following paraphrase:

“I hear the rumor that God has forbidden you to eat of a certain tree in the garden. Surely He would not be so restrictive” (McClish, 86).

Very slick indeed! Satan first sows a seed of doubt in the sure soil of God's word. It quickly sprouts and flourishes in the mind of Eve as discontentment. A discontentment that she believes God has unjustly thrust upon her. She could eat of any and all of the other numerous trees growing in the garden, but that was not blessing enough. Satan had her longing after the *very* one, the *only* one, God had prohibited. Instead of firmly and soundly renouncing Satan, and then fleeing from him, she foolishly got into a conversation with him! Granted, she told the serpent what God said, but she did not stand on it. She just relayed it and then capitulated. She seemed to lack any degree of conviction whatsoever in what God had plainly told her husband. Likewise, we can quote scripture and tell others what God says, and even feel good about it, but if we do not follow through and do it, we too are being duped just as much as Eve! May we be dissatisfied with what the world offers, and content with God's blessings (1Jn.2:15-17, Heb.13:5). Eve's fatal mistake was that she gave Satan the benefit of the doubt, and doubted the very One she should have trusted, God.

As the sleight progresses the serpent uncoils from his subtle approach and strikes boldly at the truth of God's Word by

unabashedly proclaiming to the woman, ***Ye shall not surely die***"(Gen.3:4). Then he brings the sleight to its climax by giving Eve a reason why she would not die, should she partake of the forbidden fruit, ***for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil***"(Gen.3:5).

Thus, the sleight unfolded in these ways: First, doubt was cast on God's prohibition. Second, the Devil blatantly contradicts God's word. Finally, he baits Eve by making the claim that she will be god-like. All three maneuvers in the sleight were based on lies. The serpent knew full well that God had informed Eve which tree to avoid, yet he played dumb. In other words, he deceived her in pretending not to know. Next he lied by claiming Eve would not die by ingesting the fruit, he then capped off the deception with another lie which he knew would appeal to Eve's vanity, viz: deification. With the sleight now in place, all the tricky Tempter had to do was unwind and watch:

The Fight

Unfortunately, not a fight between himself and Eve so to speak. That is, the fight did not involve Eve giving the serpent "what for." She certainly should have had some choice words of her own, words of truth, words given in defense of what God spoken. But she said nothing of any real value along these lines other than weakly repeating what God had earlier told Adam. We expected more of Eve.

However, it was not this *kind* of fight. Sadly, it was an inward fight as opposed to an argument of verbiage with the viper. It was a spiritual struggle within herself. Was she going to do what God said, or what the Devil tempted her to do? Herein lies the power of Satan. As Eve gazed at the dangling and delicious fruit she was enticed. The serpent did not force feed her, he only enticed. The decision to taste and eat was entirely Eve's.

Likewise today we must realize and accept that Satan's power, though great, is limited. His power resides only in the realm of persuasion. He can tempt, but he cannot force. He can persuade, but he cannot coerce. He can exert appeal but we can choose to repeal. No one has the platform on which to say, "The Devil made

me do it," that's a cop out. Read and believe these words of Paul, ***There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it***"(1Cor.10:13). Regarding this wonderful verse, my father has written the ff.:

“...he (Paul) assures them (the Corinthians) that never will God allow sin to overwhelm us, except by our consent. What a blessed comfort to rest in the knowledge that we are able to bear every temptation! God has promised us a way of escape. Let us never be guilty of saying, "I could not help myself." Let us never think that our situation is unique. Every temptation we confront has been overcome by others and can be by us. The task is never too hard. The desire is never too strong. The habit is never overpowering. There is always a way of escape...In spite of the comfort this passage gives, it places the responsibility for sin squarely on our shoulders. When we sin, every time we sin, it is our fault. We cannot shift the blame to God, our parents, our mate, society, or Satan himself. We are to blame" (Conley, 65).

Christ was able to defeat Satan with no more than what we have today, the written Word of God, (cf. Mt.4:1-10). Confronted face to face with the Tempter, *three times* Christ was able to resist his tenacious advances. He did so with Scripture. Being personally afflicted by Satan, the beleaguered patriarch Job was able to fend off the Adversary's attacks trusting in God for deliverance ***!..I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food***"(Job 23:12). Even his wife could not persuade Job to renounce God, (Job 1:9). He told his "friends" ***Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him***"(Job 13:15). Joseph, though young and far away from home refused the advances of Potiphar's wife telling her ***"how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God"*** (Gen.39:9)? Others in the Bible were able to resist temptation and say no to the Devil, why didn't Eve? Obviously, it was not because she couldn't, but because she wouldn't.

Each day, we too are in a fight with the nefarious forces of the nether region. Every day we are forced to make the conscious decision to either follow Christ or Satan. It was no different for the first man and woman. The Genesis record states that both the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil grew "*...in the midst of the garden*"(cf. Gen.2:9; 3:3). It prompts one to wonder if these trees did not grow side by side. If they did, we can envision Adam and Eve perhaps coming to the tree of life each morning for breakfast. If so, they both had to consciously say no to any urgings that might have effected them as their eyes caught sight of the verboten fruit.

Certainly, it was a fight Eve could have won had she wanted to badly enough. Yet she allowed herself to be coaxed into sin by Satan and her own selfish desires. May we keep in mind it is not a sin to be tempted, (cf. Heb.4:15). Nonetheless, if we deliberately put ourselves in temptation's path, have we not crossed the line? Or if we find ourselves in the throes of temptation and decide to stay put, and not *take*, much less *look*, for *tl way of escape*, have we not already succumbed? Eve surrendered too easily. She did not fight hard enough with the temptation the serpent placed before her. Sometimes, neither do we. Instead of her winning the fight, as she was capable of doing, she took:

The Bite

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat"(Gen.3:6). This mutual bite was *the* fall of man. In the entirety of Holy Writ what other verse can compare with the tragedy of this one?

James describes the spiral from temptation into sin this way, ***But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"***

(James 1:14-15). Is this not precisely the same path of perdition Eve and her husband took?

“She was the first to demonstrate James's detailed description of the temptation-enticement-lust-sin-death process” (McClish, 91).

What tactics did Satan use that led to the fall? The same ones he uses today. Satan needs no new bag of tricks. His old ones work just fine. Basically his vile bag contains just three, but extremely effective gimmicks. Concerning these the apostle John says, ***For all that is in 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***”(1 John 2:16). As she stood near the deadly tree, perhaps inhaling its sweet aroma, she desired the taste and texture of the fruit upon her lips and tongue, this was the lust of the flesh. Then she took notice of its appearance, the sheen of the outer skin, the shape, the supposed heft, this was the lust of the eyes. Finally, she contemplated the alleged benefit of ingesting the fruit, i.e., having Divine knowledge.

Though Eve had all three of these thrust upon her at once, we recognize that we do not have to be inundated with all three before we can be tempted to sin. Nor are we unaware of these old tricks of Satan. Though they are old and well known, they are very persuasive. If we would just do what Adam and Eve failed to do, i.e., think ahead of the consequences of our sin, it would go far in preventing us from sinning. Even yet, that is not a strong enough deterrent for many.

This sad account also shows us that we can be tempted to sin by those we are closest to. Adam was tempted by his wife, she no doubt convincingly repeated Satan's spiel to him. He too, bought into it and took a bite as well. The one who was created as a helpmeet for Adam, helped him meet both physical and spiritual destruction. For God had said, ***But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die***”(Gen.2:17).

What a terrible plight was brought about from this bite! It positively was not worth it! This forces us to consider next:

The Sight

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons"(Gen.3:7).

The eyes of Adam and Eve were indeed opened, and they saw more than they wanted to. Satan had mixed in a bit of truth with his lies, a practice that is deadly even to this day, because it gives falsehood an air of credibility.

What was the reaction to their enlightened state? To cover up, run and hide. This is still man's favorite way to deal with his sins. What a pitiful sight they must have been. Here they are, swathed in fig leaves and trying to hide behind trees from God! They saw themselves as they really were but somehow thought God would not. But at least Adam and Eve were cognizant of their spiritual condition. Even though we are told, ***"...the whole world lieth in wickedness"***(1 John 5:19), and ***"...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"***(Rom.3:23), the people of the world are blind to their spiritual condition. At times, even those in the Lord's church are oblivious to sin in their life, or if they aren't, they simply don't care. Adam and Eve, though they grievously erred, were no less ashamed over the consequences of their action and perhaps even remorseful for their sin. They recognized the state they were in and did not like it. They took notice of their deplorable sight. They saw themselves as they really were and so did God. Though He called out to Adam ***"Where art thou"*** (Gen.3:9)?, He did so, not for information, but for illumination. God wanted Adam to see where *he* was! Being forced to take notice of the sight of their fallen state, the first husband and wife did not lie about what they had done. Adam confessed he was afraid, naked and hence was in hiding. He also admitted that he had eaten the forbidden fruit, although he shifted the blame to Eve. God then asked Eve ***"What is this that thou hast done?"*** She was forthright in her answer, ***"The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."***

How sad it is today, that when people are caught red-handed in sin, they deny it

with all their might. They don't see, or won't see, the awful and lost condition they are in. They are spiritually blind. Such are

not *even* on the same moral plane as Adam and Eve! It's as though folks like these today, have managed to somehow *add* a few fathoms to the original depth of the fall Adam and Eve brought about! At least Adam and Eve saw and acknowledged their sin and sad condition. Due to rampant spiritual blindness, folks today don't even blush, much less recognize, or even care about their sinful standing before Almighty God.

But God sees and God cares. He is ***"...longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"*** (2 Pet.3:9). Though God's attributes of power, knowledge, and all abiding presence have no limit, such is not the case with His patience. His longsuffering with man will one day come to an end, (cf. 2Thess.1:7-9; 2 Pet.3:10-12). Nonetheless, He is giving men and women time to take notice of the sight/condition they are in, so that they might repent and be saved. *Even* those who hate Him and reject Him.

"The scriptures abound with evidence of God's longsuffering. Far from desiring that any should perish, he longs for all to come to repentance. Any theory which teaches that God does not will the salvation of all men is therefore palpably false" (Woods, 186).

Inherent in the fall of man is his desperate need to see that he *has* fallen. Until he is capable of making this determination he will never see the need to be lifted up. How grateful we should be to our loving Father that He saw fit to lift up His Son on the cross in order that He might ***"draw all men"*** to Jesus, and hence to Him (John 12:32; 14:6). Each Lord's day we are called back to that scene, a *sight* indeed, that once and for all takes care of those who are willing to do something about their sins. ***"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved"*** (John 3:16,17).

Following the sight of Adam and Eve's sin and God's awareness of it, came:

The Flight

“And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Gen.3:22-24)

Earlier God had placed Adam in the garden, and had presented Eve to him there, (Gen.2:8, 22). Now He was thrusting them both out. This expulsion demonstrates that sin has dire consequences, (cf. Is.59:1-2; Rom.6:23). One of the most lethal lies that the subtle serpent is still hissing is that sin has no downside and that one can indulge in as much sin as desired with impunity. But look what happened to Adam and Eve, who committed only *one*, and then looked almost noble in their owning up to it. They were permanently banished from their perfect home. Not only that, they began to die physically by being denied any further access to the tree of life. There would be no more partaking of its life-preserving fruit, angelic security made certain of that! The man and woman were also going to experience some things utterly foreign to them prior to their fall. Namely, sorrow, manual labor, labor pains, perspiration and a proliferation of thorns and thistles to constantly combat if man wanted to eat. This is what *one* sin wrought! Who would say it was worth it? Even the snake had to get accustomed to a different lifestyle! He was forced to get used to a dirt diet and sore belly. Although he was still ambulatory, apparently there was a radical change in how he got around. Speculation abounds regarding the various appendages and limbs the snake possessed before he was cursed by God. It is asserted by many that his posture was vertical as opposed to horizontal. However,

“As to what serpents looked like before this curse, only God knows. If we needed to know we would have been told. It is far more important for us to see what God has revealed than to speculate on what has not been said” (Jones, 32).

While there may be some things we cannot know about our arch enemy, there are certainly some things that are beyond doubt or speculation. For instance, even though the Devil's influence is everywhere, *He* is not! Unlike God, he is not omnipresent. He has to traverse back and forth upon the earth, (Job 1:7). James declares that upon our resistance of him he will "*flee*" from us, (James 4:7). The attribute of omnipresence does not allow for the possibility of fleeing or absenting oneself. Therefore, omnipresence is solely a Divine attribute, not a Satanic one. Let's not ascribe to the Devil more power than he has.

When we sin, each and every time we sin, we expel ourselves from the garden of fellowship with our heavenly Father, (Is.59:1-2). Like Adam and Eve we are denied access to the very One who is the Giver and Sustainer of life, (Gen.2:7, John 10:10, James 1:17-18). Yet because of God's unfathomable love for sinful man, the flight we have all taken on the dark wings of sin can be reversed. We can soar once again into the radiant courts of God for one reason, and one reason only. That reason is:

The Light

Sandwiched in between the recognition of man's fall, and his subsequent ejection from Eden's garden, is the first glimmer of hope, the first rays of redemption. This blessed hope is revealed in these Divinely prophetic words spoken to the despised serpent, "*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*" (Gen.3:15).

This is precisely where the theme for this entire lectureship, "*The Need For Redemption*" rests. This is the very first verse in the Bible that has Messianic overtones.

It's been called the "*protevangelium*" i.e., "the first gospel." No sooner did the dark curtain of sin ring down, God's immediate response was to foretell that light was on the way. But *this* light would be far brighter than the fiery star (Gen.1:16). This light would not be the sun, but *the Son*. The truth that this is a prophecy of Christ the Light (John 1:9; 8:12; 12:46) must not be denied.

“Note the expression “the seed of woman” Generally in the discussion of procreation, seed is attributed to the man rather than the woman.

There has been one exceptional case in which a woman brought forth a son without the implantation of seed by a man - the birth of Jesus, the Christ” (McClish, 100).

“...the only “seed of woman” ever known upon earth was and is Jesus Christ our Lord. Paul’s statement to the effect that Christ was “made to be of a woman” (Gal.4:4) implies not only the virgin birth of Christ but his pre-existence also” (Coffman, 67,68).

Because a Redeemer was needed, a Redeemer was promised, and a Redeemer was sent.

“The terminology of this verse is such that it cannot apply to *anything* in heaven or upon earth except the long spiritual conflict between Christ and Satan” (Coffman, 67).

Verse 15 must not be limited to just an earthly meaning. Whereas men kill more snakes, than vice-versa, this is not even close to the thrust of this passage. Instead it is the most glory-filled promise ever made by God to man assuring the race that the seed of woman will destroy the power of Satan. And, He most certainly did! When Christ died on the cross, Satan bruised His heel, i.e., gave our Lord a minor injury, it put Him down for a period of three days. However, when the Lord arose from the dead and walked out of the tomb, He delivered a head-shot, i.e., a death blow to the Devil from which he can never recover. He is now forever doomed, and his power has been diminished, (Mt.24:31, Heb.2:14, Rev.1:18; 12:7-9).

Concerning “the seed” study the ff. passages (Gen.22:17-18, 2Sam.7:12-16, 1Kings 2:1-4, Psalms 89:19-37, Gal.3:16, 29, Gen.49:10, Rom.16:20, etc) With all these passages in view one has a much sharper picture of the seed of Gen.3:15. One brother has written:

“There would be a particular seed (Christ), especially from a woman (Virgin Birth), who would deal particularly and finally (atonement) with the one particular enemy of man (Satan). Because of this all men who would enter Christ (Gal.3:26-27) would defeat Satan (Rom.16:20) and would themselves become

the spiritual seed of Abraham (Gal.3:29), living victoriously over the sons of Satan (John 8:44; Rev.19:19-20) because of the one victorious seed, Jesus (Rev.19:21).” (Jones, 33)

Because Christ, the seed of woman has “*...abolished death , and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*” (2 Tim.1:10), the whole of mankind can now enjoy not only this life, but the one to come:

Delight

This can be called “the height regained,” i.e., due to our reconciliation with God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ, fallen man can now get up and stretch himself “*toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*” (Phi.3:14).

We can now consider ourselves as “*...holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling...*” (Heb.3:1), and “*...partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world...*” (2 Pet.1:4). We can now be “*...called the sons of God*” and have the hope “*...of seeing Jesus as he is*” (1John.3:1, 2).

The Word of God begins with the tree of life growing in a paradise of beauty. Likewise, because God has redeemed mankind by the blood of Christ, the Bible ends the way in which it began, with the tree of life in a setting of indescribable beauty, (cf. Rev.21:18ff.; 22:1-2).

Conclusion

The fall of man was tragic. He has never since experienced anything worse or equal to it. But God provided a way to bring man back. Dare we fall again? Sadly, many of the redeemed have (2 Pet.2:20-22). May we *never* let it happen to us! “*Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city*” (Rev.22:14).

Biographical Sketch

J. D. Conley was born in El Paso, TX., in 1959. He is a third generation Gospel preacher and is in his 19th year of full-time preaching. He majored in Bible at Freed-Hardeman University and is a graduate of the Brown Trail School of Preaching in Fort Worth, TX. He's had three local works, two in W.V. and is now in his eighth year working with the Harmar Hill church in Marietta, OH., where he also serves as one of the elders. He has been married to the former Denise Cooper for 32 years, they have six children.

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EVOLUTION, FACT OR FICTION?

Brad Harrub, Ph.D.

Introduction

He has bought into the lie. Now completing the first semester of his sophomore year, this young man has endured three semesters in general science classes. When he initially entered the university, he held mixed feelings about the origin of mankind and the origin of the universe. However, he has been so fully indoctrinated in the evolutionary theory in his classrooms that “origins” no longer remains a question. On several different occasions, this young man has sat at the feet of professors who claim that organic evolution is a “fact.” They have convinced him that science does not make sense except in the light of evolution. Rarely is a subject taught without it somehow being tied back to the evolutionary theory. His textbook is filled with examples that stand as proof for the evolutionary theory. Using intellectual intimidation, the professors have successfully indoctrinated yet another generation of students. So after only three semesters in college, his mind is made up and his worldview has been altered to fit his mindset.

Having sat through a two-week-long videotape series on the life of Charles Darwin in my freshman biology class, the scenario above is not foreign to me. Week after week, my fellow students and I were educated in the sciences from a distinctly evolutionary perspective. What once was only taught as a theory in a general biology class setting has now infected basically every field of science. Many professors believe that one cannot discuss the parts of a plant, the anatomy of a mammal, a bacterial culture, or Mendelian genetics without touching on evolution or evolutionary history. It has successfully permeated all branches of science. Charles Darwin—the man recognized as the Father of the Evolutionary Theory—was heralded as a world-renowned scientist and was elevated to almost “sainthood” status in many of my classrooms. It was only upon further investigation and research that I learned the truth about this man and his theory.

Charles Darwin: Cheater, Preacher, and Scientist

Most parents have told their children: “Cheaters never win.” But history has recorded that, at least on earth, that is not always the case. In science, unlike many other disciplines, dates hold great meaning and power. The scientist who first publishes a particular finding is given credit for that discovery from that point forward. This places a great deal of pressure on researchers to publish their findings, and has even resulted in the advent of “advanced online publishing,” as scientists literally race to have their names as the first to publish new findings. It also has caused some scientists to cheat and try to out-publish a rival in order to receive attention or fame. One such race has all but been forgotten in the annals of science—and sadly, the cheater was never truly rebuked. Instead, today he is honored and even elevated as one of the greatest scientists who ever walked the earth.

On February 12, 1809, two individuals would be born who would both change the history of the world. Abraham Lincoln was born in Hardin County, Kentucky, and he would go on to serve as president and lead the United States through its greatest internal conflict—the Civil War. On that same day, Charles Robert Darwin was also born at his family home, The Mount in Shrewsbury, England, and he would go on to alter the landscape of science. Two different men living as contemporaries took two very different paths and left two very different legacies.

Darwin’s Early Years

Darwin was the fifth child of Dr. Robert and Susannah Darwin. His mother died when he was just eight years old, and so her influence was short lived in his life. This tragedy, combined with the fact that his father was an extremely busy physician, probably played a large role in why Darwin was hungry for attention and would often manipulate people for his benefit. Darwin’s father ran one of the largest medical practices outside of London. His grandfather, Erasmus Darwin was also a physician and the author of *Zoonomia*, or *The Laws of Organic Life*. These men definitely helped shape Darwin’s worldview, and their

influence would eventually mold Darwin into someone who longed for status.

Aside from the death of his mother, Charles Darwin led a fairly easy childhood. His father had him baptized as an infant in the Anglican Church—even though the family normally attended the Unitarian church with their mother while she was living.

At the tender age of sixteen, Darwin was sent to the University of Edinburgh to study medicine. Everyone assumed he would follow in the footsteps of his prominent father and grandfather. However, when he was subjected to watching surgical procedures performed without anesthesia, Darwin realized he was not cut out for medicine. Simply put, he could not handle the “occasions when the surgeon's assistant held down the shrieking patient by main force.” Even though he craved the attention that position would give him, Darwin neglected his studies and could not stomach that career.

Trained as a Preacher

In an effort to save face and the family reputation, Darwin was shipped off to Cambridge University where he studied—of all things—divinity. At this time in his life, Charles Darwin adhered to the conventional beliefs of the Church of England. But that was all about to change. During his tenure at Cambridge, Darwin met a group of Cambridge priests who enjoyed science—led by John Steven Henslow. Henslow, like Darwin, enjoyed collecting various specimens they found along their walks together.

In 1831 Darwin graduated from Cambridge with a degree in **divinity**—the only degree he would ever receive. While many consider him one of the greatest scientific minds ever to have walked the earth, the reality is this man was trained in the theology. How ironic is it that Darwin was trained as a preacher and yet many evolutionists today ridicule preachers and condemn religion.

It was John Henslow's recommendation to Captain Robert FitzRoy that landed Charles Darwin a volunteer position as a naturalist aboard the *H.M.S. Beagle*. A voyage that originally was scheduled to last two years eventually lasted five, during which

time Darwin would record meticulous notes and collected hundreds of biological specimens. And it was that voyage that eventually brought him to the Galapagos Islands where he found creatures that caused him to ponder the origin of living things.

Five Years of Seasickness

Darwin and the crew of the *H.M.S. Beagle* sailed out of Plymouth, England on December 27, 1831, on a surveying expedition. Before they set sail, FitzRoy gave Darwin the first volume of Charles Lyell's book *Principles of Geology*, urging him to read it "but not believe it." It would be this book that introduced Darwin to the theory that landforms were the result of gradual processes over huge periods of time. Lyell's book would later play an important role in molding Darwin's beliefs about gradualism and its role in plant and animal development.

During his time on the *Beagle*, Darwin learned two things. First, life at sea did not agree with him as he often suffered from severe bouts of seasickness. At one point he caught a fever in Argentina and spent an entire month in bed. Second, he proved gifted at collecting and recording specimens as he honed his skills along the way. He spent a great deal of time sending Henslow, his mentor, letters of descriptions of his various observations. During this trip he collected enough material to write three books on South American geology. Henslow, meanwhile, often read Darwin's letters before the Cambridge Philosophical Society and the Geological Society of London—an act that brought Darwin a "celebrity" status in scientific circles even before his return. The stage was set for this seasick naturalist to garner attention as a leader in the scientific community. This one journey would set up Darwin as a scientist and would shape the rest of his life. One wonders where the world would be had he never stepped onboard.

[Quote "...I am quite conscious that my speculations run beyond the bounds of true science....It is a mere rag of an hypothesis with as many flaw[s] & holes as sound parts." Charles Darwin to Asa Gray, cited by Adrian Desmond and James Moore, Darwin, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1991) pp. 456, 475.]

Married with Children

On January 29, 1839, Darwin married his cousin Emma Wedgwood. Emma served as a nurse for much of Darwin's life as his health suffered throughout much of his adulthood. All told, they were blessed with ten children. Two of those died as infants. But the death of his ten-year-old daughter Annie in 1851 probably affected him more than anything. Many have speculated that this was the keystone event that caused Darwin to completely turn his back on God.

Cheater and Author

On June 18, 1858, Darwin received a manuscript that would forever change his life. The author Alfred Russell Wallace had penned his own theory regarding natural selection and evolution. Darwin was literally holding in his hand a paper that would record Wallace's name in the annals of history. Had Wallace sent the manuscript to any scientific journal rather than Darwin, history would have given honors for the advent of evolution to Wallace, and Darwin's name would be castigated to the heap of forgotten names in science. In an unprecedented and clearly selfish move, Darwin sent Wallace's paper on to Charles Lyell to be considered for publication, but the plot was hatched to co-publish. Wallace's family was suffering from scarlet fever and he was left to trust Darwin, Charles Lyell, and Joseph Hooker. However, his trust was misplaced. Charles Lyell and Joseph Dalton Hooker schemed to read and publish Wallace's essay in conjunction with some of Darwin's unpublished writings before the Linnaean Society and published in the Society's journal. In Darwin's material they included a letter to the American botanist Asa Gray that **predated** Wallace's essay. This would forever place Darwin's name ahead of Wallace, even though scholars who have compared their articles commonly agree that Wallace's contributions are more significant than often thought.

Mechanism and Micro vs. Macro Evolution

With that under his belt, Darwin hastily put together a book titled *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection—or*

The Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life. It was this book that helped launch the organic theory for evolution. In his book *Origin of Species* Darwin laid out how he viewed evolution to work:

1. Inheritance of acquired characteristics (borrowing some from concepts developed by naturalist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck)
2. Adaptation
3. Natural selection

Two of these “mechanisms”—inheritance of acquired characteristics and adaptation—have been thoroughly discounted by scientists. Darwin’s main driving force for evolution was natural selection, often described as “survival of the fittest.” Darwin believed that the surviving species would improve over time, and evolve into a completely new species. Most honest scientists will admit natural selection does not work above the level of microevolution. Researchers today also realize this is a tautology—meaning that the fit survive, and the ones that survive are fit. Sadly, there are still some scientists today who accept organic evolution because they know microevolution to be authentic.

Microevolution is true—and is defined as small changes within limited parameters (ex. dogs bred for different traits). **Macroevolution** (or organic evolution) **is false** and has never been proven in a lab. According to the macroevolution model, the universe is completely self-contained. That is to say, the universe is all that exists and thus everything descended from a common ancestor—which itself came from an inorganic form. There is no “First Cause,” no “superintending intelligence,” no “divine guidance” that is responsible for what we see around us. Organic evolution maintains that all life descended from a common ancestor (ex. dog to a fern or giraffe). Textbooks often teach the truth about microevolution, and then try to slip in macroevolution—that all species evolved from a common ancestor, something that has never been experimentally proven. **Darwin was teaching and espousing macroevolution.** Young people need to know the difference. As Hugo de Fries once noted: “Natural selection may explain the **survival** of the fittest, but it

cannot explain the **arrival** of the fittest” (1905, p. 825-826, emp. added). Respected Swedish biologist Sören Lövtrup observed:

Micro mutations do occur, but the theory that these alone can account for evolutionary change is either falsified, or else it is an unfalsifiable, hence metaphysical, theory. I suppose that nobody will deny that it is a great misfortune if an entire branch of science becomes addicted to a false theory. But this is what has happened in biology.... **I believe that one day the Darwinian myth will be ranked the greatest deceit in the history of science.** When this happens, many people will pose the question: How did this ever happen? (1987, p. 422, emp. added).

Darwin was completely wrong on inheritance of acquired characteristics. While he recognized some of the problems with Lamarck’s original theory, Darwin still believed the environment might have the ability to change an organism. Today scientists know that changes that occur in body cells are not passed on to the DNA in reproductive cells. Scientists know today that body cells, whether it be muscle tissue or skin tissue, does not have an effect on sperm and egg cells. Adaptation is ill defined and is not a mechanism for change. Scientifically speaking, the mechanism Darwin put forth for evolution is not tenable.

[Quote “And the salient fact is this: if by evolution we mean macroevolution (as we henceforth shall), then it can be said with the utmost rigor that the doctrine is totally bereft of scientific sanction. Now, to be sure, given the multitude of extravagant claims about evolution promulgated by evolutionists with an air of scientific infallibility, this may indeed sound strange. And yet the fact remains that there exists to this day not a shred of bona fide scientific evidence in support of the thesis that macro evolutionary transformations have ever occurred.” Wolfgang Smith, *Teilhardism and the New Religion* (Rockford., Ill.: Tan Books, 1988), pp. 5-6.]

Darwin devoted two chapters of *Origin of Species* to the fossil record. One might think that with two chapters, Darwin had a

great deal to say in evaluating the available evidence, yet a careful examination reveals that he spent most of these chapters carefully apologizing for a lack of evidence. Darwin was therefore left to speculate and predict that eventually the fossil record would bear out his theory. Scientists have collected and cataloged approximately 200 million fossils in museums worldwide since that time. Yet, Darwin's elusive transitional fossils are still missing. The world may hail him as king, genius, or even a god. But the evidence reveals a frail man who studied theology, garnered attention from a boat ride, and was willing to cheat in order to place his name first. True scientists have abandoned true Darwinism for "neo-Darwinism" as his mechanism was untenable. And this is a man who textbooks and the mainstream media continue to honor, endorse, worship, and praise?

The Gradual Shift Toward Religious Evolution

Scientists have not always espoused atheistic ideals and evolutionary origins. In fact, many famous scientists were deeply devoted to religion and were not ashamed to espouse their beliefs in God (e.g., Pasteur, Newton, Lister, Lord Kelvin, etc.). However, the advent of the evolutionary theory caused a shift away from God and towards man-made theories. But a scientific theory alone is not enough to pull a society away from its religious moorings. Evolutionists needed a founder they could worship and a vocal spokesman to trumpet the cause. Charles Darwin and Thomas Huxley fit the bill perfectly. Those familiar with New Testament Christianity understand the important role the apostle Paul played in helping spread the Gospel during the first century. We know that Paul was responsible for writing many of the New Testament epistles and furthering the borders of the Church. But evolutionists have their own "apostle Paul" who was responsible for spreading the "gospel" of naturalism and materialism. In a revealing article titled "Is Evolution a Secular Religion," staunch evolutionist Michael Ruse noted:

Darwin himself was an invalid from the age of 30, and any profession building had to be done by his supporters, in particular by his "bulldog," Thomas

Henry Huxley. In many respects, Huxley played to Darwin the role Saint Paul played to Jesus, promoting the master's ideas (2003, 299:1523).

This is a significant concession coming from a man who is a serious candidate to “pick up” where the late Stephen Jay Gould left off, and one who can pack more anti-creationist propaganda into a single sentence than Huxley ever could. While Ruse denies any link between evolutionary theory and morals, he owns up to an accusation that many creationists have pointed out for years—that **evolution is not defended by many of its leading advocates as a science, but as a religion.**

Ruse points out that the history of the evolutionary theory falls naturally into three parts. He notes, “The first part took place from the mid-18th century up to the publication of Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection as expounded in his *Origin of Species* published in 1859” (299:1523). Ruse maintains that before this time evolution was little more than a “pseudo-science on a par with mesmerism (animal magnetism) or phrenology (brain bumps)” (p. 1523, parenthetical items in orig.). It was during this period that Erasmus Darwin, Charles Darwin's grandfather, wrote evolutionary poetry, including *Temple of Nature*, where he wrote:

*Imperious man, who rules the bestial crowd,
Of language, reason, and reflection proud,
With brow erect who scorns this earthly sod,
And styles himself the image of his God;
Arose from rudiments of form and sense,
An embryon point, or microscopic lens!*
(1803, lines 309-314).

The next phase of evolutionary history came as a result of Huxley's hard work. Ruse noted, even after Darwin's *Origin of Species* and Huxley's initial attempts to gain evolutionary “clients,” that:

[E]volution still had no immediate payoff. Learning

phylogenies did not cure bellyache, and it was still all a bit too daring for regular classroom instruction. But Huxley could see a place for evolution. The chief ideological support of those who opposed the reformers—the landowners, the squires, the generals, and the others—came from the Anglican Church. **Hence, Huxley saw the need to found his own church, and evolution was the ideal cornerstone.** It offered a story of origins, one that (thanks to progress) puts humans at the center and top and that could even provide moral messages.... Thus, evolution had its commandments no less than did Christianity (299:1524, parenthetical item in orig., emp. added).

In detailing the history of this religion, Ruse notes that Huxley preached “evolution-as-world-view at working men’s clubs, from the podia during presidential addresses, and in debates” (1524). To Huxley’s chagrin, the theory was still excluded from mainstream universities and was not being taught to students (something desperately needed if this theory was ever to take root and survive on its own.) Thus, things remained this way until the third phase, which Ruse notes began around 1930.

It was during this era that mathematicians fused Darwinism with Mendelian genetics, thus giving a scientific footing to evolution. Men such as Ronald Fisher and J.B.S. Haldane were able to help “professionalize” evolution in such a way that it now appeared politically correct to “study” it. Ruse noted, “Rapidly, the experimentalists and naturalists—notably Theodosius Dobzhansky in America and E.B. Ford in England—started to put empirical flesh on the mathematical skeleton, and finally Darwin’s dream of a professional evolution with selection at its heart was realized” (1524). But was the evidence really there to support this new theory?

Then Why Do They Teach It As Fact?

The young man was extremely frustrated. He had come to the seminar as a skeptic, with hopes of debunking much of the material that was being presented. However, during the question

and answer period, this college student quickly realized the weakness of his case, and he became angry at having never seen some of the problems of the evolutionary theory and the scientific studies that indicated the earth was relatively young. He asked a few additional questions and began to shake his head. Finally, holding the microphone in both hands, he looked up and asked, “Why haven’t they ever taught us this stuff?”

Great question. I suspect the reason many young people are never introduced to the errors associated with the evolutionary theory is that students would quickly realize this theory is foolish and should be abandoned. Add to this the fact that this is a godless theory that has ultimately become a religion for those who have stiffened their necks against God, and one can begin to understand why evolutionists are extremely protective about what is taught in the classroom. They don’t want anyone loosening the grip they currently have in the academic world.

Textbooks today brashly assert organic evolution as a “fact.” Yet, these same textbooks gloss over the fact **that evolution cannot explain**: (1) how non-living material produced living material; (2) from whence matter for the universe originated; and (3) the design found in nature. These are major hurdles for the evolutionary theory, and yet this is the only theory for origins that is legally taught in most classrooms. If we desire young people to be open minded and critical thinkers, then why are they only exposed to one contaminated theory for the origin of mankind? That is not educating—it’s indoctrinating. And our tax dollars are funding it.

In previous years, textbooks correctly taught students the Law of Biogenesis: that life comes only from other life. This **law of science** was established after empirical evidence demonstrated that life cannot spontaneously arise from non-life in nature. This is not a theory or hypothesis, but rather, a **scientific law** that has never been observed to be incorrect. Current textbooks however, have dropped the Law of Biogenesis in favor of abiogenesis—a theory that teaches students the possibility that life can arise from non-life under “suitable circumstances.” Do we

have any scientific data to back up this new theory of abiogenesis? Absolutely not—but at least it doesn't contradict the evolutionary theory. Have we lost the ability to reason? How logical is it to replace a scientific law with an unproven theory?

[Quote: “*Scientists who go about teaching that evolution is a fact of life are great con-men, and the story they are telling may be the greatest hoax ever. In explaining evolution, we do not have one iota of fact.*” Dr. T. N. Tahmisian as quoted in *Evolution and the Emperor's New Clothes* by N.J. Mitchell. Roydon Publications, 1983.]

While evolutionists may have the backing and support of the mainstream media, many Darwinians realize how damaging that spotlight can be when left to shine on their beloved theory too long. Students who are taught to think critically and not swallow whatever is thrown out before them quickly realize Darwin's theory falls short in many areas. For instance:

- Can evolution explain why we laugh/cry?
- Can evolution explain the origin of sex and gender?
- Can evolution explain altruism/charity?
- Can evolution explain the origin of language?
- Can evolution explain the origin of the human consciousness?
- Can evolution explain the origin of the original matter for the universe?
- Can evolution explain the design found in nature?
- Can evolution explain how we got life from non-life?

But this is only the beginning. Evolutionary theory cannot adequately explain the origin of sex and gender. Think about it for a moment. How do you simultaneously evolve a separate male and female—with all of the necessary internal organs—all the while, still being able to reproduce during this evolutionary “transition” period? What good is a partially evolved uterus? Do we have examples of transitional stages between asexual and sexual reproduction? Additionally, if the sole purpose of a

creature is to replicate its own genes (e.g., survival of the fittest), then wouldn't asexual reproduction make more sense? Why go to the trouble of "evolving" separate male and female anatomy, when all one would have to do is split or bud off? Evolutionists might argue that sexual reproduction evolved because of the need for diversity—but such speculations are not a part of real science, as no one has successfully demonstrated how this "need" can cause such major physiological changes. Speculations are easy to pronounce, but rarely stand up to the test.

In the Footsteps of Darwin

Just a few months ago film producer Mark Teske and I set out on a whirlwind journey to follow in the footsteps of Charles Darwin. We concluded that if the islands were the place that set Darwin's mind in motion about the origin of living things, then that's where we should go. Few evolutionists (and even fewer still creationists) have ever actually witnessed firsthand the environment that changed Darwin's life. We wanted to rectify that. So we flew onto Baltra Island and then took boats all around to various islands that Darwin himself surveyed.

During our time there, we witnessed firsthand the finches that made Darwin famous and the blue-footed boobies. Each island had a distinct form of the giant tortoises, and we were able to see many of these in their own natural habit. (We were even able to hold one of the completely spherical eggs at one of the preserves.) It was these same tortoises that years earlier Darwin had eaten while on the islands. In his book *Voyage of the Beagle* (1831-36), Darwin observed:

As I was walking along, I met two large tortoises, each of which must have weighted at least two hundred pounds: one was eating a piece of cactus, and as I approached, it started at me and slowly stalked away; the other gave a deep hiss, and drew in its head. These huge reptiles, surrounded by the black lava, the leafless shrubs, and large cacti, seemed to my fancy like some antediluvian animals.

The word *antediluvian* means “before the deluge or Flood.” It is commonly used to describe the period between creation and the Flood of Noah’s day. Ironic, is it not, that Darwin, a man who many esteem as a god himself, came to the islands and referred back to a Biblical period.

It wasn’t until after he returned home from his trip that Darwin began to rethink the origin of living things. He had collected 13 finches from the islands that he examined upon his return and then began to question how these different birds had come into existence. He speculated that rather than being created by God, these birds were probably offspring of a single pair that had flown to the islands years earlier. Darwin failed to realize that this was what we deem today as “micro-evolution,” which is simply small changes within limited parameters. It tells us nothing about the source of that particular species. He grew this notion of common ancestry until he reached the point in which he believed all living animals had arisen from a single source—something that has never been observed in a laboratory setting. Having been to the Galapagos Islands, I am even more convicted that there is a Designer behind all of the design we see in nature. I know that the unusual animals we walked with did not arise by chance, but rather they were created by the Creator. Darwin came to the islands and left questioning the existence of a God. We came to the islands and left with a renewed confidence that He lives! Ω

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Noah's Salvation and Ours

Genesis 6–9; 1 Peter 3:18–22

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Introduction

It may be true that among men today, the most well known of all Bible stories is the story of Noah and the Great Flood. If a person knows nothing of the Scriptures, it seems he knows of Noah and his marching of the "two by two" into his grand construction. Maybe it is true because of the many different appeals the story has to a variety of groups of people. To the geologist (especially those who are believers in the inspired account) it is a story which can give possible explanation to many phenomena unexplained by others forms of scientific study. To the archaeologist, it inspires the search for sea fossils in the mountaintops. To the historian, the Biblical account of the flood is just the beginning, as comparative analysis can be made of the histories of many world cultures which include a record of such a devastating event. Still, to those of philosophy and theology, the account opens many doors to controversy, which the educated, and even non-educated, have debated for millennia: Was it really a global flood? Is it possible that Noah really saved all of those animals in one ship, etc.?

Among all of those fields of study which have had a fascination with the Deluge, the story still provides a simple

enough narrative whose images don the walls of children's Bible classes in church buildings world-wide. It still engenders the fascination of young ones who can memorize the story, sing the catchy songs, and even understand the applicable lesson to life. Maybe these children are those from whom we all should draw inspiration, for they see the story through wondering eyes, in awe of the enormity of the task which Noah undertook and accomplished through God's work. Maybe it would do us well to gaze with child-like wonder at the awesome work of God through the righteous man Noah, and meditate on the basic lessons of the story, which even children can understand.

Studying the confirmatory evidence of geology and archaeology, being fascinated by the other cultures' accounts, and even debating the controversial questions often raised, though important, pale in comparison to the basic theological and philosophical questions we should ask not only of this passage, but of all Scripture: What does the story say of God? What does it say of man's relationship to Him? What does it say of *my* relationship to Him, of *my* everyday life? It is more than just a story, but a story of meaning for life. Delitzsch emphasized this fundamental approach eloquently, saying:

The piety of Noah..., the destruction of the old world by the flood, and the preservation of Noah, together with the animals enclosed in the ark, is circumstantially and elaborately described, "because this event included...a work of judgment and mercy of the greatest significance to the history of the kingdom of God" - a judgment of such universality and violence as will only be seen again in the judgment at the end of the world; and, on the other hand, an act of mercy which made the flood itself a flood of grace...and of life rising out of death. "Destruction ministers to preservation...death to new birth; the old corrupt earth is buried in the flood, that out of this grave a new world may arise. (89)

It is this type of approach which we take here, looking not to the tangent areas of study, but to direct application of the Biblical

text to man, with a focus on a comparison: *Noah's Salvation and Ours*. No conjecture or supposition is needed to apply the story as a *type* of our salvation, for inspiration has done so already in 1 Peter 3:18-22, from which our comparison to the Genesis account is drawn.

Our Sin is Appalling

In his Bible study workbook, *Studying Sin Seriously*, Wendell Winkler, with his masterful ability to simplify complex themes, magnified the already vivid pictures that the Bible paints of the awfulness of sin. He listed them, as *Sin is*:

1. *A Putrefying'Disease* (Isaiah 53:5; 1:6)
2. *A Heavy'Burden* (Psalm 38:4-6; Galatians 6:1, 2)
3. *A Hard'Taskmaster* (John 8:34; Romans 6:6)
4. *As Foolish'Insanity* (Proverbs 24:9; Luke 15:17)
5. *A Defiling'Filth* (2 Peter 2:20-22; Titus 1:15)
6. *A Binding'Debt* (Matthew 6:12, 14, 15; Luke 11:4)
7. *A Blemishing'Stain* (Psalm 51:1, 2, 7; Isaiah 1:18-20)
8. *An Impenetrable'Darkness* (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 John 1:6) (Winkler 18-19)

It does not take an educated person to see the wretched nature of sin, by virtue of the everyday vile images with which it is compared, and with which we are all too familiar. It is ironic, however, that although we are able to see the images so vividly, it is sometimes difficult for such information to "sink in," as we say. When it comes to understanding it "intellectually," sin is easily understood. But, when it comes to understanding it "introspectively," as in what sin is actually doing to "me" and "my life," there is often a disconnect prohibiting our feeble minds to a comprehension of its gravity. J.W. McGarvey elaborated on the challenges he faced in communicating to his listeners, as well as to himself, the terribleness of sin, in his June 11, 1893, morning sermon.

I wonder if any of us has ever realized what it is to commit sin. I believe that I would esteem above every

other gift that could be bestowed upon me as a preacher, the power to adequately *conceive what sin is*, and to adequately *set it before the people*. A number of times in my ministrations, I have prepared sermons designed to set forth the enormity of sin; but I have every time felt that I made a failure. I found, I thought, two causes of the failure: first, a want of realization in my own soul of the enormity of it; and second, inability to gather such words and such figures of speech, as would, with anything like adequacy, set it forth before my hearers. The pleasures of sin have blinded our eyes to its enormity. So I have come to the conclusion, after a great deal of reflection, and a great deal of mental effort, that about the only correct gauge we have with which to measure the enormity or heinousness of sin, is the punishment God has decreed against it. God is infinite in all His attributes; infinite in mercy, in love, in compassion; and when we find the punishment that such a God as that was constrained, by the justice that also characterizes Him, to enact against sin, I think we shall be better able to form an idea of its enormity than we can from any other view of the matter. (16-17, emp. added)

It is such an image of sin that is gleaned from Genesis chapter 6, when the Lord was said to have been "sorry He had made man," and was "grieved in His heart," (6:6), saying, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them" (6:7). Of this "grieving in heart," it was said, "The repentance of God is an anthropomorphic expression for the pain of the divine love at the sin of man, and signifies that 'God is hurt no less by the atrocious sins of men than if they pierced his heart with mortal anguish' (*Calvin*)" (Keil 88). How bad is sin? Bad enough that those who engulf themselves in it pain God so badly, that by His justice, they are deserving of death, both mortally and eternally. In the words of Jesus, "He who has an ear, let him hear" (Revelation 2:7)!

When we read statements like, "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that *every intent of the thoughts of his heart* was only evil continually," (6:5, emp. added), and when we view the extreme (in our view) nature of God's response, i.e. flooding the whole earth, it is tempting to think of that society as "much worse," or as some unfathomable evil, beyond what we ourselves know. Tempting it may be, but also quite dangerous.

Consider where this evil culture had its beginnings: "[T]he sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose" (6:2). We dismiss the idea that these "sons of God," were some form of angelic creature involving themselves sexually with female humans, as "we are here in the realm of humanity, and not in the sphere of superhuman spirits,; and the historian has not given the slightest intimation of the existence of spiritual beings different from man (Murphy 178). We are dealing with man, and specifically his selfish desires. These "sons of God," righteous men, took their wives from the "daughters of men," of unrighteous men, with concern for self, and "without regard to spiritual character" (Murphy 179). He continues, "The godly took them wives of all; that is, of the ungodly as well as the godly families, without discrimination. 'Whom they chose,' not for the godliness of their lives, but for the goodliness of their looks" (179). It began with pleasing self over pleasing God. That attitude hits a little closer to home for most of us.

It reminds one of the snowball effect of sin, as described in Romans 1:18ff, where "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge" (1:28), but rather sought after their own pleasures and desires. Their demise *began* in the same fashion as those who experienced God's punishment in Noah's day: seeking selfish desires rather than God's desires. What was their end? "God gave them up..." (Romans 1:26). Though we may not see ourselves as those whose thoughts are "only evil continually," or as those who "worship the creature rather than the Creator" (cf. Romans 1:25), do we not see the same foundational attitudes at work among men today? We would be fooling ourselves if we said we did not see selfishness every day: in our nation and its dealing with other

nations, in our often self-aggrandizing political figures, in our congregations seeking large numbers rather than loyal disciples, in our ministers who seek fame rather than the face of Jesus, and most importantly, in ourselves, where too often *our wants* supplant *His wishes*.

Why did Jesus die? "Christ suffered once *for sins...*" (1 Peter 3:18, emp. added). Whose sins? Our sins! Sin is *Appalling* to God today in the same way as it was in Noah's day, and if we fail to recognize the enormity of it, we will suffer the same fate.

His Grace is *Amazing*

In the introduction, we cited a passage written by F. Delitzsch in which he characterizes the Great Flood as two-fold in purpose: 1) a administering of judgment, and 2) a show of grace, by which he might resurrect the human race from the depths of sin. We spent the first point discussing this judgment, and now take note of the second purpose, God expressing His concern for His people.

Thomas Olbricht, in his summary of Old Testament theology, said the following:

The story line of the Old Testament exudes love, excitement and hope. It tells how this universe was made, and how man, that inscrutable cipher, occupied such a prominent position. It asserts that the Creator, before the creation of man and the universe, spoke into existence the vast reaches of space. Then he created man in his image. It tells of the Creator's love affair with creation and man. It affirms an undying, relentless, unceasing love, but not from the human side. Man not only is inexplicable, he is unstable and fickle, vacillating, and often faithless. But God is not man. As the Old Testament tells it, he loves - intensely - forever. The God of the Old Testament is an incessant lover. (5)

It is not a common thread that many people see when studying the Old Testament, but it is true what Olbricht has said. Most often, the God of the Old Testament is viewed as the harsh,

unrelenting, retributive God, who punishes people on a whim. (Most forget that such swift punishment is meted out in the New Testament as well, e.g., Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5, which should surprise no one, as the God of the Old and the God of the New are one and the same.) God had been issuing judgment, but showing mercy from the beginning. Adam and Eve suffered rebuke, yet God cared for them, clothing them, providing for them. God blessed Abel for his righteousness and judged Cain for his evil act. But, "hitherto [in Genesis] we have met with distant and indirect intimations of the divine favor, and significant deeds of regard and acceptance. Now for the first time *grace* itself finds a tongue to express its name" (Murphy 183). "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). "*Charis* (grace) is the Greek rendering of the Hebrew *chen* (favor)...and...is indicative of the utter freedom of God, in relation to His creation, His sheer prerogative to save" (Blowers 364). That is exactly what we see in the Noahic narrative.

We must be careful to observe this mercy and compassion, or His "sheer prerogative to save" mankind in this story, and not see only God's judgment act. Yes, judgment was exercised, but so also was a way for salvation. God did not simply decide to destroy the world one day, and carry it out the next. He chose a man, righteous Noah, to be that man to bring salvation. Hebrews 11:7 informs us Noah, "divinely warned of things not yet seen... prepared an ark for the saving of his household." How does such salvation come about, if not for the mercy of God, being shown in His warning and instruction to Noah? It is beautifully illustrated again in Genesis 8:1, when the text simply states, "Then God remembered Noah...and made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided." O for deliverance by the grace of God!

Thus, when we come to the New Testament, the same principle is applied to the salvation of men through Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God's "sheer prerogative to save." Notice Peter's statement, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, *the just for the unjust*, that He might bring us to God..." (1 Peter 3:18, emp. added), then later attributing the saving power toward man to "the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (3:21). As with Noah's salvation, we must ask questions: How does salvation come

about, if not for the sacrifice of the *Just* one, on behalf of the undeserving *unjust* ones? All salvation begins with God! Franklin described the coming about of "the grand scheme of human redemption," saying, "The Infinite Goodness originated and suggested it, the Infinite Will resolved it, the Infinite Wisdom devised it, and the Infinite Power executed it" (384). From whence comes salvation? Only from God, through the Lord Jesus Christ!

In today's culture, there is such a vast divide between men and how they speak of the grace of God. There are extremes, where some may see grace as the "end all," not requiring, and sometimes even *negating*, any human element of activity, or "works." Then, at the other extremity are those who so work to combat the former unscriptural view, that there is a fear of even speaking the words, "for by grace you have been saved" without some additional comment of clarification (cf. Ephesians 2:8). It seems to be an over-complication on either end concerning a concept which (may the reader forgive) is intellectually quite simple. This is not to say that the grace of God is shallow, or even something which men can truly ever comprehend, but the presentation of it in the New Testament is not a complicated thing. In any case, these extremes breed a misunderstanding, and as with everything, balance is key.

At the risk of over-simplifying the unfathomable gift of God, we call attention to the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:10, and ask, "Is not all that we do, all that we have, all that we are and hope to be, of the grace of God?" In discussing the privilege of apostleship, Paul said simply, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (15:10). Could we define "grace" as presented in the New Testament, and the Old Testament for that matter, as simply all that God gives, simply because He sees fit to give? Would you rise from your bed tomorrow? But by the grace of God! Would you be blessed with financial prosperity? But by the grace of God! Would you receive eternal life when the temporal existence is over? But by the grace of God! Each of those things happens *only* if God's will allows, and by His grace He sees fit to give. Our very existence is based on the grace of God, His willingness to provide, when as imperfect men, we deserve no provision.

How was Noah saved? By the grace of God extending warning and instruction. How are we saved today? By the grace of God offered through Jesus Christ. It *all* originates with God! As the poet has profoundly declared, "*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.*"

Our Obedience is the *Answer*

We now turn our attention to the main character of the story, Noah. Leupold has observed that, "This is not the story of the Flood. It is Noah's story" (263). He may be right. All of the attributes of God's "goodness and severity" (cf. Romans 11:22) can be seen in the story, as has been given. But what is God's grace and mercy, if there is no one to respond? And for us, where is our lesson of trust and obedience if Noah is not in the picture? Where are we today if there is no righteous Noah to carry on the lineage which would produce the Messiah, and eventually each of us living today?

So little is said in the Scriptures of the character and piety of Noah, but the veracity of those precious few words makes one feel as though a whole volume was dedicated to Him. He is called, "just" and "perfect" (Genesis 6:9a), or "righteous," and "blameless." Each of the descriptors speaks to his character, his integrity and his faithfulness to the ways of God. What is more telling of Noah is the environment in which he exhibited these qualities. Besides those evil people mentioned previously, the text says, "The earth was also corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence... all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth" (Genesis 6:11, 12). So, in the midst of selfishness, immorality, continual evil thoughts, corruption and violence, Noah was upright and blameless. Again, we cite Leupold:

If out of all his contemporaries he alone with his family is saved, then he must have been most unusual. To stand one's ground and to remain uninfluenced by the attitude and conduct of all men to the contrary, gives indication of a strength of character almost without parallel in history...Noah conformed to the divine standard [and] met

God's approval... It...implies that those things that God sought in man were present in Noah. (264-65)

Of the things that are said of Noah, maybe the most impressive and worthy of imitation is the simple declaration, "Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9b). Is there a more complimentary commentary on a man's life than that? Of this phrase, he "walked with God," it has been said:

He must have been at peace with God; two cannot walk together unless they be agreed (Amos 3:3)...What a real union of hearts the...phrase "walked with God" implies! What sweet hours of holy and happy intercourse God and [Noah] must have had as they communed with each other...God was a pleasure to [Noah], and [Noah] pleased God. (Lockyer 109)

One thing can be said for sure, that if the epithet, "he walked with God," follows a man's life, he shall have lived it to the fullest!

Maybe the most important aspect of Noah's character is that which the Hebrews writer cites, saying: "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7). Many have posited the question, "What would be of Noah had he not built the ark?" It is safe to say that Noah and his family would have perished. The grace of God was offered by means of warning and instruction, but it did Noah no good without his willingness to trust God's word and obey His commands.

In the words of Peter, Noah's response was an "answer of a good conscience toward God" (1 Peter 3:21). At least that is the application Peter makes for the Christian today. Speaking of Noah's salvation by water, Peter declares, "There is also an antitype which now saves us - baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into

heaven and is at the right hand of God..." (3:21-22). When God's plan of redemption was offered to Noah, his "answer of a good conscience" was his trust and obedient building of the ark. For the Christian, when God's plan of redemption through the Savior is offered, his "answer of a good conscience" comes in the form of trust in the Savior's cleansing blood and the obedient act of baptism, from which he gains access to that blood.

Barclay had some interesting historical context to this passage:

Peter calls baptism the *pledge of a good conscience to God*. There is a very vivid picture here. The word which Peter uses for pledge is *eperotema*; in Greek this was a technical business and legal word... In every business contract there was a definite question and answer which made the contract legal and binding. The question was: "Do you accept the terms of this contract, and bind yourself to observe them?" And the answer before witnesses was: "Yes." ...Peter is, in effect, saying that in baptism, God said to man... "Do you accept the terms of my service? Do you accept its privileges and promises, and do you undertake its responsibilities and its demands?" And in the act of being baptized the man answered, "Yes." (289-90)

If a man wishes to be right with God, or have that "good conscience," there must be a response, an "answer" of trusting and obedient faith. Baptism is, at the very least, the beginning of that response.

By no means do we wish to proclaim that this act of obedience is an end. No, but rather a beginning of life-long trust and faithful obedience to the Word of God. In Noah's story, after the redemption from the flood was realized, the incident with his drunkenness, and his son's unrighteous act are illustrative of the life of man. Redemption may be realized and salvation obtained, but it does not place us above the possibility of falling into former ways, and turning from the covenant we have made with God.

God's wonderful grace was offered to Noah, and is offered now to us. May we follow Noah's example and *Answer* accordingly.

His Plea is for *All*

If we simply read through the narrative account of Genesis, we may be left with the impression that God simply pronounced a judgment on the wicked world, it took Noah 120 years to finish the ark, then God brought the flood. There is no indication of what went on during those 120 years, and it seems as if God was just waiting for Noah to finish. But, even in that primitive time, 120 years is a long time for four men to build a ship. But there is an interesting statement in Peter's account which this writer believes serves as an explanation. Speaking of the souls of Noah's day, we are told Jesus preached to them, "who formerly were disobedient, when the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water" (3:20).

Yes, God waited *while* the ark was being prepared, but notice it was not the reason *why* He waited. His waiting was brought about because of His "Divine longsuffering," or His perfect ability to suffer long with His inept and disobedient creation. God was giving those disobedient and rebellious people time to repent! Notice further that Peter calls Noah a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5), giving us indication that Noah was trying to save those people as well. We also ask, when did *Jesus* preach to the souls? It seems that He did so through Noah during those 120 years of waiting. Why? Because God was patiently waiting, offering His message of salvation through the preaching of Noah. This idea is consistent with the New Testament, as Paul said He "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1Tim. 2:4). And again, that He is "longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Unfortunately, none of those souls heeded the words of Noah, and all perished in the waters of the wrath of God. Today, the message of salvation is clear and simple, as presented in God's Word. Who is to say that His "Divine longsuffering" is not being

employed today, restraining Him from executing His final judgment? Is He now pleading for *all* men to be saved by the preaching of the Gospel, because the number of our days is running up soon? No one knows. But, even if it is not the case, the scenario is still urgent for every soul who is not obedient, for "life is but a vapor," (cf. James 4:14) and is gone in an instant. May we all be obedient, and then all serve as "preachers of righteousness," telling the world of the saving message of Jesus.

Conclusion

Taken as a whole, the story of Noah and the Flood is a simple story of redemption. It is the story of a lost and wicked people, of a gracious God who wishes not for those people to perish, of a man's faithful obedience which secures salvation, and a just and holy God, giving to sin its just due. It parallels so beautifully the scenario with which each individual shall face. How shall we respond? In eloquence, William Baxter offers a conclusion:

...In the deluge, while there is anger and justice, so there is an ark, a dove, an olive leaf, the smoke of sacrifice ascending, and, over all, the rainbow hues of love and peace; the fierce, surging waters, like the frown of God - the rainbow, like His smile of love...You have seen this wonderful display of love which God has made, [now]...done for you. You have seen the Lamb of God bleeding, groaning, agonizing, dying, not to save friends, but to secure happiness for his foes. Will God permit you to slight all this love, and all this sorrow, and yet hold you guiltless? Will you steel your heart against all that God has done and Christ has suffered? Amid all those manifestations of tender compassion, will you force your way down to ruin, and madly seek that perdition from which the Redeemer died to save you? ...Stop, I entreat you!...If you shrink at the difficulty of obedience, think of the danger of disobedience. If the weight of the cross appall you, think O think, of the brightness of unfading, immortal crown! God loves you; can you doubt it, when you look upon the cross, and its bleeding victim? Christ

loves you; can you doubt it, when, for you: "He left the starry crown, And laid his robes aside; On wings of love came down, and wept, and bled, and died?" (432, 442-43).
Ω

Biographical Sketch

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Current Attacks on Genesis 1 – 11

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Introduction

To say that our age is dominated by Bible skepticism is to state what must be painfully obvious. Of perhaps the three most disputed events in the Bible (creation, the flood, the resurrection), two are found here in the opening chapters of Genesis. One might ask if it is important to know whether or not these early biblical events are real.

Concerning the Bible, there have always been doubts and attacks, but the general public once seemed confident that the Bible was all true. It seems evident that belief in the Bible's trustworthiness has eroded, an erosion that seems celebrated by the media. Among them, attacks made against the Bible have gone largely unchallenged and even unquestioned. When the AP, network and cable TV, or most radio venues feature an expert to weigh in on some Bible topic, the expert is inevitably one who most of us would consider, for the sake of economy in description, a left wing kook. But his litany of confident assertions is accepted as Gospel (irony intended).

The uninitiated viewer or reader is assaulted with this constant, never varied message: all of the learned scholars now know that the Bible is not the Word of God. If any of it came as

the result of true inspiration, those are hopelessly lost to antiquity. What we have left is a collection of legends, fables and stories written by authors with a personal agenda; supposedly, they only claimed inspiration to bolster the authority of their own writings.

Most of us have neither the time nor the resources to argue the point, though this message has not gone completely unnoticed or unchallenged. Unfortunately, those who object have been marginalized by those same liberals and skeptics. Since all the learned scholars agree, those who disagree are obviously neither learned nor scholarly. This “Emperor's New Clothes” tactic has succeeded for at least the following three reasons.

Three Reasons for Attacks on the Genesis Record

First, there is the matter of what we have come to call in our age, “PC,” or political correctness. This author is old enough to remember that this term was invented by its practitioners and was worn, not as a slander, but as a badge of honor. To them, there were a set of orthodoxies that were, of course, correct. These included such things as gay rights, women's liberation, and a litany of other politically liberal ideas. These were considered so self-evident that all who disagreed were obviously, hopelessly ignorant or dishonest. Opponents were not to be debated or defeated, but silenced. The term “politically correct” was soon seized upon by those opponents as oppressing a free exchange of ideas, a great irony considering the stated viewpoint of non-judgmentalism claimed by political liberals.

The “PC” movement has parallels in biblical liberalism. In the most prestigious institutions of higher learning, few conservatives are to be found (true in both a political and a biblical sense). Today, this tendency is seen beyond the Yale's, Princeton/s, and University of Chicago's. To suggest that there are no knowledgeable biblical conservatives who could fill seats in such institutions seems naive.

Second, there is the matter of self-perpetuation of liberalism. After generations of constant inundation and indoctrination, it comes as no surprise that the vast majority of graduates agree with the views of their former professors. These go on to either fill those positions themselves or lend support in other ways. In

any case it is entirely possible that these Ph.D.'s have never been confronted with the authenticity of the Word of God. A conservative viewpoint is hardly even worth their consideration.

The third reason that these tactics have succeeded is because of a disturbing trend among the public. For many years there has been a disconnect between what was believed by religious people in the pews, and what was likely believed, if not by local “pastors,” at least by their various hierarchies. While denominational councils largely held sat in seats of the scornful, their memberships were not sold, perhaps in ignorance of what the leadership really thought.

Our Generation

In our generation, that disconnect has reached critical mass, at least in some cases. Some decent folks who still believe that the Bible is God's Word have felt compelled to leave their denominations thinking “there must be a church out there that still believes the Bible.” I myself know of some who were baptized into Christ because they were seeking a church that still respected the Bible.

Unfortunately, a large portion of our population (if not the majority, at least a significant minority) are undisturbed by the dilution of the Bible. To many, the Bible's quaint morality is the reason that it can't really be true. It is to be expected that in this climate of moral decay our states are falling one by one to the axe of same-sex marriage. How can one argue for his right to fornicate and commit adultery without being “judged,” and deny that same right to homosexuals?

Why do more people seem to doubt that the Bible is true? It may be because more people chose to flaunt the Bible's standards. In Romans 1, Paul clearly demonstrates the interdependence of atheism and immorality. While we typically think that atheism begets immorality (and this is true), the converse is also true. That is, many people don't believe the Bible because of their own love of wickedness. They cannot afford to believe the Bible.

For many years assaults on the Bible seemed appropriate only for discussion in some remote dusty hall. But today, these have become more populist in nature, and are embraced by many. As

Paul wrote concerning the generation of corrupt Gentiles, their rejection of God was likewise a matter of preference. Romans 1:28 reads, “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;” The Gentiles had rejected the God of the Bible, not as a matter of evidence or reason, but because of their hatred of Him and His standards. Is it too much of a stretch to suggest that our own age has mirrored that of the 1st Century Gentile world?

We suggest then that the attacks on the chapters (Gen. 1-11), that provide a foundation for the rest of Scripture, are not a matter of cold scientific analysis, but are borne of white-hot passionate hatred. We further suggest that if we cannot place any real trust in these early chapters of the Bible, then the whole of Scripture is not worth the paper upon which it is printed because it is here that the authority of God and that of the Bible is established.

Once upon a time in America, the Bible was still sacred in the minds of the public. To illustrate this fact, one needs to go no farther than December 24th 1968. On that Christmas Eve, mankind found himself at the cusp of what might still be considered his most incredible achievement: the lunar landing. Though the actual landing would not take place until the following year, Apollo 8 astronauts were at that moment farther from home than any human being had ever been: in orbit around the Moon. That evening, in what was then the most viewed television broadcast ever, residents of Earth were treated to footage of the moon at close range, with audio provided by astronauts William Anders, James Lovell, and Frank Borman reading from Genesis 1:1-10.

One can only imagine the swelling of hearts and the tearing of eyes at the reading of God's word from such a magnificent podium. The choice to read from the beginning of Genesis could not have been more appropriate. These astronauts were a collection of steely-nerved ex-test pilots who had undergone years of rigorous training and preparation for that journey. They had been propelled through space to a quarter million miles from home, and had traveled at tens of thousands of miles per hour with only the thinnest shield between themselves and the vacuum

of space. Their rendezvous with the Moon had been calculated to a razor's edge by the finest mathematicians. The slightest miscalculation would mean there would be no going home.

On that Christmas Eve, these three evidently considered that extraordinary human pursuit to pale before the light of the magnificent creation before them. They made the only sensible and sane choice: to give praise and glory to God, to remind the world that the Creator had made all of this possible. It was a vista from a vantage point that only God had previously enjoyed. And so they humbled themselves before the Creator and read from Genesis.

One can only imagine the uproar should an astronaut do likewise from one of the shuttles. Is such a thing even imaginable today? Perhaps if he also read appropriately from various other fraudulent writings of the world's religions, not that any of them would contain appropriate descriptions. The world was changing quickly even then, more than forty years ago. An enraged Madalyn Murray O'Hair filed suit over the reading of Genesis. Though the suit was eventually dismissed due to a lack of jurisdiction over events on the Moon, the damage was certainly done. Buzz Aldrin took communion on the Moon, but his live commentary was carefully worded to avoid more controversy, and his plan to read from John 15 was altered. He read it, but silently.

Attacks on the Genesis Account of Creation

The various objections to the creation account have been widely documented and discussed. The various motivations for these attacks could not be more obvious. To the atheist, there is no God, so how could he have been said to create anything? To the evolutionist, the Genesis account and the evolutionary model cannot be resolved, despite the best efforts of various compromises. To skeptics and liberals, the Bible's account is man-made and thus unreliable. In effect, we have a collision between the Bible text and competing philosophies.

The attack of atheism is hardly worth discussing, since there is no middle ground. Atheists, especially the current crop of militant ones, are not really making clear and concise

philosophical arguments, preferring elocution to proof. Although Richard Dawkins is the most infamous of these, perhaps this tendency is most easily seen in the writings and musings of Sam Harris who has a tendency to claim he has proved something by articulating a position. Harris is quite fond of "sound bites" and one-liners. The following are some of the more favorite quotes attributed to him.

"Theology is ignorance with wings."

"We know enough at this moment to say that the God of Abraham is not only unworthy of the immensity of creation; he is unworthy even of man."

"It is time that we admitted that faith is nothing more than the license religious people give one another to keep believing when reasons fail."

"Books like the Bible and the Koran get almost every significant fact about us and our world wrong."

"Could there be any doubt that the Jews would seek to harm the Son of God again, knowing that his body was now readily accessible in the form of defenseless crackers?" (http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/16593.Sam_Harris pp 1-2)

This thoughtless hostility may be contrasted to Isaac Asimov's description of the Bible.

The most influential, the most published, the most widely read book in the history of the world is the Bible. No other book has been so studied and so analyzed and it is a tribute to the complexity of the Bible and the eagerness of its students that after thousands of years of study there are still endless books that can be written about it (Asimov 9).

This is not to suggest that Asimov was a friend of the Bible. He himself, though a Russian Jew by birth, was an atheist, and his writings espouse the most skeptical of theories concerning the Bible's origin. Nonetheless, he recognized the moral value of the

Bible, and even its superior style and content. He wrote: “Carefully and sparely, and with great vigor and beauty, the first thirty-four verses of the Bible tell the story of creation” (Asimov 18). It is difficult to imagine Richard Dawkins even reading the quote without choking!

The believer in the Genesis account finds little if any common ground upon which to begin a discussion with the atheist critic. The atheist professes to know that no such thing as creation took place, because no such thing as a creator exists. His criticism of the Genesis account of creation is largely borrowed from skeptical theories claiming to account for its existence. Though he disbelieves the entire Bible, discrediting the Genesis account of creation is a high priority. The attack of evolution is likewise well documented and discussed. It is important to understand that while virtually all atheists are evolutionists, many evolutionists are theists. This fact is not offered to discredit evolution, but to understand better the various compromises. It comes as no surprise at all that theistic evolutionists include those with no faith in the Bible at all and those who subscribe to liberal and skeptical theories. It may come as a great surprise that there are a growing number of theistic evolutionists with backgrounds in evangelical or even fundamentalist religious organizations. These include evolutionists among Southern Baptists, the Church of the Nazarene, and yes, churches of Christ.

Several years ago, this author became familiar with the writings of Dr. Karl Giberson, noted author from the Church of the Nazarene. His denomination is not the church of the New Testament, but neither is it a liberal organization. Giberson and others like him, stridently advocate traditional evolution but claim respect for the Bible. How can these two be made compatible?

Obviously, there are compromises that must be made in order to reconcile the Bible and the evolutionary model. One problem we observe is that these compromises are consistently one-sided! That is, no matter what the current theory de jour is, the Bible is made pliable enough to adapt to it. We wonder just how many versions of evolution the Bible is able to accommodate. If the Bible's timetable and that of evolution differ, the Bible is molded to fit via various gap theories, the Day-Age theory, or an

unrecorded annihilation of an imaginary first creation. But the evolutionary model is to be accepted (seemingly) without question. These fundamentalist evolutionists tell us that we have misunderstood the text; they tell us, "It is poetry."

But it doesn't read as poetry, it reads as a straightforward history. We also note that if God had wanted Moses to write a literal account of six days of creation, what different words would have been given to Moses? Could he have stated the facts any more clearly than he did? If God had wanted to tell us that we descended from two fully formed and fully-grown human beings named Adam and Eve, how would the story have been told differently? A simple reading of Genesis one and two belies the claims that these are stylized and figurative accounts. Despite the claims made by these "friends" of the Bible, these are attacks against its integrity.

The attacks of liberals and skeptics tend to be more forthright. They plainly state that the Genesis account, not to mention the rest of the Pentateuch and the Bible in general, are largely fraudulent. The Pentateuch in particular has been subjected to the rigors of criticism and has been reduced by analysis to a series of tribal legends and later additions to the text, none of which is to be associated with a man named Moses. In his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Harrison documents that the seeds for this view of the Pentateuch were sown as early as the sixteen hundreds, perhaps even sooner (Harrison 9-61).

By the nineteenth century, these theories had reached a crescendo, known collectively as the redaction theory, the Graf-Wellhausen theory, or the Documentary Hypothesis. Lloyd R. Bailey surmised, "This approach has been the predominant scholarly model for the last two hundred years" (Bailey 35). It is claimed that the text of the Pentateuch was actually written by no fewer than four groups of editors. There were those who wrote using the word "Yahweh," those who used "Elohim," a group of reformers who wrote much of Deuteronomy, and priests who wrote in the post-exilic period. These four groups are typically abbreviated as being J E D P. All of these are said to have their own personal agendas that are clear to see in the text.

The supposed evidence for this redaction (editing) of the text is quite subjective. It is claimed that Genesis one and two are contradictory, and that this is understandable since these were two accounts of creation written by two rival editors (J and E). However, this explanation has a number of weaknesses. First, it fails to consider it possible that one writer just might know and use "Yahweh" (Lord, Jehovah) and "Elohim" (God). Interestingly, they themselves use various names for God, but deny that Moses could have!

Second, their explanations fail entirely to compute the "Toledoth" (generation, genealogy) into their musings. Following the general introduction to Genesis in ch. 1:1-2-3, we are introduced to the Toledoth of the Heavens and Earth, or the events that followed the initial creation on the first day. Even with no understanding of this arrangement, the claim that Genesis one and two contradict one another is fanciful on the face of it. While there are additional details provided in chapter two, additional details are not, by definition, contradictions. The creation of mankind is mentioned in chapter one in the general context of the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. The creation of mankind in particular is the focal point of chapter two.

Third is the matter of evidence. Though this attack against the Bible is quite popular and has now had two hundred plus years to fester, its advocates have yet to provide even one small morsel of evidence. It is a theory built entirely from imagination.

There are no prior documents which Moses could have quoted. There is absolutely no evidence whatever that any such document as "J," or "E," or "P" ever existed anywhere on this earth. Not even one little half word from any such "document" has ever been discovered on any ancient monument, or upon any clay tablet excavated from the Middle East graveyard of ancient civilizations. The literature of all nations yields not one little tiny reference to any such things as those alleged source documents for Genesis. What are they? They are the brain children of speculation by imaginative enemies of the Bible. The first eighteen centuries of the Christian era has no reference to

any of them. They are nonentities. If the critics would like to be believed by intelligent men, then let them produce the documents! (Coffman 8)

Coffman also pointed out that the alleged rival sections of Genesis are “bound together by unusual verb forms and other linguistic characteristics that show them to be not at all from various old and distinct traditions, but from a common source...” (Coffman p 14). Despite its lack of supporting evidence, the Documentary Hypothesis is not going away; advocates have too much riding on discrediting Genesis. Given the poverty of evidence supporting this ancient editing of the Bible, one can only wonder why any of our own brethren would choose to board such a leaky vessel as the Documentary Hypothesis. But as ACU's publishing of *The Transforming Word* demonstrates, some have happily set sail aboard the *Titanic*. Has this happened because of compelling evidence, or a desire to undermine the authority of Scripture in general? We cannot know for sure.

The theories of liberal scholars may reveal more about their own trustworthiness than that of the Bible. Is it possible that these are guilty of what is called today "projection"? That is, liberals accuse Bible writers of only writing what was convenient to their own agenda, of writing what they wish were true. Perhaps they suspect this because this is what they themselves would do if given the chance. Perhaps that is, in fact, what these liberals have been doing for now these many years.

Attacks against the Deluge

Many of the same principles of hostility against the creation account are in evidence in the flood record of Genesis. To the atheist, the flood account is nothing more than mythology typical of ancient civilizations. To skeptics and liberals, there may be a grain of truth in the Bible's account of the flood, but the truth of the matter was probably far different. Thus, the view is that the de-mythologized Bible may have grains of truth, or that the story is valuable, whether or not there was any truth in it at all.

Attacks on the flood include doubts that any such event ever occurred, or more frequently, that the flood was greatly

exaggerated. Just as in the creation account, the evidence is often interpreted in light of the reader's personal baggage. Bible believers tend to see extra-biblical evidence of the flood while skeptics interpret that same evidence as being the result of just about anything else. Regardless of the opinion of the interpreter, it must be stressed that there is much evidence that at the least can be legitimately attributed to a worldwide flood.

It is important to understand that like the creation account, the biblical flood once enjoyed widespread acceptance among scientists of the pertinent disciplines. This is no longer the case. The reasons for this have not so much to do with evidence disproving it, but rather the onslaught of evolution and its demands. As Dickson put it, "Flood geology can move into no vacant rooms of evolutionary thinking" (244).

There are various explanations and compromises offered for the biblical flood account, perhaps the non-universal flood being the most commonly offered. Usually the universal flood seems disputed based, not on its absolute impossibility, but on its lack of a modern historical parallel. Interestingly, there seems to be little scientific difficulty with a world completely covered by water, so long as that water was frozen. Of course the Bible itself explains that this event was one with neither antecedent nor repetition. In fact, if there had been another worldwide flood, the Bible record would have been demonstrated false.

Is it important that we accept the universal flood at face value? As observed in the case of the creation account, Genesis 6-9 is not poetry. One may argue that it is figurative, but it reads as a literal account. Other Bible writers seemed to accept it at face value; Peter wrote of a world destroyed by the flood in 2 Peter 2:5, cited it as an historical reality in 1 Peter 3:20-21, as did Jesus in Matthew 24. For the Christian, it would seem critical to accept what one called "the Word" believed of the Word! If Jesus were wrong on this topic, perhaps He was wrong about being the Son of God too.

As in the case of creation, the suggested compromises are a one-way street. Interestingly these are not primarily in the field of geology, but rooted in the philosophy of evolution. The geology of the Earth can certainly be sensibly interpreted in light of a

worldwide flood. But the timetable of evolution requires that geological evidence be interpreted in terms of millions of years. The existence of fossils, a relatively rare phenomenon for deceased living things, is reasonably attributed to a massive flood, like the Genesis flood. But since evolution requires million year old fossils, the idea that a catastrophe like the flood could have produced them is rejected out of hand. This also applies to various other dating methods that presume that the world is just as it always has been (uniformitarianism).

The Genesis flood must have been universal for the following reasons. First, there is no point in building an ark unless the flood were universal. The worst place one could be in a flood is in a boat, unless there were no higher ground. Likewise, there is no reason for God to choose to preserve animal life in a flood, if this were only a local event, even one of great destruction.

Second, the number of flood legends suggests that at the very least, something unique in the history of mankind took place involving a flood. While one cannot deduce from these legends (such as the Gilgamesh Epic and the Atrahasis Epic) that a flood covered the entire Earth, they certainly fit what one would expect to find if the event really happened. Lest one conclude that the biblical account is no more than just another ancient flood legend, the details of Noah and his ark are not just different, they are definitely superior. For instance, the hero of the Gilgamesh Epic was instructed by his god to build a not particularly seaworthy cube. By contrast, the dimensions of Noah's Ark (the often-cited six to one and ten to one, length to width and length to depth respectively) were the very model of nautical stability.

Interestingly, Asimov argued against the Bible flood, claiming that there is no record of any such event. He wrote:

This, according to the Bible, was a world-wide deluge, but there is no record of any such phenomenon, of course. The Egyptian civilization, for instance, was in a particularly flourishing state at this very time and was building its pyramids. Nor do the Egyptian records speak of any floods

other than the annual overflow of the Nile, as far as we know (Asimov 38).

There are a number of problems with Asimov's analysis including his great faith in the Egyptian chronology and the claims of antiquity made by her dictatorial kings. It seems that some skepticism would be in order regarding histories written for kings who were under the impression that they were gods! It also is important to remember that just because an event was not recorded in Egypt does not mean it didn't happen, especially if recorded elsewhere.

The third reason that the flood must have been universal is the promise of God in Genesis 9:11. There we read, "Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." If this were a local flood, even a devastating one, then God has broken his promise many times by other local floods.

Thus, though we might argue that one may accept a compromised flood account but remain faithful to God, we question if that is possible. The only evidence against such a flood seems to emanate from a conviction that the Bible is generally unreliable. On the other hand, the universal flood is accepted by those inspired to write the Bible, and it is used prominently to illustrate Christian principles. We question whether such a fraudulent account could really bind any spiritual principle on hearers.

Attacks on the Origin of Nations and Abraham

The third Toledoth of Genesis was found in Genesis 6:9, the Toledoth of Noah. The fourth Toledoth has also come under fire, that being the Toledoth of the nations in Gen 10:1. The Bible maintains that all men descended from but one man, Noah, and that through his three sons, Ham, Shem, and Japheth. These chapters (10-11) are largely ignored except for the incident at Shinar recorded in chapter eleven.

However, the specificity of the chapter and its claims cannot be ignored as it sets forth the origin of the nations of the world with their patriarchs. Though there are no rival documents, again this history is thought to be suspect. Coffman wrote:

There are no critical difficulties whatever in Genesis 10, for this record is the only document that has descended through the centuries to shed light upon the particular facts here related. How does one contradict something with nothing? Satan did the only thing he could do, that is, resort to the imaginations of wicked men, those imaginations, of course, being the only source of such alleged prior documents as “P” and “J.” Until Satan can produce those documents and submit them to the same kind of examination that the Bible has encountered, they should not enter in any manner whatsoever into the interpretation of these pages. (Coffman 145)

Many of these ancient nations were named for their particular patriarchs, and such names are called eponyms. This process is certainly familiar to the reader of the Bible, since the nation of Israel was so named after Jacob. However, when the eponym is cited, it is often in the context of a mythical ancestor. One may recall the origins of the city of Rome as an example of this sort of thing. Were these real characters described as fathering these great nations? In particular, was Abram of Ur a real character?

A careful reading of the catalogue of nations is revealing. Though not every nation is immediately identifiable, a startling number of them are. It is reasonable that these early nations would take on the names of the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of Noah. These nations were quite literally families at this point, though they grew rapidly and spread out geographically. But the various clans were generally identified by the name of their family patriarchs.

Many of these families were of great and lasting importance, such as the clans that settled Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. But the next two Toledoths focus our attention on one particular line. Shem's is the fifth Toledoth (Gen. 11:10), identifying him apart

from his two brothers. And though Shem had a number of descendants, Toledoth number six is that of Terah, the father of Abraham (Gen. 11:27). In effect, though Terah is named, Abraham and his family are clearly the focal point of the rest of the book of Genesis. Was Abraham a real character, or just a legendary name for the clan of Israel?

Because of the previously considered editing theories, it is often thought that Abraham (not to mention the other patriarchs) were imaginary characters. Pfeiffer indicated that biblical scholars are often skeptical of the existence of the progenitors of Israel, and that various theories attempt to account for their existence. These included rival "Abraham" and "Isaac" cults that were later merged to have one become the other's son (Pfeiffer 24). He went on to note that the details of the lives of these patriarchs were in complete harmony with what we know of the world in their days. Archer also pointed out that twentieth century extra-biblical evidence supported the existence of a real man named Abram at the appropriate time. He cited the following evidence:

- (1) The excavation of Ur indicates that it was a large and flourishing city at the appropriate time.
- (2) Abram was a common name in that area.
- (3-4) Shechem, Bethel and the Jordan Valley were inhabited in Abraham's day.
- (5) Previously disputed, the accuracy of Genesis 14:1 has been verified with regard to names, locations, and policies.
- (6) References to the city of Nahor.
- (7-8) Confirmation of personal and legal customs peculiar to Abraham's family (Archer 158-161).

It is certainly true that the evidence for the existence of Abraham is not universally accepted. As in the other cases, interpretation of data is required, and as Pfeiffer pointed out:

The conservative may feel that his doctrine of verbal inspiration has been made intellectually respectable because the views of the Wellhausen school have been so rudely upset. The liberal, however, will see the similarity between religious institutions of ancient Israel and her neighbors of the Fertile Crescent as a reason for denying any uniqueness to the faith of the Old Testament. (Pfeiffer 29)

Conclusion

Can there be any resolution to a question such as this? There are certainly those for whom no evidence is sufficient to prove that Genesis provides an accurate account of events, and that it was composed by God Himself. The attacks on Genesis creation, the flood, and the patriarchs are likely to continue until the Lord returns. But there is one additional reason, while it is unlikely to convince either the atheist or the liberal, but certainly it seems reasonable to those who believe. It is the setting of the writing of Genesis.

Moses was called upon to write Genesis at a particular time and for a very particular reason. The book was written to a nation of ex-slaves, most of whom would live the rest of their lives with the shadow of bondage affecting their every waking thought. To them, the great impact of the book would have been the message that they were not Egyptian's beasts of burden, but sons of God through Adam, and direct descendants of the great man Abraham.

The impact of Genesis remains the same today for those of us who are also the children of Abraham (Rom. 4:16). To the Bible believer, we suggest that bowing to the gods of skepticism and liberalism is to surrender our own status as children of God Himself and our heritage of faith through our father Abraham. If the record of Genesis is not real, that message of our own status is

fraudulent, and it is difficult to imagine the value of such a deception. Because of Genesis, we have confidence that we are more than beasts of burden upon this Earth. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Dan is the son of Doris and the late Bob Kessinger—a Gospel preacher of renown. He was reared on a farm in Roan County, WV and educated in the schools of that County. He is a graduate of Ohio Valley College (now University) and has been preaching since 1982. He has served two churches: Proctor, WV and Dewey Avenue in St. Marys where he has worked for more than sixteen years. He is married to the former Mary Amy West, and they have two sons, D. J. and Thomas. In addition to Gospel meetings, appearing on many lecture programs, working with West Virginia Christian Youth Camp and serving on the faculty of West Virginia School of Preaching, Dan also has a weekly radio program, each Lord’s Day morning on the local station in St. Marys. He frequently contributes to religious journals and has written a book entitled *A Cloak of Malice*. His hobby, handed down for several generations in his family, is playing “Blue Grass.” He has made some albums and appears on several programs each year taking several awards for his playing of various stringed instruments, such as fiddle, guitar and mandolin.

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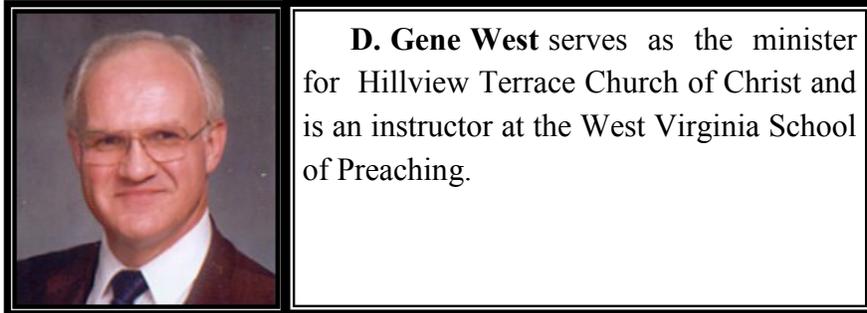
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God's Grace in Genesis 1-11

D. Gene West



Introduction

It has been alleged by some “biblical scholars” both in and out of our Brotherhood that there was no grace in the ages of the Old Testament, *i.e.* Patriarchal and Mosaic epochs. The God of the Old Testament, they affirm, was a God of harsh vengeance and punishment lacking the kindness and grace shown to man in the New Testament. As a matter of fact, many theologians look upon what they call “the God of the New Testament” as a permissive kind of parent who is very willing to spoil His children, even overlooking their shortcomings, whereas in the Old Testament He was strict and punitive demanding perfect obedience to His every whim. They cite such events as the punishment of Uzzah, who contrary to God’s specific command, touched the Ark of the Covenant when he thought it was going to fall from the ox cart at the threshing floor of Nachon, also called Chidon (2 Sam. 6:6f; 1Chro. 13:9f). Some would affirm this action by God was unwarranted and capricious showing the punitive nature of Israel’s God.

This view is based, primarily, on three things: 1st a failure to understand the offensiveness of sin to God; 2nd what God was attempting to do with the nation of Israel for the salvation of mankind; 3rd a single statement found in the New Testament. In John 1:17 one reads, “For the law was given through Moses, but

grace and *truth* came through Jesus Christ.” If there was no *grace* during the Old Testament eras, there would have been no *truth* since according to this theology these came only with and from Christ.

The affirmation is that God *changed!* In the Old Testament He was a God of legalism, but in the New He is a God of grace. However, in verse 14 of John’s context, it is affirmed that God is a God “full of grace and truth” which He fully revealed when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Furthermore, in the 16th verse John affirmed that from the “fullness of His grace,” His grace was “received,” obviously in the propitiatory coming of Christ. Hence, in v. 17 John asserted that *the* grace and *the* truth (referring to the gift of salvation and the message through which it is received, the Gospel) came through Jesus—the channel by which God demonstrated the grace He had always possessed. The coming of Jesus and His work were the *fullness* or completeness of the grace (*gift*) God planned to give man before the creation of the world. One of the instruments God used to bring this grace to the world was the Law given through Moses at Sinai. John is not comparing, or contrasting, the Law of Moses, saying it had no grace, and Christ and His Gospel saying grace was unknown until He came. The coming of Jesus demonstrated that God’s grace was now “filled up”—its expression was complete. The grace and truth that came by Jesus is the Gospel of salvation.

On this passage, our late brother Guy N. Woods astutely observed,

The grace we are privileged to receive through Christ is vastly superior to the blessings of the old covenant even as Christ, through whom this grace comes, is infinitely superior to Moses, by whom the law came. (Deut. 5:1, 2.) The “law” mentioned here is that which was given from Sinai. This law was by Paul regarded as the opposite of grace in that it created obligations it could not help discharge thus making apparent man’s need of God’s grace which may be received only through Christ. (Gal. 3:10; 4:4; Rom. 8:2-4.) The law was helpless to justify, and it served only to bring the Jews to Christ. (Gal. 3:8-

27.) Only in Christ is there deliverance from the guilt, and power and the presence of sin. The blessing of salvation we appropriate (not *merit, earn, purchase, or deserve*) through obedience to his will as expressed in his commandments. (Matt. 7:21; Acts 10:34, 35; 1 John 2:4; 5:3.) (*The Gospel According to John 35*)

Regarding the so-called punitive nature of God, it should be pointed out that the Hebrews writer affirmed that God is a God of chastisement (Hebrews 12:3-11). There is a great deal of difference between chastisement and revenge or cruelty! Chastisement comes from a heart of love, while revenge and cruelty come from anger and hatred. Perhaps a warning is in order. The fact that we live in the age of grace and the kindness of God is seen more fully now than ever before does not give us license to sin. In the New Testament, as in the Old, man cannot sin against God with impunity, for God does not change (Mal. 3:6). The only way to escape the punishment of sin is through the justification that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

The word grace in the Old Testament. The word grace is found 170 times in our English Bibles with 38 of those being in the Old Testament. The Hebrew word most frequently translated grace is found 69 times mainly in the Pentateuch and the books of History. The word is *chên*, pronounced *khane*, meaning: graciousness, kindness, favor, beauty, pleasant, agreeable, or the response to the pleasant and agreeable. The meaning is not radically different from the Greek word *charis* found 132 times in the New Testament. The fundamental meaning of the Greek word is “a gift” bestowed though not deserved. Of course, if it were deserved, or owed, it would not be a gift—would it?

Grace in Genesis 1 – 11; Chapter 1

Having established implicitly, if not explicitly, that God has always been a God of grace, it now becomes incumbent to demonstrate that truth from Genesis 1:1 – 11. Because the word “grace” does not appear until Genesis 6:8, there may be a tendency to fail to recognize those acts of God’s grace before that time. Therefore, we need to look at some events in these chapters

that demonstrate God's immeasurable grace, even though the word is not used.

Grace in Creation. When one stops to consider the awesome creation of God, certain facts come to mind. 1st. There does not appear to be any reason for all the creation that took place before the 6th day other than to make something whose beauty is incomparable. But God does not need that kind of beauty, for the beauty of His residing place called Heaven defies imagination. Just read the throne room passages in the Book of Revelation and see that the beauty there is described by the most precious and exquisite things known to man—pure gold and precious stones. These are only symbolic descriptions of a reality so magnificent the human mind cannot comprehend it. We struggle even with the symbolic descriptions. Creation day after creation day goes by with only more and more splendor being created until on the 6th day we see why all that went before was accomplished. It was done to make all in readiness for the forming of man from the dust of the earth and breathing into his nostrils *nephesh*—the breath of life—making him a living soul. Now we see the reason for all the provision *Elohim* spread out before He ever created the fore-parents of humanity. When Adam was placed in that Paradise known as Eden, there was no provision wanting. Everything man wanted or could have wanted was there is such abundance that it defies imagination. When on that day of creation *Elohim* saw that there was only one thing lacking to make man's Paradise perfect, He caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep and from one of his ribs he created the perfect mate for him.

What had man ever done to earn, merit or deserve such abundant provision from God? “Nothing” seems to be the correct answer, and if it is, the whole of creation must have been an act of grace on the part of *Elohim* designed for the benefit of that “very good” creature that God made the day before He rested. What necessity or luxury was missing in that perfect Paradise? None!—hence, all the creation were acts of grace on the part of *Elohim* for the comfort and well-being of mankind. From before the 1st day of creation *Elohim* already loved and was making provision for the creatures that He had not yet placed on the turquoise planet.

God's Grace in Genesis 1 – 11; Chapter 3

Grace in the Expulsion.

Man who had been so graciously provided for by the God of our universe, was soon made discontent by Satan who appeared to mother Eve in the form of a serpent, the most cunning of all the creatures *Elohim* had created on this earth. Satan used his persuasive powers of deception to lure the mother of all living into his labyrinth of sin and rebellion against her loving Creator. This is easily understood, for all have experienced what deception can do; we have tasted its bitter and poisonous result. However, there is no indication in Scripture that our first father was deceived by anyone. Genesis 3:6 merely, almost matter-of-factly, relates: "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate." There are several mysteries that surround the activities of that day. Alders wrote of some of the questions that come to mind:

The biblical narrative gives no details at this point. We are not told whether the man was present during the conversation between the serpent and the woman and thus was led into the same path of temptation, or that, in the course of his tending of the garden, he approached the scene after the woman had eaten of the tree. We do not know whether the woman [*sic*] actually approached the man and urged him to eat or what effort she expended in this direction. First Timothy 2:14 suggests that the man was not present during the conversation with the serpent but later was influenced by the woman to participate in the fatal eating of the tree. (I 102).

1st Timothy does not totally clear the matter for us, the passage merely says that "Adam was not deceived..." There are at least two allowable possibilities in that language. First, that he was there when Satan tempted Eve, but did not fall for the temptation himself. Secondly, that he was not present at the time and later ate of the fruit at her mere suggestion. In either case it

would appear that Adam was far less excusable than Eve, for he surrendered to her his leadership role granted by virtue of the order of creation (1 Tim.2:13-14). What happened in this regard is not as germane as what resulted, for after Adam rebelled against God's graciousness, they both gained a kind knowledge they had not had heretofore—what we might call carnal, for they discovered their nakedness and were ashamed—man's first taste of guilt. It seems that Eve did not consider what she could *lose* by falling prey to Satan's wiles, only what she thought she could gain, which was, in fact, no gain at all.

At this point God made the decision to expel them from the paradise of Eden, for He did not wish that they eat of the "tree of life" and live forever. So, why did He not just cause them both to die and start again with a new couple? Because He knew the end from the beginning. He knew that no matter how many times He started again Satan and man would take the good and perfect and use it for evil purposes. Had He started again a million times—mankind would have still stood in need of the spiritual redemption that would come through the death of His Son on Golgotha's brow.

The only way that would not been the case would have been for Him to create man as a robot having no free moral agency—unable to choose between good and evil. Thus, *Yahweh* decided to expel the couple from Paradise and curse—punish them so they would never forget what they had lost in the transgression. Though *Adonai* had made this decision before He ever created—it was an act of grace for Him to punish mankind rather than, at that moment consign His immortal creatures to an eternal condemnation; He gave them opportunity to redeem themselves!

God's Grace in Genesis 1 – 11; Chapter 4

God's Grace and Murder

Murder is a horrific crime so often committed today that we tend to think little of it unless it strikes close to us. But to plan and destroy one of God's creatures, made in His image is to insult arrogantly the *Yahweh* of our universe. As we shall see later, murder is such an affront to our God that He determined that one

who should commit this crime should be executed as punishment for his sin (Genesis 9:6).

The first murder ever recorded is one of the strangest in the annals of man. For one thing the motivation behind the heinous deed is a very strange one—deep jealousy because God respected Abel’s sacrifice to Him, and had no respect for the sacrifice of the eldest son of Adam. There are many views on the “why” God had regarded, or respected for “Abel and his offering,” but not for “Cain and his offering.” Neither time, inclination, nor space allow for the listing and discussion of all the views, some of which appear reasonable—some are fantastic! The Author of the magnificent Book of Hebrews recorded that Abel offered his sacrifice by faith. “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks” (Hebrews 11:4). Since “faith comes by hearing . . . the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17), one may safely affirm that Abel offered according to the instruction of God and Cain did not. Leupold held the view that the problem with the whole offering was not what the men offered, but the attitudes they had in offering. He wrote:

With characteristic spiritual discernment the Scripture goes to the heart of things. Formalistic worship is of no value in God’s eyes; it is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Our narrative gives expression to this thought by stating that “Yahweh regarded Abel and his offering; but Cain and his sacrifice He did not regard.” The meaning of the verb *sha’ah* is “to gaze,” but when it is used with *’el* in a connection such as this, it means “regard with favor.” But the significant thing, noticed first by Luther and most commentators since, is that this regarding with favor directs itself to the person, then to the offering; so in the case of both of the brothers. This fact very significantly shows the determining factor in worship is the attitude of the individual. Him, or his heart, God weighs. If he is not found wanting, the gift is acceptable. If he fails to please the Almighty, his gift is reprobate. This fact is so

important that it alone is stated. The writer regards it as quite unimportant to record how the divine favor or disfavor was expressed. (I 196-197)

However the “divine disfavor” was expressed Cain recognized it immediately and became enraged. While fundamentally agreeing with Leupold, it must be insisted that the attitude which Cain manifested was a basic disregard for faith—obedience to God’s Word. It has been previously noted that Abel offered by faith, which implies that Cain did not. Since faith comes by hearing the Word of God, Cain’s chief attitudinal problem must have been to discard faith in favor of following his own will rather than God’s.

Nonetheless, the matter of the grace of God shown to Cain, despite his attitude, whatever it may have been, is in the fact that God did not exact the death penalty for “capital” murder. Cain had opportunity to repent for God reasoned with him vv. six and seven and despite God’s warning Cain, at his first opportunity rose up against Abel and slew him. When God pronounced judgment against Cain it was not death, though he evidently thought that was what he deserved as is implied in the 14th verse. God’s curse, though it involved severe punishment, did not condemn Cain to immediate death, thus allowing him more time to repent, for God said: “When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth” (Genesis 4:12). Cain’s response was that he considered his punishment a fate worse than death. He replied: “Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me” (Genesis 4:14). Did Cain think the only place God presented His face was where they were? Was he missing the omnipresence of God? Cain entered the land of Nod east of Eden where he developed the first pagan society recorded in the Bible. This shows clearly God’s *grace* in not executing him, or having him executed, and even allowing him to develop a line of heathen descendants. God’s grace gives the sinful time to reform, though

often they refuse to do that, but move further and further away from God.

God's Grace to the Arrogant.

In Genesis 4:17-24, we find recorded a brief genealogy of Cain who had been driven from home and family because of his murdering his brother Abel. As time progressed there arrived in this world a man by the name of Lamech, who would have been great-grandson to Cain. Not a great deal is known of this man, except for the following facts: 1st without the approval of God, Lamech took to himself two wives. He was the world's first bigamist, it would seem and his action led to the polygamy that was later practiced so freely by many people, including Abraham and Jacob. The man who surpassed all others in this practice was, of course, the great King Solomon who had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, but "from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8). Lamech's wives were Adah who bore Jubal whose descendants were nomadic keepers of "cattle," a broad term for kine and sheep, as well as other livestock. She also bore Jubal whose descendants were musicians and the makers of musical instruments. Lamech's other wife—Zillah bore him a son named Tubalcain, the metallurgist of his time, working with brass and iron. Tubalcain had a sister whose name was Naamah of whom nothing more is known.

2nd one day, obviously quite unexpectedly, Lamech called his wives and made a rather strange confession. He said, "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, even a young man for hurting me. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold" (Genesis 4:23-24). This is one of the most difficult and "knottiest" passages in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, perhaps in the whole book. A cursory reading leads one to conclude that Lamech was openly admitting to murdering a young man, or perhaps two men. Furthermore, he seems to be saying that he does not need God to avenge anyone who would attempt to kill him for the life he had taken. He feared no "avenger of blood!" Recall that God told Cain that he would place a mark on him and if any of the family of Abel, or any other

members of Adam's family should slay him because of the murder of his brother, God would bring sevenfold vengeance on that person. This seems to indicate that God would require seven lives of the family of the person who would slay Cain.

Linguistic experts tell us that this is a poem and Lamech had not yet killed anyone. That he was boastfully proclaiming that if he did so and the family of the one(s) murdered attempted to take vengeance on him, he would not depend on the protection of God as did Cain, but that he would take ten times the vengeance on those who attempted to avenge the one(s) he murdered. He seems to be proudly proclaiming that he did not need God, or His protection—that he was perfectly capable of taking care of that himself.

Gill apparently believed that Lamech had already committed murder by taking the lives of two men who were guilty of an attempt to slay him or some of his family. He wrote:

Confessing what he had done, or boasting what he would do should he be attacked; or in order to make his wives easy, who might fear from his fierceness and cruelty, and the murders he had committed, or on account of Abel's murder, ver. 15, that either the judgment of God would fall upon him and them, or some man or other would dispatch him and his; wherefore calling them together, he thus bespeaks them, *hear my voice, you wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech*; this he said in an imperious manner to them, demanding their attention and regard . . . (39).

Surely, his speech could have been more than just words of comfort for his wives telling them not to be anxious that though he had committed murder he would wreak havoc and mayhem on any who threatened to take, or attempted to take vengeance.

Later Gill set forth the Jewish tradition that the two men Lamech had slain were his own son Tubalcain and his great-grandfather, Cain (39). This, according to Jewish tradition was the result of a hunting trip gone bad. Clarke thought this tradition was ridiculous (63). At any rate, Lamech boasted that he

needed no protection from God! It was a kind of “avenger beware” speech, certainly with elements of bragging.

Leupold, on the other hand, sees Lamech as a sort of braggadocio boasting of his prowess as a warrior fully able to protect his own, but he insists that Lamech’s poem had to be based on some reality—it was not just pulled from the air. He does not, however, venture a guess as to whether Lamech had actually committed murder, or whether he was just showing the barbaric ability to do so and avenge himself on all comers. He wrote:

From one point of view, of course, this poem is a glorification of the sword. But penetrating deeper into its character, we find it to be a glorification of the spirit of personal revenge. So the poem has an unholy savor and reflects admirably the spirit of those who have grown estranged from God and His Word. So all human culture and the achievement of civilization degenerate apart from God (222 – 223).

We need not think of the positions of these two scholars as being mutually exclusive. Many of the things in this little poem could literally have happened—there is no reason to doubt the historicity of Lamech’s words, though no victim is named. Leupold was certainly correct in identifying the development of evil in the man and in his world. The poem could express both history and bravado on the part of Lamech. As Clyde Woods wrote: “Lamech’s thought seems to be, ‘How violent and mean I am! Those who wound me I kill!’ . . . In arrogant pride, Lamech claims his vengeance is more severe than that of God (see verse 15)” (15). Adam Clarke approached the whole episode from an entirely different point of view. Presupposing a kind of “blood feud” he wrote:

Now we may suppose that the descendants of Cain were in continual alarms, lest some of the other family should attempt to avenge the death of Abel on *them*, as they were not permitted to do it on Cain; and that in order

to dismiss those fears, Lamech, the seventh descendant from Adam, spoke to this effect to his wives: “Why should you render yourselves miserable by such ill-founded fears? We have slain no person; we have not the least wrong to our brethren of the other family; surely then reason should dictate to you that they have no right to injure us. It is true that Cain, one of our ancestors, killed his brother Abel; but God, willing to pardon his sin, and give him space to repent, threatened to punish those with a seven-fold punishment who should dare to kill him. If this be so, then those who should have the boldness to kill any of us who are innocent, may expect a punishment still more rigorous. For if Cain should be avenged seven-fold on the person who should slay him, surely Lamech or any of his innocent family should be avenged seventy-seven-fold on those who injure them.” The Targums (Jewish Commentary, par. added) give nearly the same meaning, and it makes a good sense; but who can say it is the true sense? (63)

Clarke then declared the passage “inscrutable” (63).

Whether he was a murderer, or simply boasting that he would willingly become one if threatened, or merely trying to allay the fears of his family, is not as important as the question: Did God show His divine grace to such a barbarous man? It must be said that He did! Whether he, in reality, committed murder, or if he was willing to do so at the earliest provocation is not as germane to our study as God’s mercy shown to him by allowing him to live and enjoy prosperity for many years. God showed Lamech the same blessing as He did his great-grandfather Cain by allowing him to live and find “space for repentance.” Whether or not he ever did, is not known.

However, God does not always take immediate vengeance on the wicked. This we learn from the question of the martyred souls under the altar in Revelation 6:10 who cried, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” There is no report of vengeance or attempted vengeance! Lamech seems to have lived out his years

in peace, perhaps perishing in the great flood. Whether murderer or braggart, or concerned husband and father, he presumed on the grace of God—a very unwise thing to do! Yet God extends His grace in some way or another to the vilest on the earth, (Matt.5:45) but His spirit will not always strive with man—a judgment comes!

God's Grace in Genesis 1 – 11; Chapter 6

Grace for Noah and his Family

In the next narrative demonstrating the divine grace of God, we have one of the richest, most studied and best loved events in all the Bible. Possibly overshadowed only by the account of Jonah and the great fish. The mature meditate on it, children sing of it—it is one of the finest narrations showing the grace of God to be found in any literature, inspired or otherwise.

In the 5th chapter of Genesis we have the genealogy of Adam, ending with the introduction of a man named Noah. It was during the time that the “sons of God” married the “daughters of men” because of their beauty. The unrighteous women corrupted the righteous sons of God and the result was “. . . the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). That is astounding! Since obviously, there was no hope of reforming mankind, God resolved to destroy the population of the whole earth. However, while God was making the resolution that His spirit would not always strive with man—meaning God would not continue to put off judgment of the wicked interminably—there was a limit to His patience, the time must come for action, (Gen. 6:3) He remembered Noah a man thus described, “. . . Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:9). As a result of his righteousness and his walking with God, *i.e.*, his faithful obedience to God, “. . . Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (Genesis 6:8).

Though the grace of God was demonstrated in earlier events in the Book of Genesis, as observed formerly, this is the very first time the word “grace” (*chên*) appears in the Bible. Noah's finding grace in the eyes of the Lord means that he was precious and pleasant in God's sight. There was nothing odious or despicable

about Noah and his family as God viewed their lifestyles from His high and exalted throne beyond the azure blue. It is certainly a compliment to Noah and his family that as God observed the behavior of the highest of His creation, Noah and his family stood out as the brightest of stars on the darkest of nights.

Though Noah was just, perfect in his generation and “walked with God,” as did his great-grandfather Enoch, (Gen. 5:22) he did not *deserve* or *earn* the gift of life that God would bestow on him by the waters of the flood. After all, his righteousness, perfection and obedience were measured by human standards, against the backdrop of his day—he was not a perfect, *i.e.*, absolutely sinless man as we shall see once he and his exited the Ark, but one who was both righteous and upright, or sound. If absolute perfection on the part of man were the standard by which God decides to show His grace, none would ever receive it, for perfection needs no grace. Leupold observed: “In the midst of God’s judgment His “grace” (*chen*) also shines forth. Though the word is often used of the favor one man enjoys in the sight of another, such favor, when it flows forth from God, is that unmerited, rich favor we are wont to call “grace” (I 262). That the Scriptures intend to convey that Noah was a pious and devout man cannot be denied. Therefore, he attained or acquired a place of preciousness in the sight of God, not through activity on his own part, (Isa.64:6) but from the overflowing heart of God; Noah received that which was needed to sustain and save him and his family when the deluge came. As R. Payne Smith in his commentary on *Genesis* found in *Ellicott’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* so succinctly wrote, “Jehovah’s purpose was not extermination, but regeneration; and with Noah a higher and better order of things was to begin” (I 36).

Adam Clarke astutely observed:

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.] Why? Because he was, 1. A just man, ish tsaddik, a man who gave to all their due; for this is the ideal meaning of the original word. 2. He was perfect in his generation—he was in all things a consistent character, never departing from the truth in principle or practice. 3. He walked with

God—he was not only *righteous* in his conduct, but he was *pious*, and had continual communion with God. The same word is used here as before in the case of Enoch. See chap. v.22 (69).

By *pious* Clarke intended to convey that Noah's primary devotion in life was to God; that he had a dutiful and reverent attitude toward God and an earnest wish to fulfill his religious obligations in the sight of God. He practiced none of the heathen idolatry. No wonder he was both precious and pleasant in the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do!

Peter mentioned this event in history when he wrote: “. . . T] he Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water” (1 Peter 3:20). The salvation brought to Noah through water was as much an act of grace as the salvation we find through water mentioned in the very next verse. Whether our *Yahweh* preserves physical life or grants spiritual life it is accomplished by His divine grace. Had God not shown His grace to Noah and carried out His plans for the destruction of mankind, unless He had created again, our planet would be void of all humanity.

The means by which God granted His grace to Noah are found in the following commands:

“Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks. And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. And of

every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them” (Genesis 6:14-21).

Had Noah failed in any part of this commission, the grace of God would have failed him when the flood came. God’s grace bestowed upon Noah is found also in the words, “Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided” (Genesis 8:1). A further demonstration of God’s grace toward Noah is found in these words:

“So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand” (Genesis 9:1-2).

Notice: while there was nothing that Noah could do on his own to earn God’s grace, God did not set a completed ship or barge laden with the animals that He wished to save down on the earth and bid Noah and his family to enter. Noah’s faith “working together” with his works brought the salvation granted him, as James stated regarding Abraham in 2:22. He was saved neither by grace alone, faith alone, nor works alone—but by combining each, these prevailed to save this good man and his equally good family. Again, notice: Noah did not come up with the idea of building a great Ark to the saving of his house, both the idea and the pattern were given to him from Heaven. He had to accept the ideas by faith and build according to the pattern—blueprint, if you will, given him. Had it not been for the proper combination

of God's grace, Noah's faith and obedience nothing that breathes the breath of life would have survived the great deluge.

Conclusion

The rich and precious words of Paul to Titus come ringing from the heart: For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age . . . (Titus 2:11-12). Noah denied the "ungodliness and worldly lusts" that surrounded him; he lived "soberly, righteously and godly" in his age and his name is forever inscribed in the Book of Life and the best minds of this world. How magnificently God's grace was displayed in these chapters, including the confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel, for speaking many languages is better than death and destruction. Ω

Biographical Sketch

D. Gene West, a native of Hancock County, WV, was baptized into Christ by the late Jess W. Nutter, April 11, 1950 and began preaching in February, 1953. He currently serves the Hillview Terrace Church of Christ in Moundsville, WV, and serves as a teacher of Acts and Revelation at the West Virginia School of Preaching. He and his wife, the former Shirley Bissett are the parents of three children, Kandi Davis, Mary Amy Kessinger, and Todd C. West. They are the grandparents of seven grandchildren. He graduated Freed-Hardeman University, West Liberty University, Fairmont State University, and has done graduate work at Southern Christian University and West Virginia University. After more than ten years of intense study, he authored a moderate preterist commentary on Revelation entitled: *Avenging His Holy Saints, Apostles and Prophets*. This is a hardbound work of some 847 pages, including the indices. He has also written: *A Student's Commentary on the Book of Acts* and *A Student's Commentary on the Treatise to the Hebrews*, on the Books of *Philippians*, *Philemon*, *Romans*, *Galatians* as well as *Messianic Prophecy Outlined* and some tracts on Islam, the Names of God, Homosexuality and some others.

He holds Gospel meetings each year, speaks on various brotherhood lecture programs and makes frequent mission trips to the British Isles where he helps brethren in Scotland and England. He gave minimal assistance to British brethren in the publication of a wonderful anthology edited by brother Joe Nisbet of Aberdeen, Scotland entitled *Historical Survey of the Churches of Christ in the British Isles*, and serves as the American agent for the sale of this great book.

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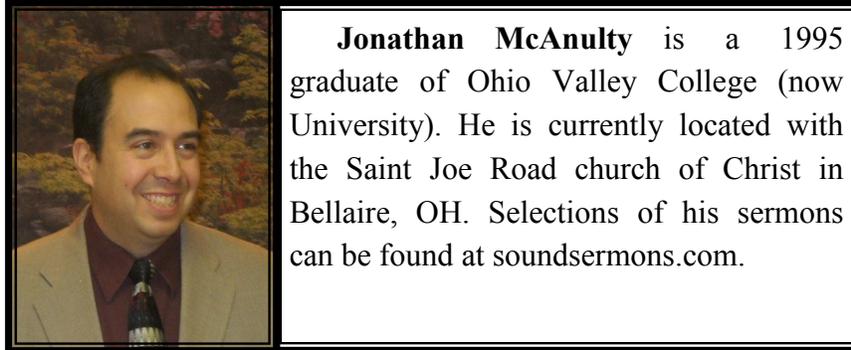
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Walking with God

Jonathan McAnulty



Introduction

For several years now, the West Virginia School of Preaching Lectureship has been, for my family and me an annual event, much anticipated and always edifying. I am grateful this year for the invitation to participate as a speaker and would like to thank the Lectureship Committee and the Eldership of the Hillview Terrace congregation for the opportunity they have given me.

Enoch and Noah

Our subject for this lesson is “Walking with God,” a term used to describe the characters of Enoch and Noah. In Genesis 5:24, following the genealogy of Enoch, we read “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.” (All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the NKJV.) Likewise, in Genesis 6:9, Moses writes, “Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.” This exact formulation to describe the conduct and life of an individual is unique to these two passages, though as we shall see in a moment, the concept of walking with God is found elsewhere in scriptures.

Noah and Enoch are also each mentioned in Hebrews 11:5-7, and those words are pertinent, I believe to understanding what it means to walk with God.

“By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”

Enoch and Noah were both men of faith, meaning they heard the Word of the Lord and then obeyed the Word of the Lord. Because of this faith, both men were pleasing to God. In specifically stating that Enoch “*pleased God*,” the writer is relying on the Septuagint, which did not use the phrase “*walk with God*,” preferring to render it with the looser “pleased God.” Lightfoot suggests the translators did this because they thought the phrase, “walk with God,” was too intimate for the relationship between God and man (208). Nevertheless, the Hebrew writer gives inspired weight to the uninspired translation, so that, though the original phrase, “*walked with God*,” is most certainly broader in meaning than the Greek rendering, the understanding of the first must include the second. And, as the Septuagint used this phrase to describe Enoch, so too does it describe Noah this way, saying, “Noe was a just man; being perfect in his generation, Noe was well-pleasing to God” (Genesis 6:9; Septuagint).

Concerning Enoch and Noah, we can also see the result of “walking with God:” salvation. The salvation of Enoch was nearly unique. The Scriptures teach he “was taken away so that he did not see death.” Like the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 2:1, 11), Enoch was removed from the earth before he could experience physical death, being translated from a material existence directly

into the spiritual realm. The salvation of Noah was no less dramatic and the Hebrew writer chooses to focus on this aspect of Noah's story, stating that, "moved with godly fear," he "prepared an ark for the saving of his household." Moses says of Noah that he found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8, 9). This grace manifested itself in God's message to Noah concerning the coming deluge and Noah's subsequent obedience and ultimate physical salvation; a salvation that serves as a type of our own (1 Pet. 3:20, 21).

Other Uses of "Walking with God" in the Scriptures

Though no individuals other than Enoch and Noah are specifically noted in the scriptures as having walked with God, we should not think that their relationship with God was so unique as to be beyond our capabilities. Indeed, the relationship these men enjoyed with God is typical of the relationship enjoyed by all who do God's will.

Hosea wrote, "Ephraim has encircled Me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah still walks with God, even with the Holy One who is faithful" (Hosea 11:12). The nation of Judah, because of their continued faith, maintained a relationship with God. Hosea describes this relationship as one of "walking with God." While we somehow doubt the entire nation of Judah was comprised solely of men possessing the spiritual caliber of Noah and Enoch, God saw fit, through the prophet, to highly commend them and their obedience through the use of this phrase and having done so, He teaches us that walking with God was not a feat reserved for two select men.

In Micah we learn that walking with God is not just a good idea, it is required of us: "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). These echo the words of Moses in Deuteronomy: "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His

statutes which I command you today for your good?" (Deut. 10:12-13).

Contrasting Micah with Moses, we see that there is a distinct relationship between walking with God and walking in the ways of God, as taught in the Word of God. This is in harmony with the Psalms, which teach us, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night" (Psa. 1:1, 2). Those who are not walking in the counsel of God must be walking according to the counsel of the ungodly on the path of sinners, for there are only two paths we can follow: a broad gate with easy path leading to destruction, or a narrow gate with a difficult path leading to life (Matt. 6:13-14). There is no third way, no middle of the road, and no sitting on the fence. You are either walking with God or walking with the world. And to walk with God requires a relationship with the word of God, meditating on it "day and night." One cannot be said to walk with God while rejecting the truth of God's Word.

The Man who Walks with God Believes the Words of God

As already seen, Enoch and Noah were men of faith. They believed in God and they believed that He was a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. While we do not know the specifics of the life of Enoch, we know of His faith, for we have the testimony that he was pleasing to God, and without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:5, 6). This faith must have come from his knowledge of God's Word and his trust in the same, for "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

Concerning the life of Noah we know more. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8). This grace manifested itself in the form of a message of salvation. God told Noah He was sending a flood which would destroy the sinful world. Noah believed the message and was moved with "*godly fear*." Because of his faith, he acted and began building an ark according to the Commands of God, exactly following the pattern as it was delivered to Him. Because of this obedient faith, Noah saved

himself and his family. Thus we have the testimony of the Scriptures that Noah heard the Word of God, he believed the Word of God and He obeyed the Word of God.

If we are to walk with God, we too must be men and women of faith, a faith rooted and grounded in the truth of God's Word. It should be said of us that we are a people who know the Word of God. More than this, it should be said of us that we love the Words of our God.

There are those who approach the Bible tepidly. They harbor suspicions concerning the wisdom of God. They doubt the fullness of His love and righteousness. When they accept the Scriptures, they do so grudgingly. They seek for loopholes in the Law of the Lord. We might even say that some of these souls, mindful of the wisdom and doctrines of men, are ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Among such "believers," may we never be counted.

To walk with God we must embrace the word of God. We should agree with God wholeheartedly, like Christ recognizing that God's Word is Truth (John 17:17). We should recognize the justice of God's Word, the propriety of His Laws and the glory of the same. Like the Psalmist, we should be able to say, "I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches, I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word." "Oh, how I love Your law!" "Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them" (Psa. 119:14-16, 97, 129).

Amos asked, "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3). The answer is self evident, "No!" If there is no agreement as to the destination between two individuals, they cannot make a journey to that destination together. If their destinations are close, they may walk together for a while, but eventually the paths will diverge and the two will go their separate ways. Similarly, two people going to the same place cannot walk together if they do not agree to travel the same path. So it is with those who would walk with God. If we do not agree with God concerning the destination eventually, even if we appear to be walking with Him at first, there comes a time when our path shall depart from His. Moreover, while some believe

there are many diverse paths by which one may reach a heavenly destination. God says it is not so. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life," said the Lord, "No one comes to the Father except through Me," (John 14:6) and Peter announced, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." There is a single, narrow gate: Christ (John 10:7). There is a single path leading to life and it is the Word of God which illuminates (Psa. 119:105).

When Hosea tells us that Israel did not walk with God (Hosea 11:12), we can reasonably deduce that they failed to walk with God because they were not in full agreement with the Word of God. They were full of idolatry, wickedness, and worldly thoughts. So long as one clings to the philosophies, wisdom and doctrines of the world, one must eventually reject the wisdom of God. Thus the apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians,

"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

If we would walk with God, if we would have God walk with us, we must be in agreement with the doctrine of Christ and we must, of necessity, reject the hollow wicked works of darkness.

This is hard for some. Perhaps it is because they have been so long in the world that they do not know right from wrong. It is a sad truth that man has always sought to call good, evil, and evil, good; replacing light with darkness and reveling in it. We see signs of this throughout our culture, indeed throughout the world. Perhaps it is hard simply because of pride. For many it is difficult to admit that they have been wrong, misguided and deluded. Yet,

we cannot in pride pretend to know the best direction for our own feet. “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Prov. 14:12). God, being Creator of heaven and earth, has the right to choose the path He will walk upon with us. We either agree with the path or we do not. If we agree with the path God has chosen, we can join Him there and enter at the end of the way into life. If we do not agree we have the freedom, given by God, to walk our own way, for a time; though we are well warned by God where a path of our devising ultimately leads. With true humility, the righteous will always admit that God's wisdom is higher than theirs and that His path is the right path (see again Micah 6:8).

Of course, the ultimate test of true faith and devotion to the Word of God is obedience. “But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?” (James 2:18-20). Would anyone remember the faith of Noah if he had failed to build the ark and had subsequently drowned in the flood? Would Abraham have been the father of the faithful if he had stayed in Ur? If Moses had chosen to stay with the sheep instead of leading the people of God, would we think of him as righteous? Without exception, the faith of such as these was made manifest only when they heard the Word of God, believed the Word of God and then obeyed the Word of God, doing all things as God instructed them (cf. Genesis 6:22).

Sin is that which happens when we turn away from the Word of God. We can actively rebel, practicing lawlessness, we certainly sin (1 John 3:4). More insidious, is the passive rebellion: failing to do the things God has *told us to do*. “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).

Hear again the words of Moses:

“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your

God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?” (Deut. 10:12-13).

Notice what God required of men under the Law of Moses. He has not changed. He still requires that we fear and respect Him (Heb. 12:28). He requires us to walk in His ways and to love Him with all of our hearts and souls (Matt. 22:37-38). And He requires us to obey Him in all things (Matt. 28:18-20). Considering who God is and what He has done, His desires are both reasonable and right (cf. Deut. 10:14-18). He is Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Creator and Savior of Men. All His works are righteous and those things He commands us are commanded for our good.

If we would walk with God, we must believe His words, love His words and submit ourselves in obedience to His words.

The Man who Walks with God Speaks the Words of God

This brings us to our second broad point. The man who walks with God, loving the Word of God, not only listens intently to that same Word; he feels compelled to share it.

Consider again Enoch and Noah. Jude 14 references Enoch as a prophet. Though there is reason to think this may be a quote from Jewish literature, rather than a direct quote of the man himself, the Jewish people considered Enoch to have been a preacher (Lightfoot 207). And though we have no record of any sermons preached by Noah, Peter tells us that he was a preacher of righteousness, and we may implicitly trust his inspired word (2 Peter 2:5).

Again from Amos 3.

“Can two walk together, unless they are agreed? Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing? Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no trap for it? Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all? If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not

the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done it? Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?"

The connection between walking with God and sharing the Word of God with other men should not be downplayed. Amos, as a man of God clearly felt the need to share the Message of God with his countrymen. His attitude is typical of the apostles and prophets. It should be typical of all those who are eager to serve God and walk in His way. Each of us, when the call comes, like Isaiah, should say, "Here am I, send me!" (Isaiah 6:8).

Why should this be true? Why is evangelism a natural result of walking with God? Firstly, the man who walks with God recognizes the necessity of the Message. It is not a trivial thing, the Word of God. It is not a matter one can safely ignore for it contains a vital warning. Such words of warning came often to the prophets and God held His servants responsible for making sure those in danger heard the trumpet call (Ezek. 33:1-11). Men today have been warned by God that a Day of Judgment is coming and we, like Ezekiel, have been entrusted with the job of making sure those upon whom doom is coming are aware of the threat. We cannot exaggerate the peril of this threat. Yet the enormity of the danger makes the message all the more necessary, for the danger can be averted. God has made a way of escape. If there was no salvation, we could be excused for thinking men might be better in their ignorance, but as God provides salvation, we are without excuse when we do not warn men of the danger and teach them how to be saved. There is no more necessary or precious message given to men, than the Gospel of Christ.

Thus, men walking with God share His Word with other men because they highly esteem it as a treasure (2 Cor. 4:7). They think of the Bible as a wonderful book, more to be desired than the sweet of honey (Psa. 119:103; Prov. 24:13-14), or the glitter of gold (Psa. 119:72, 127). As the Scriptures are the instrument

through which our Divine Creator makes His Wisdom and manifold graces known, and as the Gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation (Rom. 1:16), such an attitude is imminently reasonable.

How does one react when one hears good news? Naturally, one feels compelled to share it. How does one act when one gains a valuable treasure? One celebrates and calls others to gaze upon that which has been acquired. Should it be any different with the treasure of God's Word, which is the Gospel, or Good News? Let us never forget that an evangelist is someone who shares good news! (cf. Young, 309, 430). Too often when men think of the Word of God, they remember only the bad news, the promise of coming destruction. The Gospel of Christ is not the bad news of judgment, it is the Good News that we can be saved from the coming destruction. It is the promise that, like Noah, we can find a place of safety from the wrath of God. We need to share the message of salvation as the tremendously good news that it is.

The Bible is more than just a blueprint by which one can avoid the heat of hell. God, through Christ, shares with us Words of life. He guides us, with divine wisdom, into an abundant life of righteousness. That is, more than just turning away disaster, the Scriptures guide us into spiritual prosperity, eternal joy, and everlasting blessings. It would be selfish to keep such wisdom to ourselves. And the man who is truly walking with God on the pathway of righteousness is not going to practice selfishness. Full of love, and imitating the Heavenly Father, such a man is eager to share the message so that all men might know the joys of life.

God is not willing that any should perish but desires men to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:8). God's love for men and His desire for men to be saved is demonstrated in the gift of His Son. Through Christ we have the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit and adoption as sons of God. Such gifts did not come cheap; requiring as they did the death of our Lord and Savior. When we realize the enormity of the price God was willing to pay for our redemption, we are moved to recognize the enormity of His love and the value he places on each individual soul. If such is the attitude and will of God, it follows that a man who walks with God, sharing His divine values, must have a similar love for

the souls of men. As obedient children, walking in the footsteps of our Father, we are called to be holy as He is holy (1 Pet. 1:13-14). We are to seek to be perfect as He is perfect and we find this perfection through reflecting the love of God in our own attitudes and actions (Matt. 5:43-48).

We see such a desire reflected in the lives and preaching of the prophets of the Old Testament, who were willing to suffer for the sake of the message they preached. We see it in the apostles Christ chose to preach His Gospel. The Apostle Paul, writing to the church in Rome, said the following:

“I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”

Is it possible to reflect the love of God if we are not willing to declare to men the Words of Life? If we truly agree with the values that God teaches, will we not try to instill those values in our own lives and the lives of those around us? If we truly believe the Word of Warning, will we not feel compelled to share the warning with others? And if the Scriptures are to us Good News, how is it we do not feel compelled to share that News with all and sundry?

We are sent by Christ into the world to make disciples of every nation, preaching the gospel to every creature under heaven (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ (Rev. 22:17). If we wish to walk with God, we need to be a people who not only believe the Word but are eager and willing to share it.

The Man who Walks with God is Accepted by God

Why should we be eager to walk with God? Simply put, walking with God brings blessings and salvation. Not walking with God brings condemnation and destruction.

Enoch walked with God and the Lord took him so that he did not know death. Having walked with God in this life, he had the privilege to walk with God in heaven for all eternity. Noah walked with God and found safety and salvation from the judgment of God. The world of Noah's day was under condemnation. God gave Noah a plan by which he and those who followed him, could be saved. The analogy to our own situation should be clear.

Like Noah, we live in a world condemned. Most of the world has chosen to walk a path away from their Creator and His Law. "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (1 John 5:19). It is not a new problem. David wrote, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, No, not one" (Psa. 14:1-3). For thousands of years men have been in rebellion against their Maker. They scoff at His existence and ridicule His Divine Law. In pride they trust in their own wisdom and seek after their own wicked desires. Enamored of the world, they lay up treasure upon treasure in this world, never giving thanks to the One who has given them all. The result is rampant immorality, widespread perversion, and unending violence. When God, in the days of Noah, looked down, He saw a similar situation and thus promised a great flood. The promised judgment today is fire, not water, but the result will be similar.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be

burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet. 3:10-13).

Trusting the Word of God, we have faith in the reality of the coming judgment. Like Noah, we should be moved with Godly fear, not to the preparing of an ark, but rather to an examination of ourselves and a submission to the Will of God. The Bible is clear in picturing the displeasure and judgment of God upon those who walked in the way of sinners. It is equally clear in providing guidance on how to avoid this fate. “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1John 2:15-17). Therefore, “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful” (Psa. 1:1). There are no blessings in sin. Rather, blessings are found when we turn away from sin and focus ourselves upon the truths of God's word. It is then we will find forgiveness (Eph. 1:7), righteousness, peace and joy (Rom. 14:17).

It is possible for a man to walk with God today. Like Enoch, and like Noah we can be pleasing to God. If we believe in God and we believe that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him, we can be well pleasing to Him (Heb. 11:6). As we come to God in faith we learn that He has given us a plan by which we can avoid the coming destruction. The plan we receive is different than the plan given to Noah. He was to build an ark of wood. We

are to come to Christ in faith, repenting of our sins and be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Noah, in his generation, was saved by doing all that the Lord commanded him (Gen. 6:22). We too can be saved from our wicked generation, through our obedience when we turn to Christ in baptism (Acts 2:40). Like Noah, we can find grace in the eyes of the Lord.

As we find this grace, and as we begin to walk with God, God gives us the opportunity to save others. The promise of salvation is open to all. Just as on the day of Pentecost, the promise “is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39). God is not willing that any should perish. Our actions should reflect His will.

The Bible tells us that Enoch, because of his righteous walk and his relationship with God, received spiritual life, an eternal gift which no man can take from him. We too have the “hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began” (Titus 1:2). Though we, unlike Enoch, may experience physical death, the end result will be the same. “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Rom. 6:4, 5). “And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man” (1 Cor. 15:49).

Conclusion

Peter, speaking to the household of Cornelius, said, “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Acts 10:34-35). Over and over again, God tells us what men need to do to maintain a right relationship with Him. It is not an impossible task. Noah walked with God and found salvation. Enoch walked with God and found a heavenly home. Though they found righteousness, we should not think them uniquely special. They were men, with natures like our own. If we will fear God and work righteousness, God promises to accept us. Through

faith and obedience to His Holy Word, we can walk with God in this life. We can learn to be like God, growing into the fullness of His only begotten Son (Eph. 4:13), manifesting His Will in our lives. And if we do so, if we walk with God now, we shall, when this life is over, continue in that same walk, entering through the heavenly gates into an eternal and glorious home, where righteousness dwells. There we shall be in the company of Enoch and Noah and all the saints of God, who, without exception, chose to walk in the ways of God. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Jonathan McAnulty is a 1995 graduate of Ohio Valley College (now University). He is currently located with the Saint Joe Road church of Christ in Bellaire, OH. Jonathan often tells people he's not really from anywhere. Though born in El Paso, Texas, he lived there only a few weeks before the family went to Virginia. He grew up in Missouri, New Mexico and Pennsylvania, never living longer than about four years in any one place. While attending Ohio Valley College, he met and married Sandra Treadway. They have been married for 18 years and have four children, whom they homeschool. Since 1995 Jonathan has preached for congregations in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Selections of his sermons can be found at soundsermons.com.

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The Days of Genesis 1

Brad Harrub, Ph.D.

Introduction

In a single statement she had unknowingly compromised her entire belief system. Sadly, this was not the first time I had heard someone concede the veracity of God's Word. Trying to appear intellectually elite, this Christian woman proclaimed that she did not have any problem with the whole creation/evolution controversy. She assertively proclaimed: "God could have done it any way He chose. If He wanted to use six days or six million years, it does not matter to me. I do believe God created things, but maybe He used evolution to get us to where we are today." Others, with flushed faces and neck-veins bulging, have shouted: "You are limiting God! By declaring that it was simply six 24-hour days, you are limiting God and His abilities!" Truth be known, God could have done it anyway He chose. But Christians must understand that He told us exactly how He did do it. And if limiting God means that we are holding Him to exactly how He said He did it, then yes, we are limiting Him to His Word.

Oftentimes, these disparaging comments are declared by individuals who have not considered fully the consequences of their thinking. They consider a firm belief in Jesus Christ the only essential ingredient to true spirituality. However, when these individuals find their faith challenged, or when evil, pain, and suffering strikes, an inward examination reveals absolutely no foundation on which to rely. By compromising the opening chapters of God's Word, individuals soon find themselves unable to defend any passages that follow thereafter—their beliefs having been founded on sand. Consider the quandary of a Christian who concedes an evolutionary heritage for mankind. And yet when that individual's own children question the need for baptism, the parent's defense of using God's Word as validation for the essentiality of immersion for the remission of sins becomes untenable. However, a rock solid foundation is possible—a foundation that is unwilling to compromise the creation account found in God's Word.

Scientific Investigation of the Creation Account

Much arguing has occurred as to whether God's creation activities were structured along a seven-day week as we commonly know it. The answer to this controversy can be found in the midst of the God handing down the Ten Commandments:

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work.... For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it (Ex. 20:8-11).

God patterned the Israelite's week after His creative week. God said He did His work (of creation) in six days and rested, and that He expected the same of the Jews; what could be clearer? Later on the Lord instructed: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed" (Ex. 31:16-17). God could very well have created the Universe in six millennia, six centuries, six decades, six weeks, six hours, six minutes, six seconds, or even six nanoseconds, but God said He did it in *six days*. Consider the following examination of the creation week:

Day One

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). In this single sentence, Moses summarized one of the most important miracles that ever took place. He leaves no question as to how the Heaven and Earth got here. Notice, God did not create all the stars and the moon on this particular day. It simply states the Heaven and Earth. Prior to the first day of creation, nothing existed. There were no stars, or planets, or any living things. The phrase usually employed to describe God's creative activity at this point is *creatio ex nihilo* (creation from nothing). F.F. Bruce

correctly observed: “The visible, material universe came into being by pure creation—out of nothing. It was not fashioned from preexistent material...”(1962, p. 125).

In the past, it was popular among scientists to suggest that the Universe is eternal. Today, however, scientists will admit this is unscientific. We now know that the matter and energy of which the Universe is composed cannot have existed forever. The eminent astrophysicist from NASA, Robert Jastrow, stated bluntly what every scientist today knows to be true: “The lingering decline predicted by astronomers for the end of the world differs from the explosive conditions they have calculated for its birth, but the impact is the same: *modern science denies an eternal existence to the Universe*, either in the past or in the future” (1977, p. 30).

Every material thing eventually runs down. For example, when a vehicle is made from metal, wood, plastic, rubber, and glass, energy is used to put all these different parts together. However, soon after the vehicle is made, the wood begins to rot, the metal rusts, and the rubber deteriorates. Similarly, the Universe also is running down. Thus, there must have been a time in the past when it was new—like the vehicle described above. This period of time—denoted as “the beginning”—started with God creating some basic ingredients of the world, such as water and light. Through His power, God not only brought these things into existence, but also imbued them with order. Just as someone had to shape the metal, glass, and rubber in order to make the vehicle, so God had to organize matter and energy in order to make the Earth.

Before God completed this task, the Earth was “without form, and void” (1:2). That is, nothing existed which had any particular shape or purpose.

Could the Lord have used a Big Bang?

Early in the first day, the most prevalent feature of the new Earth was deep water and darkness. The water’s presence on the Earth as mentioned in Genesis 1:2 should not be overlooked. Christians ready to compromise the Creation account often suggest that maybe God used a Big Bang explosion to form the

Universe. The premise is that maybe God simply created matter and then used the Big Bang to get us where we are today. But consider the implications. An explosion of matter the magnitude needed to carry out the initial “Big Bang” would have been literally white hot—too hot to even measure using current technology. And yet we are told that water was on the Earth on this first day, something that would have been impossible had the Earth resulted from a Big Bang explosion. One cannot have a fiery explosion and a water covered Earth on the same day. Any water present would have immediately been turned to steam. No, the Lord did not use the Big Bang to create the Universe around us.

Next we find God speaking light into existence, and placing into motion a cycle of daytime and nighttime (Gen. 1:3-4). Subsequently, this cycle was used to establish a time for the six periods of God’s creative activity, each period being marked by an evening and a morning—viz., a normal day of approximately 24 hours in duration (Gen. 1:5; cf. 1:14). [Notice Moses uses this clarification on each of the days. Americans record days morning to evening. The early Jews recorded days evening to morning. But both measures of time represent the same thing: one twenty-four hour day.] The work of day one at first appears to include only the creation of light. However, if in keeping with Exodus 20:11 **all** things were created within this week, then day one actually begins in verse one, with the creation of the watery void called “Earth.”

Besides the initial creation of the Earth in a waste and void (i.e., unformed and unfilled) condition on day one, the Creator also called light into existence out of nowhere. Henry Morris has suggested what this might have involved:

It is obvious that visible light is primarily meant, since it was set in contrast to darkness. At the same time, the presence of visible light waves necessarily involves the entire electromagnetic spectrum.... In turn, setting the electromagnetic forces into operation in effect completed the energizing of the physical cosmos. All the types of force and energy which

interact in the universe involve only electromagnetic, gravitational, and nuclear forces; and all these had now been activated (56).

Moses makes no excuses for teaching that light existed prior to the luminaries. H.C. Leupold appropriately commented: “If scientists now often regard light as merely enveloping the sun but not as an intrinsic part of it, why could it not have existed by itself without being localized in any heavenly body?” (1942, p. 52). On the first day God said, “Let there be light” (Hebrew *or*), whereas on the fourth day God said, “Let there be lights” (*ma-or*, light-bearers). Therefore, God’s first recorded statement created independent light—without a light-bearer. And since God instituted the light/darkness cycle on that day, we must conclude that the light came from a fixed direction, and that the Earth rotated on its axis. (In eternity there will again be light without the Sun—Rev. 21:23).

Regarding the light bearing objects created on day four, the phrase, “let there be lights” (v. 14), is identical in grammatical construction with other statements of “let there be...” in the chapter. Therefore, the command can mean only that God spoke the luminaries into existence on day four just as He had created the initial light on day one and the firmament on day two. Notice also that God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven”—an expression that could not have been used if they had been there (though concealed) since day one. Then Moses records that God **made** the lights (v. 16) on day four, not that He just made them “shine” or “be visible.” And then he said that God “set” them in the firmament of heaven, which can only mean that they were not there until that very day—created *ex nihilo* (Heb. 11:3).

Day Two

On the second day, God began to make the Earth distinct from the rest of the Universe. He placed an expanse (KJV “firmament”; Hebrew *raqia*) in the middle of the water, and called it “heaven” (1:6). In the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, “heavens” always is plural and, in general, refers to the “heights”

above the Earth. As such, there are three particular applications of the word in Scripture. There are the atmospheric heavens where clouds move and birds fly (cf. Gen. 1:20 and Jer. 4:25), the sidereal heavens (i.e., outer space) where the planetary bodies are located (cf. Gen. 1:17 and Isa. 13:10), and the heaven of God's own dwelling place (Heb. 9:24). In Genesis 1:6, the word "heaven" refers to the atmospheric heavens.

The Hebrew raqia (the "firmament" of the KJV, ASV, RSV, et al.) means an "expanse," or "something stretched, spread or beaten out." Keil and Delitzsch offered this definition in their monumental commentary on the Pentateuch: "to stretch, to spread out, then beat or tread out...the spreading out of air, which surrounds the earth as an atmosphere" (152).

The Septuagint (a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek produced by Jewish scholars in the third century B.C. at the behest of the powerful Egyptian pharaoh, Ptolemy Philadelphus) translated *raqia* into the Greek as *stereoma*, which connotes a "solid structure" (see Arndt and Gingrich, 1967, pg. 774). Apparently, the translators of the Septuagint were influenced by the then-popular Egyptian view of cosmology and astronomy [they were, after all, doing their translating **in Egypt** for an **Egyptian** pharaoh] that embraced the notion of the heavens being a stone vault. Unfortunately, those Hebrew scholars therefore chose to render *raqia* via the Greek word *stereoma*—in order to suggest a firm, solid structure. The Greek connotation thus influenced Jerome to the extent that, when he produced his Latin Vulgate, he used the word *firmamentum* (meaning a strong or steadfast support—from which the word "firmament" is transliterated) to reflect this pagan concept.

In his *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Old Testament language scholar W.E. Vine stressed:

While this English word is derived from the Latin *firmamentum* which signifies firmness or

strengthening,...the Hebrew word, *raqia*, has no such meaning, but denoted the “expanse,” that which was stretched out. Certainly the sky was not regarded as a hard vault in which the heavenly orbs were fixed.... There is therefore nothing in the language of the original to suggest that the writers (of the Old Testament par. added) were influenced by the imaginative ideas of heathen nations (67).

Raqia denotes simply an expanse, not a solid structure. The original context in which *raqia* is used does not imply any kind of solid dome above the Earth. The Bible equates “firmament” with the “heavens” (Psa. 19:1), using even the compound “firmament of heaven” (Gen. 1:14,15,17). God provided the correct definition of the word on the second day of creation when He “called the firmament Heaven” (Gen. 1:8). It was described further when Isaiah said that the Lord “stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in” (Isa. 40:22). “Heavens” always is dual in the Hebrew and, in general, refers to the “heights” above the Earth.

Whenever a word has more than one meaning (as firmament obviously does), the context in which the word is used in the passage under consideration is critical to a proper understanding of the meaning of the word. This “atmospheric” layering would prove essential for future creations. Thus, at the end of day two, the Earth existed in the form of a sphere with several layers—one for the oceans, one for the sky, and one for the waters above the sky (Gen. 1:7). Existing beyond these second waters are the heavens (Hebrew *shamayim*) that compose the Universe. Note that this day also was composed of an evening and a morning (Gen. 1:8).

Day Three

When it was first mentioned in Genesis 1, the Earth was a formless, watery object, but now, in addition to illumination and atmosphere, God had given the forming planet the feature of dry land. Evolutionary science offers a different view altogether. Isaac Asimov explained: “The Bible makes it seem that solid land

appeared out of an initial liquid mass, but from the scientific view, it would seem that an ocean appeared out of an initial dry mass” (1981, p. 38). This is an unambiguous example of the insuperable conflicts between evolution theory and revealed truth. The Bible says **water first**, then land; evolution says **land first**, then water. How can one agree with evolution on this point without flatly rejecting divine testimony?

From the third day onward, God shaped the Earth, prepared it for life, and then created the life itself (Gen.1:9-13). He began by gathering the waters into one place to form an ocean or “sea.” He then caused dry land to appear. In the soil, God created all manner of plants—vegetables, grasses, trees, herbs, etc. Have you ever considered what these first few plants must have looked like? Were they saplings? Seeds, just about to sprout? Later on in chapter 1 God gives the plants to men and animals for food, so we know that these plants must have been created mature—already bearing fruit. Thus, if Adam were to have chopped down one of those trees how many rings would it have had? While the tree was only days old, it must have appeared much older, because God presented man with a world full of mature plants and animals. Thus, while some things may “appear” old, in reality they may be relatively young.

Plants are unique in their own right, but do share some features common to other living things. For example, they consume nutrients and produce energy. Most plants use “photosynthesis” to change carbon dioxide, water, and sunlight into energy-rich compounds and oxygen. In one way or another, every living organism on the Earth depends on the flow of energy from the Sun. That energy, in the form of sunlight, falls to the Earth, hits plants, and helps them manufacture products (like food and oxygen) that living creatures (like animals and men) need to exist. Consider also, most pollen producing plants need insects to reproduce via pollination. If each day were millions of years, how did the plants survive millions of years until the flying insects came along on day five? Additionally, the Sun is not created until day four, and yet the plants are already in place. If each day were millions of years, how could the plants survive while waiting on the formation of the Sun?

Plants also are able to pass on genetic information to their offspring by producing seeds, which can be inside pods, at the center of a delicious fruit, or in a form that allows them to be borne by wind through the air. But plants also are different from animals and humans. Plants contain cellulose, which makes their cell walls rigid. Animals and humans do not have cellulose. Plants do not have sensory or nervous systems, which means they cannot “understand” or “feel.” Humans possess both systems. Plants do not have organs (like legs or wings) for locomotion, which means that they usually stay in one place. Most animals and humans move around (although there are exceptions in the animal kingdom, like sponges).

After the dry land appeared, God commanded: “Let the earth put forth grass, herb yielding seed, and fruit trees...” (Gen. 1:11). Derek Kidner conveyed the exciting tone of the literal Hebrew rendering of this verse: “Let the earth vegetate vegetation, herb seeding seed, fruit tree making fruit after its kind” (48). Does this sound like a gradual process requiring untold millennia to accomplish? Additionally, consider that every time a seed is planted it only gives rise to the type of plant it originated from. And yet we are told that the diversity we observe in plants is from evolution. A tomato seed only produces tomato plants. Moses went on to confirm this stating that each form of life was to bring forth (reproduce) “after its kind.” This cripples the notion that all life is somehow related biologically, thanks to a parental process of organic evolution. As with days one and two, the creative activity is followed by an evening and a morning—thus completing day three.

Day Four

Day four is somewhat unique among the other days of creation. For the first time, the Earth is not the direct object of the action of God. Instead, the divine attention is directed to the creation and ordination of the heavenly bodies that surround the Earth. By His omnipotence, God spoke the planets and stars into being. From man’s standpoint, they are merely “lights in space.” They do not appear to the unaided eye as anything else; hence, there is no need (in this context) for Moses to discuss them in any

other way. Earth's exalted status is evident from the fact that the stars and planets were brought into existence for the benefit of the Earth—a far different view than that which says that the Earth is little more than a cosmic accident. In the expanse of the Universe, God placed various objects that produced light. Most of these objects are stars, which appear faint or bright, depending on their size and distance from Earth. Together, the planetary bodies were to be "...for signs, and for seasons, and for days and for years" (1:14).

God then created one medium-sized but nonetheless spectacular star, known as the "greater light," or Sun. He then created a "lesser light," the Moon (1:16-18). Although the Moon does not emit its own light, it provides light on the Earth by reflecting light from the Sun. Additionally, the Moon produces tides in the oceans, seas, and great lakes of the world. These luminaries were to accomplish three specific purposes: (1) they were to regulate between day and night; (2) they were to be indicators of signs and seasons; (3) the light-bearers were to give light upon the Earth. Although they are not called by name, the Sun and Moon are discussed in particular. The Sun, which is greater in its intensity of light, is responsible for illuminating the realm of day. The Moon, which only reflects light (thus its designation as the "lesser" light), is given the function of providing the majority of nighttime illumination. As the apostle Paul wrote in his first epistle to the saints in Corinth: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory" (15:41).

Evidence of God's activity on day four of the Creation week is all around us. The fact is, the Universe is "fine-tuned" in such a way that it is impossible to suggest logically that it simply "popped into existence out of nothing" and then went from the chaos associated with the inflationary Big Bang model (as if the Universe were a giant firecracker!) to the sublime order that it presently exhibits. Our Universe operates in accordance with exact scientific laws. The precision of the Universe, and the exactness of these laws, allow scientists to launch rockets to the Moon with the full knowledge that, upon their arrival, they can

land within a few feet of their intended target. Such precision and exactness also allow astronomers to predict solar/lunar eclipses years in advance, or to determine when Halley's Comet can be seen once again from the Earth. It does not take long to realize just how well ordered the Universe and this Earth is. Physicist John Gribbin, writing on the numerous specific requirements necessary for life on our planet, emphasized in great detail both the nature and essentiality of those requirements, yet curiously chose to title his article, "Earth's Lucky Break"—as if all of the precision, orderliness, and intricate design in the Universe could be explained by postulating that the Earth simply received, in a roll of the cosmic dice, a "lucky break" (*Science Digest*, 1983).

Day Five

At the conclusion of day four, Earth is now a fit home for animal life. On day five, God speaks into existence all manner of sea life and flying creatures (1:20-23). The seas are to "swarm with swarms of living creatures" (1:20, ASV), which conveys a feeling of immediacy. All the creatures of the ocean, such as whales, sharks, fish, and even the smallest shellfish, were created and placed into their watery home. No long, gradual process is intimated here; the command is urgent, and the result is immediate.

The creation of birds is spoken of in like terms: "and let birds fly above the earth" (1:20). The living things of the sky probably would include not only flying birds, but flightless birds as well (e.g., ostriches). Likely, this category also included creatures that we usually do not consider as birds (e.g., such as bats and flying insects). The Creator brought His creatures into being capable of functioning in their determined roles. Fish were created swimming; birds were created flying.

Whereas at times modern classification schemes rely heavily upon evolutionary presuppositions, biblical writers did not. Generally speaking, biblical classification schemes relied instead on such simple characteristics as flying, swimming, walking, creeping, crawling, etc. For example, since a bat flies, it is cataloged with birds (cf. Lev. 11 and Deut. 14). In Genesis 1, and elsewhere within Scripture, the teaching is explicit that animals

and plants are to reproduce “after their kind.” In commenting on this important concept, Jean Sloat Morton noted:

It is obvious that the “kinds” of Genesis do not fit man’s classification system. Furthermore, throughout Scripture it is impossible to fit God’s method of classification into that of man’s.... The “kinds” mentioned in Genesis are those plants and animals that do not interbreed. **Kinds** sometimes refers to what modern man calls “genus” (plural genera); in other cases **kind** means “family.” In some instances, **kinds** refers to the species (154-155).

After creating these various “kinds” of air and sea-dwelling animals, God commanded them to fill the water and sky. Just as plants produced seeds to reproduce their own kind, so also animals continued their own kind through reproduction. And, like the plants created on day three, the animals began in an adult form so that they could reproduce as God commanded them (1:22). They, like everything else God created, arrived in a completed, mature state.

As with the vegetation that preceded them, the creatures of day five were to reproduce “after their kind” (1:21-22). Evolution teaches that birds are the biological descendants of reptiles, which descended from amphibians, which descended from sea creatures. However, Moses says that birds and fish were created at the same time. Once again, evolution and the Genesis account of creation are irreconcilable. Evening falls and morning returns, thus concluding the fifth day.

Day Six

“Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind,” thunders the Creator. Complete and immediate obedience is the response reflected in the pithy phrase: “And it was so” (1:24). These three terms (cattle, creeping things, and beasts of the earth) obviously are intended to encompass the whole animal kingdom, excluding only the creatures of day five, and

man. God created every animal that lives on the land, which would include creatures such as cattle, lizards, snakes, apes, monkeys, and dinosaurs. There is no doubt that the creatures of days five and six included the multitudes of currently extinct animals (e.g., dinosaurs) with which the fossil record is replete. The Earth is finally in a state of readiness for the crowning glory of all creation—humankind. The sixth day marked the culmination of God’s creative work, and the day on which He created man and woman. Genesis 1:26-27 states: “And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” But what does it mean to be created in the “image and likeness” of God?

It is apparent from the text of Genesis 1 and 2 that the creation of man differed markedly from that of all other life on Earth in at least the following ways:

(1) A divine conference preceded the forming of man. God said, “Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness” (Gen. 1:26, emp. added). Such never is said of animals. Feinberg noted:

...[M]an is the apex of all creation. Man’s creation by God comes as the last and highest phase of God’s creative activity. . . . Now there is counsel or deliberation in the Godhead. No others can be included here, such as angels, for none has ever been even intimated thus far in the narrative. Thus the creation of man took place not by a word alone, but as the result of a divine decree (235-246).

(2) Man’s creation was unique in that God “breathed life” into him (Gen. 2:7). As James Orr wrote in his classic text, *God’s Image in Man*:

The true uniqueness in man's formation, however, is expressed by the act of the divine inbreathing.... This is an act peculiar to the creation of man; no similar statement is made about the animals. The breath of Jehovah imparts to man the life which is his own, and awakens him to conscious possession of it (41, 46).

(3) The sexes of mankind were not created simultaneously, as in the case of the animals. Rather, the first female was "built" from a section of the first male's flesh and bone.

(4) Unlike animals, mankind is not broken down into species (i.e., "according to their kind" or "all kinds of"), but instead is designated by sexuality. God created them male and female.

(5) Only man is endowed with an immortal soul; animals do not possess such a soul. Unlike animals, man possesses a God-given spirit that returns to Him when man dies (Eccl. 12:7). Such never is affirmed of animals. Scripture refers to Adam, the first man, as the son of God (Luke 3:38), and to mankind in general as "the offspring of God" (Acts 17:29). No animal ever was described by such language. Man is the only physical being upon this Earth that possesses an immortal soul given to him by God—the Father of Spirits (Heb. 12:9). This immortal spirit that is given by God (and that one day will return to Him) most assuredly makes us divine image-bearers. It likens us to God, separates us from the lower creation, and gives us a reason to live—and to live in accordance to God's will!

(6) Finally, the text of Genesis 1 explicitly states that mankind alone was created in the image of God. Nowhere is such a statement made concerning the rest of Earth's life

forms. Unlike the other creatures that God created, man alone bears a special resemblance to Him. Of all the living beings that dwell on planet Earth, one solitary creature was made “in the image of God.” What is it, then, that composes the critical essence of man that distinguishes him from all of creation, and what are the ramifications of this distinction?

For those willing to search the Scriptures and accept their teaching, nothing could be clearer than the fact that mankind was created wholly distinct from the previously existing animals. The Bible paints a picture of man as a being that stands on a different level from all other creatures upon the Earth. He towers high above all earthly creation because of the phenomenal powers and attributes that God Almighty has freely given him. No other living being was given the capacities and capabilities, the potential and the dignity, that God instilled in each man and woman. Indeed, humankind is the peak, the pinnacle, the crown, and the apex of God’s creation.

After Adam named the animals that the Creator brought to him, his lack of human companionship became evident. Unlike the animals, which all had mates that were “meet” (i.e., suitable) for each other, Adam was alone. God evaluated the situation as “not good” and took the necessary action to resolve the problem. The man was put to sleep while God removed a rib from his side and God performed the first surgery here on Earth, forming the first woman. Following this operation, God presented Adam with his wife. How will the theistic evolutionist and his cohorts attempt to harmonize this account with evolutionary theory? With the creation of mankind now complete, evening falls and morning returns, concluding the sixth day.

Day Seven

The seventh day follows as a day of rest for God. Little is said concerning this day; in fact, only two verses are devoted to it. Obviously, this was not a period of literal rest that was allotted to overcome exhaustion, since Omnipotence is not wearied by

activity. Day seven was simply a day enjoyed by the Creator in which He refrained from further creation.

Conclusion

Today we are literally surrounded by salesmen. They pitch their products on billboards, infomercials, and through every form of available media. Their only objective is to push the product and make a sale. Men and women spend years in school to learn exactly what phrases to use, and what displays will work best to market their merchandise. Good salesmen can take a lackluster product that performs well below any guarantee and convince individuals that they must have one. Most people have experienced that queasy feeling of being sold a product by a slick salesman, only later to realize that the product did not live up to expectations. While the salesman may have appeared professional, or had a great sales pitch, there always was something that was “not quite right”—something that a smooth sales job and flowery words prevented a prospective buyer from putting a finger on. Nevertheless, the salesman presents the product in such a way that one would almost feel foolish not to buy. And so our closets and garages are filled to capacity with things that were sold by successful pitchmen.

While these products may make a dent into checking accounts or take up excessive storage space, they are, for the most part, harmless. But consider products that individuals sell that possess a price much higher than any checking account balance. Have the “garages and closets” of our spiritual lives also become cluttered with material that is unneeded or unwanted—or worse—harmful? Have we bought into compromising products which are spiritually unhealthy? Sadly, many individuals are more selective of items that are worn outside the body, than information that they bring inside their own mind. As a result, many individuals unknowingly compromise their relationship with Christ and their Almighty Creator. The salesmen often come with outstanding credentials and “sound good.” However, the product that these men leave you with will not only erode the foundation of your faith, it will eventually jeopardize your soul. *Do not compromise God’s Word!* A Christian need not have nagging doubts about the Creation ac-

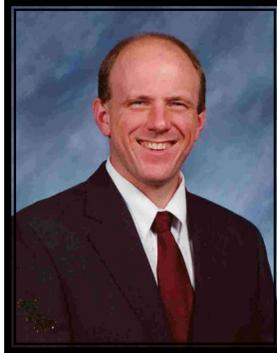
count. It often has been said that those who criticize the Bible the most, generally know it the least. In looking at the scientific evidence regarding the Creation account, it is easy to see why this statement is true. Ω

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Sanctity of Life in Genesis 1–11

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Introduction

Life—Physical and Spiritual

Genesis 1—Physical Life. God (hallowed, holy, set apart, sanctified is His name—Matt. 6:9) is the author, progenitor, founder, originator of life. His word and breath brought all physical life into existence (Gen. 1; Heb. 11:3; Ps. 33:6; 1 Pet. 3:5). Each of the six days of Creation began with the proclamation of God—what He “said” (Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24). He “breathed into” man’s “nostrils the breath of life,” making man “a living being” (Gen. 2:7).

Genesis 2—Spiritual Life. Lasting from eternity to eternity Himself (Psalm 90:1-2), this Divine Creator is concerned with more than the dust to dust (Eccl. 3:20; 12:7) existence of human flesh, for, being made in His image (Gen. 1:26), it bears with a holy God’s authority the marks of sanctity, above all other Creation (Psalm 8:3-8). The spirit of man sanctifies the flesh of man. The allowance of man’s free-will (Gen. 2:16-17) opened the door to man’s rebellion against God, which separates a soul from its Creator as certainly as physical death separates a spirit from its temporal body (James 2:26; 2 Cor. 4:16-5:8). Before the sin of Adam & Eve, close communion with God was all the earliest humans knew. Their transgression ushered in the world’s history of spiritual death, intertwined with physical suffering and

eventual demise (Rom. 5:12-14).

Genesis 3—The Curse of Death and the Promise of Life. Due to the mercy of God, man's sin would not be the end of his story. Punishment from a just God, to be sure, ensued in the curses and the expulsion from Eden (Gen. 3:8-19, 22-24). The serpent's curse, however, contains the first promise of a saving, resurrected Messiah (Gen. 3:15). The heel of the seed of woman would be bruised (a minor injury), but the head of the serpent would be crushed (arguably the most effective way to kill a snake). That serpent, the devil, exercised a princely power over death (John 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 2:14) until the Prince of Life (Acts 3:15) first submitted, then conquered in the home court (the grave) of the enemy (Heb. 2:14-15). To verify the validity of Paul's inspired taunt of Death and Hades (1 Cor. 15:55), the Author of all Life loosed from His Son the bonds of death, "because it was not possible that He should be held by it" (Acts 2:24).

Genesis 4—Temporal Rule in a World of Death. Having, then, established in prospect the eternal victory of God through Christ (1 Cor. 15:57), mankind's history turns, in the Book of Beginnings, to dealing with temporal, worldly consequences of this diabolical turn. It would be bad enough that mankind would be subject to disease, suffering, and eventual death by natural causes. But it would be worse that the spiritual depravity chosen by some would allow them to arrogantly elevate themselves to the status of taking life from their fellow men and women. Murder first rears its malicious head in Genesis 4. Not long after that, the fear of the natural consequence of vengeance is brought into play. God would need to eventually step in and regulate the system of justice, lest eternal vigilantism would chaotically rule the earth.

Murder, Justice, and Vengeance

Cain & Abel This fear of random, vigilante justice seems to have been Cain's deserved nightmare (Gen. 4:13-14). After his unacceptable worship progressed to envy and propelled him to murder, Cain sought to evade responsibility for taking a human life, employing an outright lie (Gen. 4:9). The God of justice would not let him off the hook, cursing him to life of wandering as a fugitive (4:10-11). Cain's accursedness from the ground

yields a twofold meaning:

The ground, which had yielded abundant crops for Cain when he had tilled it (vss. 2-3), will cease to give him its produce, and thus he will no longer be able to practice agriculture (vs. 12). (2) The ground or earth will not make Cain feel he is a welcome inhabitant, so that wherever he goes he will be “a fugitive and a wanderer” (vss. 12, 14; see Jude 11). (Willis, 150)

Cain thought this was too much to bear. He was justifiably fearful that anyone who saw him would take his life in return for the life he had taken (Gen. 4:13-14).

And there is the first indication in Scripture of the sanctity of life regarding blood for blood. The justification or, conversely, the prohibition of capital punishment (life for life) here finds its earliest addressing in sacred Scripture. The automatic assumption of Cain, once guilt is realized—and that only through severe punishment—is that his life deserves to be ended, or, at least, that is what everyone will think. Is modern man’s first inclination any less? The willful murderer deserves a punishment commensurate with his crime. Commentators Keil & Delitzsch refer to an un-cited quote:

For, that blood shed demands blood in return, “is a principle of equity written in the heart of every man; and that Cain should see the earth full of avengers is just like a murderer, who sees avenging spirits...ready to torture him on every hand.” (115).

In this case, nevertheless, the wrinkle of inspired history introduces the merciful side of the God of severity (cf. Rom. 11:22).

But God tempers his punishment of Cain with mercy and compassion. When Cain realizes that as a fugitive his life will be in constant jeopardy (vs. 14), God promises him that if anyone kills him, “vengeance shall be taken on

him sevenfold” (vs. 15), that is, seven of the murderer’s kinsmen will be slain. Thus, the *mark* that God puts on Cain is not a punitive stigma or brand indicating that he is a murderer, but a warning to anyone that might contemplate killing him and thus a divine protection. It must have been a conspicuous symbol of some sort, the meaning of which would be immediately apparent to any would-be assailant. This could have been something attached to Cain’s body or clothing or a mark like a tattoo made in the flesh. Elsewhere we are told of signs or marks put on the hand or the forehead (Exod. 13:9, 16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18; Ezek. 9:4, 6), and this could be the kind of thing intended here. (Willis, 150)

Regarding, the mark, Keil & Delitzsch differ, though with vagueness: “The mark which God put upon Cain is not to be regarded as a mark upon his body, as the Rabbins and others supposed, but as a certain sign which protected him from vengeance, though of what kind it is impossible to determine” (115).

Whatever the mark, let us dismiss all previous racially slurred speculation that Cain was punitively made a black man. This is nothing but profound, ungodly prejudice. And whatever the mark, the intent illustrates first the character of God: Though capital crime calls conscientiously for capital punishment, God would not allow chaotic vengeance to characterize the course of man on the earth. He is the God of all governmental authorities who exercises judicial recourse for such affairs (Rom. 13:4). Might the warning of sevenfold retribution for Cain’s potential shedder of blood be a precursor of the coming organized systems of justice, under God’s prescribed authority rather than man’s arbitrary anger?

Lamech Five generations later in Cain’s lineage came a vengeful polygamist named Lamech. Gen. 4:23-24 records his boast to his wives, with all the domineering machismo of the fabled American cowboy: “Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for

wounding me, even a young man for hurting me. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-seven fold.”

One interpretation of these words could go like this: “I killed somebody and I dare anybody to take me to task for it. Cain would have been avenged sevenfold had he died for his crime; I’ll be avenged ten times as much against anyone who tries to hurt me. Bring it on!”

A similar, but slightly divergent, opinion eliminates some malice of Lamech, re-characterizing premeditated violence into simple self-defense:

Lamech points out that his ancestor Cain had killed his own brother in cold blood but declares that he had killed and would kill only in self-defense. If God had ordained that Cain, who was guilty of premeditated murder, would be avenged by the death of seven relatives of anyone who murdered him, Lamech concludes that he was justified in killing seventy-seven relatives of anyone who attempted to murder him (Willis, 156).

Basing their interpretation on the Hebrew verb tenses, Keil & Delitzsch explain and opine:

The idea is this: whoever inflicts a wound or stripe on me, whether man or youth, I will put to death; and for every injury done to my person, I will take ten times more vengeance than that with which God promised to avenge the murder of my ancestor Cain. In this song, which contains in its rhythm, its strophic arrangement of the thoughts, and its poetic diction, the germ of the later poetry, we may detect “that Titanic arrogance, of which the Bible says that its power is its god (Hab. 1.11), and that it carries its god, viz. its sword, in its hand (Job xii.6)” (*Delitzsch*). (119)

The eloquent Biblical formation of this challenge is in poetry. For all the numerous lessons it holds, implicit is that recurring conscientious demand for justice when a life is taken. “Scholars

generally agree that this is a very ancient poem used by the author of Genesis. If so, this would indicate that blood vengeance was an exceedingly old pre-Israelite practice...” (Willis, 156). This demand for justice, again, could not be left in the hands of the vigilante. Lamech’s attitude was “vindictive and self-centered” (Willis, 156). God would establish better plans for evenhandedness.

The lesson for the modern, continual debate over the justifiability of capital punishment might be this: First, life for life has always been a general principle of mankind. However, left in the corrupted hands of vengeful man, the principle is abused, becoming aggressively more than “eye for eye, tooth for tooth” (Deut. 19:21). A merciful God who establishes ethical law would have to step in and regulate it.

The question then becomes whether the God of all morality would regulate capital punishment or wholly abolish it.

Historical Sanction—Historical Outgrowth

Cain and Lamech show the danger of leaving the innate demand for justice at the personal level. Biblical history points toward the time when exact parameters would define a system of justice. At least one secular historical perspective agrees that justice began on a personal level before it became governmentally regulated:

The infliction of death for the purpose of retribution has been a facet of human existence since earliest times. Even before the emergence of organized societies, individuals killed to avenge wrongs done to them and their families. These killings were acts of private retribution. There was no code that specified wrongful conduct or the penalties such behavior would incur.

The first criminal laws were an outgrowth of this practice of personal justice. These laws evolved as a means of codifying the compensation one individual or family owed another in order to right a personal wrong. The idea that this restitution involved a punishment

imposed on behalf of the society as a whole, however, was yet to come.

As larger-scale social structures developed, wrongs or crimes were divided into public and private offenses. Public offenses, such as witchcraft or blasphemy against the official religion, were punished by the state, while private offenses were still answered by acts of personal retribution. This split system of justice eventually yielded to a unified scheme in which private retaliation was replaced by a concept of public justice. Behind the shift was an emerging recognition that every crime committed by any member of society was harmful to the interests of the entire society. With the public-private distinction removed, the individual relinquished the right to personal revenge. In return, the state assumed responsibility for the punishment of all crimes, including personal offenses. For ultimate crimes against the person, such as murder, personal vengeance had given way to lawfully derived and administered death sentences (Henderson, 5-6).

Plug in the idea of God's design and control of history in place of the assumed, naturalistic evolution of mankind, and one comes more in tune with the biblical picture.

Genesis 5—“And He Died.” As Biblical history unfolds, one sees that the consequence of sin (death) rules the earth (Genesis 5 is replete with the reminder that every generation in Adam's lineage “died” [Gen. 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 31]). The certainty of such death (Heb. 9:27), however, did not excuse the violence that was soon to govern the population (Gen. 6:11).

Genesis 6-8—The Justice and the Mercy. In answer to this sinfulness, of which excessive violence seemed to be the culmination, God's grief demanded destruction. His grace demanded the salvation of Noah and his family—not only or merely for the sakes of their persons, but for the whole genealogical, yet-unfolded, scheme of redemption in Christ (Gen. 6:5-12; Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:10; Luke 3:36).

Genesis 9-11—The Organization of Postdiluvian Society.

Genealogically and anecdotally propelling the reader across centuries to the dispersing of nations (Gen. 11) and introduction of Abraham as the father of the nation through whom all others would be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3), the postdiluvian historical account begins with an acknowledgement of man's right to eat meat, but not with its lifeblood (Gen. 9:1-4). This more forcible expression of man's dominion over earth (cf. Gen. 1:26-28), notes the respect due even the lives of subservient beasts, as well as foreshadowing the abuse of such blood in idolatrous rituals (Keil, Delitzsch 152).

Full sanctity, and Divinely legislative protection is then afforded the creature made just a little lower than the angels (Psalm 8:4-5).

“Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man” (Gen. 9:5-6).

By these words, the scholars observe, God pithily laid the foundation for the protection of human life by means of civil government.

God would avenge or inflict punishment for every murder,--not directly, however, as He promised to do in the case of Cain, but indirectly by giving the command, “*Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed,*” and thus placing in the hand of man His own judicial power. “This was the first command,” says *Luther*, “having reference to the temporal sword. By these words temporal government was established, and the sword placed in its hand by God.” It is true the punishment of the murderer is enjoined upon “man”

universally; but as all the judicial relations and ordinances of the increasing race were rooted in those of the family, and grew by a natural process out of that, the family relations furnished of themselves the norm for the closer definition of the expression “man.” Hence the command does not sanction revenge, but lays the foundation for the judicial rights of the divinely appointed “powers that be” (Rom. xiii.1). This is evident from the reason appended: “*for in the image of God made He man.*” If murder was to be punished with death because it destroyed the image of God in man, it is evident that the infliction of the punishment was not to be left to the caprice of individuals, but belonged to those alone who represent the authority and majesty of God, *i.e.* the divinely appointed rulers, who for that very reason are called *Elohim* in Ps. lxxxii.6. This command then laid the foundation for all civil government, and formed a necessary complement to that unalterable continuance of the order of nature which had been promised to the human race for its further development. If God on account of the innate sinfulness of man would no more bring an exterminating judgment upon the earthly creation, it was necessary that by commands and authorities He should erect a barrier against the supremacy of evil, and thus lay the foundation for a well-ordered civil development of humanity, in accordance with the words of the blessing, which are repeated in ver. 7, as showing the intention and goal of this new historical beginning (Keil, Delitzsch, 153).

Lasting Expectations. Beginning here, God’s rule over nations (Psalm 47:8; Dan. 2:21; 4:17) becomes well-attested throughout Old Testament history. The Jewish code demanded at its outset that murder be outlawed (Ex. 20:13). That the crime forbidden was willful murder and not judicious retribution is well attested by the many demands of the code’s Author for capital punishment for a violation of the sanctity of life (as well as other crimes; cf. Lev. 20:10, 13; Deut. 21:18-21, 22). Murder demanded, actually,

another regulated, retributive death (Ex. 20:12; 21:12-14; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:30). Yet, that retribution was not to be meted on the personal level—if it would, it would contradict the demand of Lev. 19:18: “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.”

Even pagan nations were held to the highest standards. If they disobeyed, they faced the consequences of extermination (cf. Lev. 18:24-25; Deut. 25:17-19; Gen. 15:16-21; Deut. 7:1-4; Isa. 13-19; Ezek. 25-32; Jer. 18:7-10).

It is instructive that God expected decent behavior from even the Gentiles (Rom. 2:14-15; 1:18-32). Apparently, the pre-Mosaic demands for all nationalities, of which Gen. 9:6 was one, continued in the prescriptions of conscience while the Jews labored under the sin-divulging (Rom. 7), Savior-leading (Gal. 3:24-25) oracles of God (Rom. 3:1-2). Could it be imagined that one of the crimes of ancient nations might have been turning a blind eye to Heaven’s demand for justice in matters of murder (Psalm 82:1-4; cf. 1 Sam. 15)?

The Christian Age and the Civil Government. Christ’s advent, some claim, nullifies such barbarity and demands pure pacifism. Matt. 5:38-39 seem at first glance to give credence to this polemic, until it is realized that the context issues several highly hyperbolic statements (i.e. Matt. 5:22, 28). Does a prevailing attitude of generosity militate against all judicial proceeding? Shall all violated (by any crime) be denied the expectation of any recourse?

Vengeance belongs to the Lord, declares Rom. 12:19, but the next few verses (Rom. 13:1-7) dictate one means God prescribes for that vengeance. While final, perfect retribution awaits at the last day (2 Thess. 1:6-9), some system of government that “bears the sword” (Rom. 13:4) still is set to rule on the earth, imperfect though it may be.

Historical Abuse and Dissent

Abuse As with many of God’s laws, abuse came from the earliest times.

One of the earliest recorded sets of laws known to Western society, the Babylonian Hammurabi Code (ca. 1700 B.C.), decreed the death penalty for crimes as minor as the fraudulent sale of beer. Egyptians could be killed for disclosing sacred burial places. The Athenian leader Draco in the seventh century B.C. fashioned a criminal code that ordered the death penalty for most offenses. The severity of this code gave rise to the word *draconian*... The Middle Ages and Renaissance saw little change in the widespread use of capital punishment. Death was the standard penalty for major crimes across Europe. The methods of execution used frequently were cruel and barbaric by modern standards, often involving some form of torture. (Henderson, 6)

Abolition Against this background are the abolitionist movements of history.

The “18th-century Enlightenment” saw “leading French philosophers Montesquieu and Voltaire”, as well as “Italian jurist Cesare Beccaria” harshly criticize the extensiveness and brutality of the administration of capital punishment (Henderson, 7).

In America, colonial laws varied. Massachusetts had a “list of capital crimes” which “included witchcraft, blasphemy, and adultery. In contrast, the Quaker influence in Pennsylvania limited the death penalty to crimes of murder and treason” (Henderson, 7).

Curious to the contender that American’s Christian founding influenced its ethical system is Henderson’s observation that “legal historians, noting the relatively low rate of actual executions across the colonies, point out that these criminal codes were far harsher in word than in practice” (Henderson, 8).

In the end of individual cases, mercy may have been mixed with judgment.

“Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and surgeon general to the Continental Army,” began in about 1787 a sustained call for an end to capital punishment . . . The advent of the modern penitentiary limited the need for and lowered the use of executions. “Historically, one of the reasons societies had relied so heavily on the death penalty was that other punishment options sufficient to incapacitate serious offenders did not exist” (Henderson, 8).

In the 1830s and 1840s, the “drunkenness and riots that often accompanied” public executions created a largely successful move to privatize them (Henderson, 9). Through the 19th and 20th centuries, the abolitionist movements took different tacks. State by state legislative efforts were eventually replaced, at the lead of renowned pro-evolution, Scopes-Monkey Trial lawyer Clarence Darrow, by efforts for judicial declarations of unconstitutionality (a common ploy of American’s anti-Christian segment). Ground was gained and subsequently lost as public opinion swayed with the punctuation of horrific events that seemed to call for the need of a deterrent (see Henderson, 9-12).

Issues in the Debate

Deterrence God’s motives in establishing capital punishment were, arguably, first punitive, and second, protective. One who shed the blood of one made in the image of God deserved an equal punishment (Gen. 9:6). Proponents of the practice have gone a step further to argue that the fear of commensurate discipline is a deterrent that helps protect society from future violence. Opponents argue “that there is no conclusive evidence the death penalty has any impact on the rate of violent crime” (Henderson, 14). They also cite statistics which show that most murder victims were acquaintances of the criminal, and

thus, they interpret, no thought process as to consequence had any bearing on the crime (Henderson, 15).

Biblically, though not in the direct context of the death sentence, Eccl. 8:12 argues for the principle of punishment as a deterrent, if, indeed, it is executed in due time (another issue for another time). “Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”

The deterrent effect of capital punishment is defended on dual points, with an historical incident to illustrate:

U.S. district judge Paul G. Cassell refers to two types of deterrence: specific, meaning that once a murderer is apprehended and executed, he or she can never kill again; and general, which refers to the restraining effect the threat of execution has on a much larger pool of potential murderers. In reference to the viability of general deterrence, Cassell uses the example of John Wojtowicz and 2 accomplices. In 1972, during an attempt to rob Chase Manhattan Bank in New York City, the men held employees hostage for 14 hours. The crime occurred during a period of time when the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that the death penalty was unconstitutional, so the criminals knew that no matter what they did, they could not legally be put to death. Cassell writes: ‘In threatening the hostages, Wojtowicz said, “I’ll shoot everyone in the bank. The Supreme Court will let me get away with this. There’s no death penalty. It’s ridiculous. I can shoot everyone here, then throw my gun down and walk out and they can’t put me in the electric chair. You have to have a death penalty, otherwise this can happen everyday.”’ Most criminals do not make such impassioned speeches during the commission of a crime, but this example illustrates that at least some have the death penalty on their minds before or during the crime.” (Parks, 7-9, citing Hugh Bedau and Paul Cassell, eds., *Debating the Death Penalty*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004 p. 191.)

Injustice

Abolitionists gain much of their steam from indignation that an imperfect system will sometimes kill the wrong person. Lester S. Garrett presents a compendium of seven unjust death sentence cases, beginning with this introduction:

The same “rigorous” legal procedures and safeguards are applied in each and every capital case. But in some cases brutal killers are sentenced to death; in others, innocent men are sent to the executioner. I repeat: the *same* legal procedures, the *same* jury determination that the defendant is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, the *same* safeguards, are applied in each case. Yet they send the innocent as well as the guilty to death row (Garrett, 160).

Racial and socio-economic issues enter the picture in the debate over whether inadequate representation might lead to inconsistency in the application of the law (Friedman, 52-59).

Tragic, final, heart-rending governmental errors (sometimes unwitting and sometimes wickedly intentional) affect real people. This is not to be denied nor taken lightly. Remember, though, that Paul’s instructions regarding the government bearing the sword were written originally to citizens in the same city which would slaughter, by authorized governmental decree, thousands of Christians for no crime other than confessing the Prince of Peace. Further, one wonders if mistakes in other realms justify doing away with the enterprise altogether. Since referees sometimes miss calls, shall all football be banned? Since bad parents abuse innocent children, shall all parenting be outlawed (some seem to quite frighteningly so think)? Since false doctrine sometimes comes from the mouths of self-proclaimed preachers, shall all preaching be silenced?

The objection that the finality of execution is irreversible is heard with a sympathetic ear. A missed football call is trivial. Though tragic, many abused children (though not all, in the case of their murders) can overcome and succeed in adulthood. Execution’s irreversibility ought, to be sure, to be a humbling

factor in every jury's and judge's deliberation. Nevertheless, the force of this argument stands. Shall one outlaw all preaching because some is false? False preaching can lead to an eternity of suffering. Even the executed can, with Heaven's post-crime, pre-death forgiveness, inherit a gracious, eternal reward. But, nothing is more final than the consequence of false preaching believed. The adherents suffer for eternity beyond death's door. The possibility of mistake warrants exceeding caution, but militates not against the civil responsibility to be "an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil" (Rom. 13:7).

Most other objections have to do with the administration of justice (barbarity, proportionality to crime) and not the principle of life for life itself. Deserving serious attention, these, though, are outside the scope of this present work.

Conclusion

Henderson quite aptly observes: "The criminal law of a society reflects its value system or moral code" (16). The debate over capital punishment often is a microcosm of a larger divide in the United States. There are those who contend that the United States was founded on the Judeo-Christian system of ethics, and that those ethics should continue to remain the guiding forces of all legislative and judicial action. Others take an atheistic worldview wherein 1) This life is all that there is (making the preservation of physical life paramount), and 2) Man gets to invent his own system of ethics. This, to be sure, is an oversimplification. Reality witnesses all degrees of diversity within the continuum of these two extremes.

Without addressing every facet of the complications of administering capital punishment, it must be observed that those who argue for a Christian system of ethics are justified in including capital punishment as a part of that system. Life is sacred. Its sanctity is protected from the vicious wickedness of devil-led men only by the fear of commensurate punishment.

Presently, American society approaches the upside-down nature of ancient Judah, "killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live" (Ezek. 13:19). It is strange, but often not coincidental, that those who argue against

capital punishment for convicted killers are the same who call themselves pro-choice, and stand for the sanctioned slaughter of millions of American innocents within the womb (abortion). The progression to the slaughter of those innocents outside the womb (infanticide) is making headway among academics, and in a generation or so may be as common as the 3,600 or so abortions per day (see Bailey, Olasky).

Superficial savants will everywhere cry against the morality of capital punishment. Those of atheistic persuasion, though, have no basis for any more than a “do your own thing,” and “don’t judge” morality. Without God, there is no objective right or wrong (cf. Judges 17:6; 21:25). Those of a Christian persuasion who stand against capital punishment do so out of a well-intentioned but mistaken view of the message of Biblical history. Life is sacred. It is best kept in high view by judicially holding responsible to the fullest extent those who violate that sanctity.

Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good (1 Pet. 2:13-14).

No, vigilante justice must not rule. This is the reason that violence against abortion doctors is just as sinful. God outlawed that kind of vigilantism with his societal structure. God-fearers across the land should not seek to take matters into their own hands, but work, in the representative republic in which they live, to propagate laws that respect the Christian system of ethics, including the protection of life. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Andy Robison has preached for the Hopewell church of Christ outside Parkersburg, WV since 2001. Prior to that he worked with the Camden Avenue congregation in Parkersburg, the Oakhurst congregation in Farmington, WV, and the Pennsboro, WV church. He taught Bible and directed choruses at

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In the Beginning

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Introduction

Genesis is the book of **beginnings** because it refers to the beginning of so many aspects of the created order and human existence, including:

- the beginning of the Universe, the beginning of the human race and human history
- the beginning of marriage, the home, and family
- the beginning of God's laws for humans
- the beginning of sin (on Earth)
- the beginning of the Jewish race
- the beginning of God's scheme of redemption (on Earth)

Genesis provides human beings with the very critical understanding of **who** we are, **how** we got here, and **why** we are here. As our Creator, God has brought us into existence, fashioned in His image, and He is to be the focus, purpose, and meaning of our lives (Eccl. 12:13; Mic. 6:8; Deut. 10:12-13). Thus Genesis gives us perspective, orienting us so that we may approach life correctly and coherently. Think of the billions of people on the planet who live their entire lives without the benefit of the biblical framework that organizes a person's thinking and life. Without this perspective from the Creator Himself, a person

is doomed to wander aimlessly through his time on Earth, directionless, preoccupied with mundane trivialities, spending time, money, and energies on ultimately fruitless, meaningless activities (Jer. 10:23). Tragic, indeed.

The One True God

Observe that at the outset of God's communication with human beings, He identifies Himself: "In the beginning, **God...**" (1:1). God had no beginning; He is infinite and eternal. He is self-existent. He is the Supreme Being, the Creator. He is infinite in all of His attributes. Everyone and everything else had a beginning. Unlike the Hindu Vedas or the Buddhist Pitakis, the Bible immediately impresses on the mind of the reader the one true God. As Paul declared to the pagan, polytheistic peoples in Lystra: "We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to **the living God**, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them" (Acts 14:15). This great eternal reality orients a person—giving him context for living life.

Observe, also, that we already catch a glimpse of the fact that the God depicted in Genesis is triune in nature—one Deity in three "persons." The Holy Spirit is specifically mentioned in verse 2. Many other passages make clear that Jesus was present at the Creation. Indeed, He is repeatedly credited with the act of creation, in concert with the Father:

- "He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:2-3).
- "...through whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2).
- "...for whom are all things and by whom are all things" (Heb. 2:10).
- "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth.... All things were created through Him and for Him" (Col. 1:16).

God Speaks

In addition to being impacted with the reality of the one true

God, we are also quickly struck by the fact that God **spoke** the entire material realm into existence in six literal days. Eight times in 23 verses, we have the refrain: “God **said...**” (1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26)—giving the distinct impression that the created order was brought into existence by the oral commands of God. Can this be? The rest of the Bible confirms that very impression (e.g., Ex. 20:11; Psa. 33:6, 9; 148:5; Heb. 1:3).

The significance of God **speaking** cannot be overemphasized. One of the obvious characteristics of God is the fact that He speaks. He spoke the created order into existence, and His communication to humanity is a spoken communication that was then committed to writing. Peter expounded this point very clearly:

For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And **we heard this voice** which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but **holy men of God spoke** as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:16-21, emp. added).

This feature of God’s approach to communicating with humans is particularly vivid in the indications in the Bible regarding the reality of inspiration. For example, consider statements like, “For the Scripture says to Pharaoh” (Romans 9:17), or “And the Scripture...preached the gospel to Abraham

beforehand” (Galatians 3:8). Did “Scripture” speak to Pharaoh? Did “Scripture” preach the Gospel to Abraham? No. Rather, God did that speaking and preaching. We are forced to conclude that the word of Scripture is the word of God! The inspired writers of the New Testament considered “God” and “Scripture” to be so closely linked that they could naturally speak of “Scripture” doing what Scripture records God as doing.

Conversely, God is said to say certain things that are, in their original setting, merely words of Scripture. For example, Hebrews 3:7 reads, “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says...,” and Psalm 95:7-8 is then quoted. In Acts 4:25, God is said to have spoken, by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David, the words of Psalm 2:1. In Acts 13:34-35, God is represented as having stated the words of Isaiah 55:3 and Psalm 16:10. Yet, in both of Isaiah and Psalm 16, the words attributed to God are not, in their original setting, specifically His words, but merely the words of Scripture itself. In the Psalm 16 passage, David is speaking in the first person, asking God to preserve him. So the words of Scripture and the words of God are one and the same.

In Hebrews 1:5-13, the writer quoted seven Old Testament passages: Psalm 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:14; Deuteronomy 32:43; Psalm 104:4; Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 102:25-27; and Psalm 110:1. The Hebrew writer attributed each of these passages to God as the speaker. Yet in their original setting in the Old Testament, sometimes God **is** the speaker, while sometimes He is **not** the speaker, and is, in fact, being spoken **to** or spoken **about**. Why would the writer of Hebrews indiscriminately assign all of these passages to God? Because they all have in common the fact that they are the words of Scripture, and, as such, are the words of God.

The same is true with Romans 15:9-12 where Paul quoted from Psalm 18:49, Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 117:1, and Isaiah 11:10. The first one he introduced with the formula “as it is written;” the second one is introduced by “again he says;” the third with simply “again;” and the fourth is prefaced with “Isaiah says.” Yet, in the Old Testament setting, only in the Isaiah passage is specifically God talking—and Paul assigns those words to Isaiah. So “it is written,” “he says,” and “Isaiah says,”

are all different ways of saying the same thing, i.e., “**God** says”! Sometimes the New Testament writers assigned Scripture to its human authors. Yet it is clear that when the writers said, “Moses said,” or “David said,” such was simply another way to say, “Scripture say,” which, again, was the same thing as saying “**God** says.”

So the Bible is God **speaking** to us. The 66 books of the Bible are the totality of God’s special revelation to mankind. The only way for you and me to know what God has to say to us is via Scripture. As Paul stated forthrightly to the Corinthians: “Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.... These things we also **speak**, not in **words** which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Cor. 2:11-13). The Holy Spirit provided words that the apostles, in turn, communicated to their hearers and readers. That is why the Hebrews writer stated that God, “has in these last days **spoken** to us by His Son” (Heb. 1:2). That is also why Jesus in the first century, speaking to the Sadducees, could quote what God said **to Moses** in 1500 B.C. and indicate that God had spoken those words to the Sadducees as well: “But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read **what was spoken to you** by God...? (Matt. 22:31).

This aspect of God’s nature applies most stringently to the matter of salvation. God never inserted Himself into the salvation of individual persons. While He interacted with some through visions and the like (e.g., Acts 9), no such incident had to do with bestowing salvation on the person. God always reserved that role for His word conveyed through human spokesmen. He placed the gospel “treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor. 4:7). You remember the angel that instructed Cornelius to seek out Peter “who will tell you **words** by which you and all your household will be saved” (Acts 11:14). That’s why Philip asked the Eunuch, “Do you understand what you are reading?” (Acts 8:30).

Marriage and the Home

In examining Genesis, the reader is further struck by the fact that after creating the physical Universe, fashioning planet Earth and preparing it for habitation, providing the Earth with water,

air, vegetation, and animals, God then turned His attention to the pinnacle of His creative activities: humans. He created from dirt the body of a male of the species, and then breathed into that body the breath of life, infusing it with a spirit. He then created the female body from a portion of the male body. Matching man and woman together, God brought into existence the marriage relationship (which, according to Jesus, will not transfer into the heavenly realm—Matt. 22:30). Here is the fundamental building block of the human race which God intended to provide cohesion, order, and organization to society. Thousands of years before God brought into visible existence on Earth the church of Jesus Christ, He placed on Earth the home—consisting of one man married to one woman for life. All nations and governments that resist or violate this foundational feature of humanity are doomed to experience social upheaval, confusion, immorality, and eventual collapse.

Consider for a moment the incessant parade of depravity and moral degeneracy to which the American public continues to be subjected over the last several decades, especially via Hollywood. Divorce has been literally rampant since 1965, when its occurrence commenced to skyrocket. “Free love,” “open marriage,” and flagrant promiscuity quickly followed. Now, homosexuality is in the process of being legitimized legally and socially. Every other form of sexual perversion is pressing for respectability, including polygamy as practiced by Mormons and Muslims. “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, nor did they know how to blush” (Jeremiah 6:15; 8:12). The fact that this progressive descent into moral depravity was predictable and inevitable in no way reduces the shock and repugnance that must surely be felt by those Americans who still retain some semblance of Christian moral sensibility and ethical decency.

The Founders of American civilization, and the vast majority of Americans thereafter, were unequivocal and adamant in their insistence on the reprehensible nature of sexual degeneracy—and the threat it poses to civilized society. In the late 1800s, Mormons fled to Utah seeking respite from the widespread opposition to their cultic practices. As America extended its “manifest destiny”

westward and more U.S. territories sought statehood, the admission of Utah and Idaho into the union came to the forefront of national concern. After all, their predominantly Mormon populations were practicing polygamy. But the judicial authorities did not shrink from their appointed responsibility, as is evident from the following three United States Supreme Court cases that addressed the matter.

In the 1885 Utah Territory case of *Murphy v. Ramsey*, the Court declared:

For certainly no legislation can be supposed more wholesome and necessary in the founding of a free, self-governing commonwealth, fit to take rank as one of the coordinate States of the Union, than that which seeks to establish it on the basis of **the idea of the family, as consisting in and springing from the union for life of one man and one woman** in the holy estate of matrimony; the sure foundation of all that is stable and noble in our civilization; the best guaranty of that reverent morality which is the source of all beneficent progress in social and political improvement (1885, emp. added).

Did you catch that? The only “sure foundation” of civilization and the best security for morality (which, in turn, initiates social and political improvement) is **the family** defined as **one man for one woman for life**. But the foundation is crumbling and the guaranty is failing. Hence, as our morals continue to unravel, we ought fully to expect to see the erosion of all that is stable and noble in our civilization, and the undermining of beneficent progress in social and political improvement.

In another U.S. Supreme Court case involving polygamy in the Territory of Utah, the defendant insisted that his bigamy was simply in keeping with his constitutional right to the free exercise of his religious beliefs as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. He insisted that:

the practice of polygamy was directly enjoined upon the male members thereof by the Almighty God, in a revelation to Joseph Smith, the founder and prophet of said church; that the failing or refusing to practice polygamy by such male members of said church, when circumstances would admit, would be punished, and that the penalty for such failure and refusal would be damnation in the life to come (*Reynolds v. United States*, 1879).

The high court vehemently disagreed and issued a sweeping repudiation of polygamy:

Polygamy has always been odious among the northern and western nations of Europe, and, until the establishment of the Mormon Church, was almost exclusively a feature of the life of Asiatic and of African people. At common law, the second marriage was always void (*2 Kent, Com. 79*), and from the earliest history of England polygamy has been treated as an offence against society.... From that day to this we think it may safely be said **there never has been a time in any State of the Union when polygamy has not been an offence against society**, cognizable by the civil courts and punishable with more or less severity. In the face of all this evidence, **it is impossible to believe that the constitutional guaranty of religious freedom was intended to prohibit legislation in respect to this most important feature of social life.** Marriage, while from its very nature a sacred obligation, is nevertheless, in most civilized nations, a civil contract, and usually regulated by law. **Upon it society may be said to be built**, and out of its fruits spring social relations and social obligations and duties, with which government is necessarily required to deal. In fact, according as monogamous or polygamous marriages are allowed, do we find **the**

principles on which the government of the people, to a greater or less extent, rests (*Reynolds...*, emp. added).

Such legal declarations reflected the views of the vast majority of Americans for the first 180 years of our national existence. Indeed, for most of American history, courts have had no trouble recognizing and reaffirming the idea of the family and the historic definition of marriage: one man for one woman for life—taken directly from the book of Genesis.

In still another case, several men who wished to register to vote in the Territory of Idaho took the preparatory oath that required them to swear that they neither practiced polygamy nor belonged to any organization that encouraged its practice. Yet, when the men were discovered to be members of the Mormon Church, they were brought to trial and found guilty of procuring voting rights unlawfully—though the defense attorney argued that the oath constituted a “law respecting an establishment of religion” in violation of the First Amendment to the *Constitution*. Neither the District Court nor the Supreme Court accepted such thinking. Instead, they reaffirmed the essentiality of the Christian moral framework as the basis of civil society:

Bigamy and polygamy are crimes by the laws of all civilized and Christian countries. They are crimes by the laws of the United States, and they are crimes by the laws of Idaho. They tend to **destroy the purity of the marriage relation, to disturb the peace of families, to degrade woman and to debase man.** Few crimes are more pernicious to the best interests of society and receive more general or more deserved punishment. To extend exemption from punishment for such crimes would be **to shock the moral judgment of the community.** To call their advocacy a tenet of religion is **to offend the common sense of mankind** (*Davis v. Beason*, 1890, emp. added)

For judicial and legal authorities today, and Americans at large, to permit the airing all across the land of a television program that dignifies the practice of polygamy (“Big Love”), is to demonstrate not only the loss of common sense, it manifests the extent to which moral bankruptcy has become commonplace. The destruction of marriage and the family, the degrading of women, and the debasing of men, are the order of the day.

Polygamy is simply one more indication of our country’s half-century-long venture into decadence and paganism, moving us ever closer to a complete moral, spiritual, and religious breakdown—and the inevitable collapse of civilization. In still another court case, the State Supreme Court of Pennsylvania declared the attitude of the Founders and the nation as a whole in its utter rejection of pagan morality:

They never thought of tolerating paganism...on the ground of liberty of conscience. They could not admit this, as a civil justification of human sacrifices, or parricide, or infanticide, or thuggism, or of such modes of worship as the disgusting and corrupting rites of the Dionysia, and Aphrodisia, and Eleusinia, and other festivals of Greece and Rome. **They did not mean that the pure, moral customs which Christianity has introduced, should be without legal protection**, because some pagan, or other religionist, or anti-religionist, should advocate, as matter of conscience, **concubinage, polygamy, incest, free love, and free divorce**, or any of them. They did not mean, that phallic processions and satyric dances, and obscene songs, and indecent statues, and paintings of ancient or of modern paganism, might be introduced, under the profession of religion, or pleasure, or conscience, to seduce the young and the ignorant into a Corinthian degradation; to offend the moral sentiment of a refined Christian people; and to compel Christian modesty to associate with the nudity and impurity of Polynesian, or of Spartan women. **No Christian**

people could possibly allow such things.... Every Christian man is sure, that it is his religion that has suppressed the pagan customs just alluded to, and that to it is due the large advance in justice, benevolence, truth, and purity that belongs to modern civilization; that it has purified and elevated the family relations; that it has so elevated the moral standards of society, that the indecencies, and cruelties, and cheats, of paganism are now condemned by custom and by law, as crimes (*Commonwealth v. Nesbit*, 1859, emp. added).

Little could a mid-nineteenth-century state Supreme Court have realized that their vivid description of **paganism** would one day serve as an accurate depiction of the present moral condition of America! Unless Americans rise up in significant numbers and put an end to the downward slide into moral and sexual insanity, the nation must inevitably face destruction. We, as a nation, are even now in the process of imploding. “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34). Conforming to the teaching of the book of Genesis regarding God’s general law of marriage, articulated in the book of Genesis and reiterated by Jesus in Matthew 19, would pull our nation back from the precipice of moral, sexual insanity.

God Is a God of Rules

Another significant principle articulated from the book of beginnings is the fact that immediately upon the creation of the first human being, God imparted rules and regulations. The very nature of God is such that He inevitably expresses Himself in terms of law. The central way in which He relates to humans is via His word—expressions of His will. On the sixth day of Creation, He gave Adam and Eve a variety of instructions, including “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:27), “subdue” the Earth (Gen. 1:28), use authorized vegetation for food (Gen. 1:29; 2:16), refrain from eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (2:17), tend and keep the garden (2:15), fulfill marital responsibilities (2:22,24). The book of Genesis helps us to see

early on that we humans are subject to God and under obligation to submit to His precepts.

Yet, we are living at a time in which both citizens at large and Christians within the church manifest widespread disdain and disregard for law. Within the church, the liberal element that has asserted itself in the last 40 years has ridiculed law keeping as “legalism.” They have insisted that grace excludes law and restriction. Some have gone so far as to declare that Christians are under **no** law. The logical and inevitable outcome of this warped mentality and inexcusable distortion of God’s expectations has been a flood of worship innovations (e.g., instrumental music, praise teams, etc.), a relaxation of morality (e.g., divorce/remarriage, abortion, homosexuality), and a complete sellout to denominationalism. A great host of churches, generally the numerically largest ones among us, have literally gone spiritually crazy. They have thrown off what they consider to be the shackles and oppression of obedience, and cut themselves adrift in a sea of emotion-driven, mindless, fleshly stimulation. “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt. 15:8-9; Is. 29:13). What a tragedy that their misrepresentation of both the nature of God and His will has mischaracterized the true essence of law, as stated succinctly by Paul in Romans: “Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good” (7:12). Or as Moses explained to the Israelites: “And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, **for our good always**” (Deut. 6:24). As the psalmist declared in Psalm 119, God’s rules, laws, requirements, restrictions, and commandments are to be loved, desired, sought, pursued, and embraced. This principle, too, is a critical realization for the entirety of the human race set forth in the book of beginnings.

Sin and Redemption

Having created the first human pair and placed them in paradise, life was good—at least for a little while. But then it happened. The blackest, foulest, ugliest day in human history.

Ignoring God's law, the first human beings introduced sin into the Universe. Consider the graphic description of sin and man's resulting woeful plight provided in Frank Chesser's masterful volume *Voyage of Faith*:

From Genesis 3:6 onward, sin has slithered throughout the world of humanity, inserting the incalculable venom of suffering, sorrow, and death into the spiritual bloodstream of every human being. Sin is man at war with himself. Sin devises a field of battle and sets man in its midst. Sin places a sword in man's hand and erects his own heart as its target. Cries of pain, ruin, despair, dying, and death fill the air as lives come to a tragic end in the heat of combat and souls encounter eternity unprepared to meet God (12).

Relative to its negative impact upon the world, sin is the most powerful force known to man. Sin descends upon man with more destructive power than did the waters of the Red Sea upon the mighty army of Egypt. Sin is inflamed with more devastating heat than was the burning sulfur that made desolate the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Sin is darker than the three days of midnight that encompassed the land under Pharaoh's scepter. Sin moves across the landscape of humanity like a massive flood, leaving desolation and misery in its wake. If a man could bear the universe upon his shoulders, it would not weigh heavier than a single sin bearing down upon the soul (39).

The power of sin transcends human comprehension. Sin is the bruised and beaten body of a small, innocent child. Sin is a young couple, outside the body of wedlock, transforming a sacred act of marital love into a transient moment of animal-like passion. Sin is a member of the church, moving from house to house, destroying the unity of the spirit that once thrived in the bond of peace. Sin is the theft of innocence from the countenance of youth. Sin is the

sound of weeping, the wrenching sobs of wives and mothers, husbands and fathers breaking the silence of the midnight hour over some wayward son, daughter, or unfaithful mate. Sin is little children huddled in the back bedroom of a house that has never been a home, with heaving chests, hearts of fear, and faces wet with tears as they listen to their mother scream under the abusive hand of a drunken father. Sin is the sound of the gavel and voice of the judge as it echoes in memories never to be forgotten, “Divorce granted” (49).

Most fortunately for us, God knew that human sin would happen, and He made provision for it in eternity before He ever brought the physical realm into existence. He pre-planned the solution to our violations of His will. This magnificent realization prompted Paul to exclaim: “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!” (Rom. 11:33).

But what could He possibly do? God cannot simply wave His hand and dismiss or overlook human sin. God cannot do such a thing and be God! But someone says, “I thought God could do anything.” The Bible does not teach that notion. It is true that God is omnipotent, and is therefore capable of doing anything that infinite power is capable of doing. But being perfect in all of His attributes, He cannot do anything that is contrary to His perfect nature. He cannot lie (Tit. 1:2). He cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13). The nature of God is such that He cannot tolerate sin, and for Him to accept a sinner, the sinner’s sin must be dealt with properly; it must be handled in such a way that He can forgive it and be consistent with His nature. But how may forgiveness be accomplished? Listen to Micah’s insightful analysis of the human predicament in our inability to achieve our own forgiveness:

With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten

thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (Mic. 6:6-7).

These are rhetorical questions to be answered in the negative. Even if you made the incredible sacrifice of placing your own child or grandchild on the communion table, and then killed that child in hopes of securing God's acceptance, you would fail to accomplish your objective, and exacerbate your sinful condition. Grain, drink, and burnt offerings cannot procure forgiveness; it takes blood. But the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin (Heb. 10:4). It takes human blood. But all humans have sinned and cannot serve as a perfect blood offering (Rom. 3:23).

The Bible teaches that the only, I repeat, the **only** means of achieving atonement for human sin is for God Himself to offer Himself for our sin; He would have to take on the form of human flesh on Earth and then have blood from His physical body shed in our behalf (Heb. 10:5). That's it! That's the only way for you and me to receive redemption. That's the only way for God's perfect nature to be satisfied in such a way that He can accept us (cf. "propitiation," Rom. 3:25; 1 Jn. 2:2). So, after providing us with an account of the creation of the Universe and the first human beings (chapters 1-2), the book of Genesis turns immediately to the introduction of sin into the world and the all-important matter of redemption (chapters 3-4), preparing us to understand the need for atonement and forgiveness.

We are informed that when sin was introduced into the world, God instantly headed toward Calvary, announcing it in these words: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel" (Gen. 3:15). Here we have the first expression of the Gospel. It is stated again in Genesis when God spoke to Abraham: "And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). Paul said that statement amounted to God preaching the Gospel to Abraham (Gal. 3:8). God repeated this declaration to him at least three more times (18:18; 22:18; 26:4).

Genesis 3:15 and 12:3, combined with the Messianic prophecy of 49:10, constitute the skeleton on which the rest of the

contents of the book hang—God beginning to unveil His grand plan to save man. Everything else in the book is tied to the scheme of redemption. Guided by the Holy Spirit, Moses was merely taking the reader down the pathway that leads to the cross. Even the genealogies of chapters 5 and 11 are a link in that same chain of events. The report of the Flood in chapters 6-9, and the tower at Babel in chapter 11, only underscore the need for atonement in view of God’s rightful wrath against sin—man’s rebellion against Him.

With chapters 12-25, we are introduced to the man through whom God would work out His plan to bring Christ into the world: Abraham. With Isaac and his son Jacob (chapters 25-36), we see God’s plan inched a little further through history. And the incredible story of Joseph (chapters 37-50) provides poignant previews of the coming Savior. Why devote 14 chapters to Joseph? Like Joseph, Jesus “came to His own, and His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11). Though they sought to kill Joseph, he wound up being their savior. Joseph is a **type** of Christ, a shadow of what was to come (cf. Heb. 8:5). He points us to Christ, while demonstrating that God will carry out His plan even in the face of what, to humans, appears to be insurmountable obstacles, “that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory” (Rom. 9:23).

Worship

With the introduction of sin into the world by Adam and Eve, we are next treated to an instance of its propagation with the next generation. When God communicated His will with regard to worship, as He most surely did (Heb. 11:4), we find Abel humbly complying with those stipulations, while his brother refused to do so, causing his sacrifice to be rejected by God (Gen. 4:5). Here we have spotlighted for us early on the absolute necessity of worshipping God according to His instructions. Even as Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman: “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the **true** worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him **must** worship in spirit and

truth” (John 4:23-24, emp. added). Linguistic authorities agree that “spirit” in this passage refers to the sincere engagement of the human spirit in the worship of God, while “truth” refers to the specific instructions that come from God regarding the specific worship actions to be enacted (Miller 182ff.). Hence, God requires both internal and external compliance. He requires the right attitude as well as the right action (cf. “in sincerity and in truth” in Josh. 24:14).

The liberal argues vociferously in our day that God is unconcerned with the externals. He insists that all God is really concerned about is sincerity, and that He will accept our worship to Him as long as whatever we do in worship is heartfelt, genuine, and offered with a desire to express love for Him. Hence, we see the widespread corruption of the worship of God blanketing the church via praise teams, instrumental music, handclapping, baby dedications, non-Sunday observance of the Lord’s Supper, female leadership of worship in mixed assemblies, and the list goes on. Though such fleshly displays are heralded as wonderful expressions of great spiritual zeal, sadly, they are merely reflections of the unspiritual, immature, lustful appetites of those who perpetrate them. They most certainly envelope the worshipper and spectator in the pleasurable sensations of emotional stimulation, providing feigned reassurance that all is well, but according to the Bible, God cannot be pleased.

At least Cain is to be credited with two positive aspects: (1) at least he was worshipping (he was not irreligious and disinterested in worship), and (2) he was worshipping the right God. According to current thinking, such should be sufficient: Cain was worshipping, and he was worshipping the right God. The liberal claims that the reason why Cain’s worship was rejected by God was not at all due to his actions; it was because he lacked the proper attitude. While we cannot know for certain the condition of Cain’s attitude, since the Bible does not tell us, we do know that his **external action** was incorrect. Two passages shed light on this point. Hebrews 11:4 states: “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.” Since “faith comes by hearing...the word of God” (Rom. 10:17), both

Cain and Abel had been given instructions from God regarding how to sacrifice. The verse states that it was the “sacrifice”—not the attitude—that was “more excellent.” Second, John informs us of Cain’s motivation for murdering his brother: “Because his **works** were evil and his brother’s righteous” (1 Jn. 3:12). “Works” is rendered “deeds” in other translations. So it was Cain’s **external acts** that were the problem.

Further, we have instances in Scripture where every indication is given that the worshiper possessed a sincere, genuine attitude, and yet, his worship action was rejected by God. For example, Uzzah touched the ark for the purpose of keeping it from toppling off a cart and being dashed on the ground—“for the oxen stumbled” (2 Sam. 6:6). Despite this well-meaning intention and noble concern, he was struck dead because his external action was not in harmony with God’s directives (1 Chron. 15:13).

Notice, then, that at the outset of the Bible, in the very first book of the Bible, God directs our attention to a most important point. Of all the incidents that transpired in the lives of all the people who lived at that time, God singles out an instance of **worship** in order to convey to all people for all time the absolute necessity of worshipping Him correctly in harmony with His stipulations.

Conclusion

The entire Bible is indispensable to the well-being of the human race. Our lives ought to be devoted to poring over its contents in order to bathe our spirits with the mind of God, to become more acquainted with Him, that we might be able to please Him. The book of Genesis is particularly critical to a proper understanding of life in view of eternity. May we not neglect its precepts. Ω

Biographical Sketch

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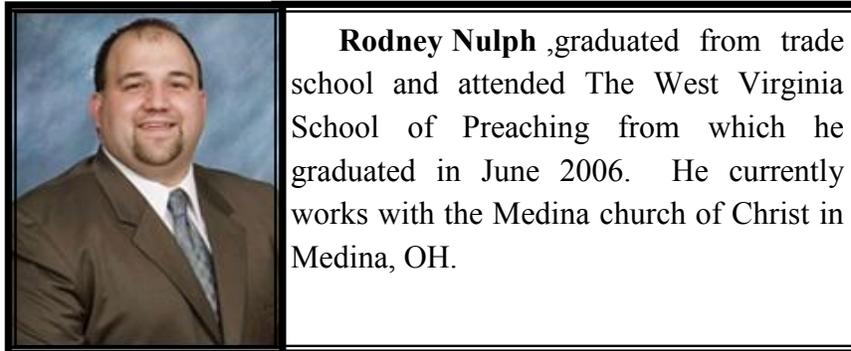
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Noah's Ark and Hermeneutics

Rodney Nulph



It is certainly a great honor to be invited to appear on such a spiritually rich lectureship. My appreciation is expressed to the elders of the Hillview Terrace congregation and the lectureship committee for inviting me to speak and to contribute to this written volume. May eternal good be accomplished from these efforts. It is also a quite humbling assignment given me, however, a much-needed one indeed.

Introduction

At the very sound of the word hermeneutics, panic begins to overtake some. It is certainly not a word that comes up in most dinner conversations. Sadly, many in our pews (and even sadder, some in our pulpits) have no idea regarding the subject of hermeneutics. This fact is quite evident in the vastly different “views” regarding certain subjects found in God’s Word, even among our own brethren. And the practice of proper hermeneutics is almost non-existent among those in the denominational world.

What is Hermeneutics?

Hermeneutics, simply defined, is the art of interpretation. There is both proper and improper interpretation. Dungan relates, “Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. It is derived from

the Greek *Hermes*, the messenger of the gods and the interpreter of *Jupiter*. Every *Hermeneus* was, therefore, an interpreter, as he was supposed to inherit some of the mystic qualities of this god philology, this patron of eloquence” (1). The interpretation of the Sacred text is known as Bible hermeneutics. Some, even among our fellowship, disdain and stand in opposition to the interpretation of the Bible. In fact, some, obviously trying to live and practice a different doctrine than that of Holy Writ, will be heard saying things like, “that is just your interpretation”, or “that is just the way you understand the text”. These phrases indicate that biblical authority is established by mere humans, and strongly hints that truth cannot really be known and understood. However, such is NOT the case and never has been! “...human beings do not establish bible authority. It is our responsibility to discover that authority” (Deaver, Preface). Proper hermeneutics has nothing to do with subjectivity, but rather deals within the realm of an objective, infallible standard (i.e. God’s Word) combined with proper logic and sound reasoning. “In short, to learn what the Bible *means*, one must correctly apply the *principles of logic* to the totality of the statements of the entire Bible” (Warren 20). A proper interpreter of the Bible will apply the “law of rationality”, which means he will only draw conclusions that are warranted by the evidence, with an honest and sincere study of the Inspired Text. “...logic alone cannot provide *content*- it can only *help* one decide accurately whether the evidence actually warrants a certain conclusion” (Warren 23).

To reject interpretation, is to reject the ability to know and apply truth. The Bible, like any literary piece, must be interpreted! And in order to know and apply truth, proper interpretation is crucial! The people of Nehemiah’s day understood the necessity of properly interpreting God’s Word, for it is written, “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading” (Neh. 8:8). Consequently, one would be hard pressed to find a better biblical definition for hermeneutics than the above inspired reference. Even Jesus Himself recognized the need for proper hermeneutics. Although the Pharisees of Jesus’ day read the Scriptures, they obviously did not understand the meaning.

For the Lord Himself declared, “But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matt. 9:13, emp. added). The Pharisees to whom Jesus spoke were obviously well acquainted with this passage from Hosea 6:6, but they had not properly interpreted its meaning. One can read the Bible, quote its contents, and fail to understand completely its truth without proper hermeneutics. Consequently, Jesus used an Old Testament passage to illustrate and understand a New Testament truth.

Additionally, after His resurrection, Jesus joined Cleopas and an unnamed disciple on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). These two disciples, not knowing it was Jesus with them, spoke openly of their bewilderment “...concerning Jesus of Nazareth” (Luke 24:19). After expressing their confusion regarding the events that took place back in Jerusalem (Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection), Jesus rebuked them by saying, “...O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? (Luke 24:25-26). These disciples knew the words of the prophets, but did not understand their meaning. Thus, Luke records, “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). Interestingly, the word “expounded” means “to interpret, to explain” (Rogers 173), “to unfold the meaning of what is said” (Thayer 147). Jesus gave the interpretation of the Word of God to these confused followers. From this inspired record alone we learn three important things; (1) proper interpretation is necessary in understanding God’s Word; (2) people can improperly interpret God’s Word, which leads to much confusion. (3) both the Old Testament and New Testament are in harmony with each other and help one in interpreting the totality of God’s Word.

Noah’s Ark and Hermeneutics.

The above introductory material essentially lays a foundation for our assigned subject. As we have already clearly stated, proper hermeneutics (interpretation) is essential in understanding God’s Inspired Word. As the disciples on the road to Emmaus,

improper interpretation will lead to a misunderstanding and misapplication of God's Word. Such is evident both in and out of the church of our Lord. The biblical example of Noah's Ark, especially when coupled with Peter's divine commentary (1 Pet. 3:20-21) regarding this incident, is a great example for our consideration on hermeneutics.

Misrepresentation

There is a popular misinterpretation in the religious world regarding salvation and redemption. In fact, many false teachers loudly preach that Noah and his family were saved by the ark, instead of properly interpreting the Word of God. This author e-mailed several denominational preachers regarding the subject of Noah's Ark and Salvation so as to document improper hermeneutics, which is clearly evident in the following e-mail discussion. *Disclaimer:* The following is in no way a ridicule of this man's beliefs, but rather a heart-breaking example of how some interpret God's Word. This author asked, "Could you please give me your position on 1 Peter 3:20-21 regarding salvation. Especially deal with Peter's phrase "eight were saved by water?" Thank you for your time. To which a self-called "expert" in God's Word responded,

"This passage appears to be an explanation of the purpose of baptism comparing it to the eight souls saved by water. So Peter says ...baptism now saves you also... This is consistent with what Peter said of baptism in Acts 2:38 as ...for the remission of sins... Baptism is a pledge or promise to keep a clear conscience toward God. In other words, baptism is a conscious promise to stop sinning, or as Paul says of baptism in Romans 6, baptism is obeying from the heart a form of teaching that makes one a slave of righteousness (v.17,18). I believe the doctrine of scripture is consistent among the various writers" (http://en.allexperts.com/q/Baptists-954/indexExp_82101.htm, emp. added).

Sadly, instead of “leading out” the meaning from the text (exegesis), this man biasly read his own meaning into the text (eisgesis).

Another example of improper hermeneutics is seen in the following e-mail discussion as well. When asked the same question as above regarding 1 Peter 3:20-21, this “pastor” answered thusly:

The eight souls were saved by water because they were in the ark, which was the only way of salvation from the worldwide flood. The same water that destroyed all that were outside of the ark saved all that were in the ark, because the ark, which is a type of Christ our Savior, was lifted up by water from certain destruction. I Pet. 3:21 simply declares that baptism saves those who have put their trust in the crucified and risen Lord, from a guilty conscience. *The person that has been converted by the grace of God, is to be baptized into a local Church in order to feed on the Word, serve the Lord and grow spiritually*” (emp. added).

Model

While it may be convenient as far as popularity and paychecks are concerned to misinterpret God’s Word, such will never please God or save man! The Bible is always its own best interpreter and model for proper interpretation. One passage gives illumination and understanding to another passage, in so much that each passage fits together like the proverbial “hand in a glove”. “...using Scripture to interpret Scripture...was being done in Acts 8:35 when ‘Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture (Isa. 53:7-8), preached unto him Jesus.’ Jesus did it in Matthew 13:13-15 when He explained His teaching in parables on the basis of Isaiah 6:9-10, and Isaiah himself did it when in Isaiah 2:2-4 he quoted the exact words of Micah 4:1-3 and enlarged upon them” (Aebi 187). Accordingly, Peter expounded the salvation of Noah and his family and clearly defined what the agent of salvation actually was. According to inspiration, in like manner of Noah and his family who were

saved by water, “baptism doth also now save us” (1 Pet. 3:21). Noah and his family were saved by water (1 Peter 3:20) and that truth will forever stand. The truth regarding Noah’s ark and salvation has been settled in heaven for centuries (cf. Psa. 119:89). Now it is up to each accountable soul to honestly seek and logically discover that truth.

Methods

How can we properly interpret the Scriptures? How can we make certain that we are in fact “rightly dividing the Word of Truth” (cf. 2Tim. 2:15)? As already noted there are both correct and incorrect methods for interpreting the Bible.

Respect

Before one can ever properly interpret God’s Word, he must believe that the Bible is in fact God’s Word. When we study Holy Writ, we are treading on holy ground! The Bible is to be revered and respected because it is in fact the very breath of our Almighty Creator (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). We must respect the Bible’s Divine origin, Divine transmission, and Divine preservation. The conviction one holds regarding respect for God’s Word will affect, either positively or negatively, his hermeneutics. The attitude that affirms “God said it, that settles it” will be a great asset in understanding and interpreting God’s Word. All interpreters must have the heart of the Psalmist, “Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes: and I shall keep it unto the end” (Psa. 119:33).

Rationality

After establishing the proper respect for God’s inspired, infallible, inerrant Word, one must approach that Word with rationality and sound reasoning. Sadly, many interpreters of God’s Word go astray in this area. In fact, Shirley MacLaine, pop theologian of the New Age movement has written what many so-called theologians believe, “Don’t evaluate and don’t let your left brain judge what you are thinking. Give your left brain more space. As a matter of fact, don’t think” (Geisler 1). Sadly, that is what many would-be interpreters of God’s Word do; “don’t

think!” However, without proper reasoning and honoring the law of rationality, one can never find truth! “I submit that logic is the most basic tool of any interpreter. Simply put, you can’t avoid studying logic...It is the basis for all math and science... Without it, there could be no rational discussion of anything; writing would be impossible. How can you put a sentence together without logical order?” (Pugh 112).

Receipt

After one determines that the Bible is God’s Word and he respects it as such, and after he is willing to use sound reasoning and honor the law of rationality, then he must apply the original recipe for hermeneutics. “There has been no new hermeneutics in the world since God endowed Adam and Eve with the ability to communicate and understand communication” (Kearley 58). Command, example, implication, and expediency are still the recipe for proper hermeneutics. This is not some mystical or profound way of understanding communication, for we use these principles each day in our normal human conversations. In fact, “[T]he ordinary tools for spoken communication between humans involves sound reasoning or logic, the basics of which are: direct statements, examples, and implication” (Rushmore 29). For a fuller discussion on command, example, and necessary implication, this author directs readers to the excellent treatise on hermeneutics by the late Thomas B. Warren *When is an “Example” Binding?*

Conclusion

Proper hermeneutics means the difference between heaven and hell! As we have clearly seen the New Testament must be used in understanding and properly interpreting the Old Testament, just like Noah’s salvation was used by Peter to speak of our salvation. Applying the rules for proper hermeneutics, with a logical and honest approach to God’s Word will enable one to come away with the exact meaning. We can know truth! As the Lord of glory once said, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). May each Bible interpreter diligently seek to, “rightly divide the word of

truth"! Ω

Biographical Sketch

Rodney Nulph, a native of rural PA, upon graduation from high school and trade school spent the next 11 years laboring in a modular/mobile home factory as an electrician. After much deliberation and prayer, the Nulphs moved to Moundsville, WV where Rodney attended The West Virginia School of Preaching from which he graduated in June 2006. He has worked with the church of our Lord in Blairsville, PA; Proctor, WV; Sandyville, WV; and currently works with the Medina church of Christ in Medina, OH. He and his wife Julene are the happy parents of a 7 year old son, Joshua, a 4 year old daughter, Brielle, and a 2 year old son, Stephen.

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Man's Dominion and Stewardship of the Earth

Genesis 1:28–30

Emanuel B. Daugherty



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Introduction

I am thankful to the Lectureship Committee for asking me to appear once again on this 17th Annual West Virginia School of Preaching “Victory” Lectures. I count it an honor and a privilege to be one of the speakers on this great lectureship. The WVSOP lectures have proved to be a great blessing to the Ohio Valley and beyond. Many have been in attendance to this program since its very beginning. I personally appreciate their faithfulness and support.

The lectures this year are taken from the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis. The doctrinal statements of these chapters lay the groundwork for the fundamental teaching of the rest of the Bible: God, the Godhead, Creation, Sin and the Fall of Man, Marriage and Home, the Universal Flood, the New Beginning of Man, and the Forming of Nations and Languages. Modernists go to great lengths to say that the Genesis 1-11 is not in harmony with the rest of the Bible. Throughout these lectures our speakers will show the remainder of the Bible to be perfectly consistent

with the teaching of these chapters. The King James and New King James Versions are used in this chapter.

Man's Dominion and Stewardship of the Earth

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And God said, See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food; and it was so (Gen. 1:27-30).

A related passage is found in Psalm 8:6-8, "You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen-even the beasts of the field, The birds of the air, and the fish of the sea and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas."

Note: One of the things the speakers on this lectureship are to do is to establish the consistency and harmony of teaching throughout the Bible. In other words, what Genesis 1-11 says about God, the Creation, the Beginning of man, the Entrance of Sin, the Flood of Noah, etc., wherever the Scriptures speak on any of the subjects found in the first eleven chapters of Genesis will be harmonious. Here we have a quote from Genesis with the Psalm of David that shows the consistency of the doctrine of man's dominion over the earth, giving evidence that the Bible is a divine book.

Henry Morris observation on this passage is helpful:

Here is the primeval commission to man authorizing both science and technology as man's basic enterprises

relative to the earth.” Science” is man’s disciplined study and understanding of the phenomena of his world. “Technology” is the implementation of this knowledge in the effective ordering and development of the earth and its resources, for the greater good of all earth’s inhabitants (e.g., engineering, agriculture, medicine, and a host of other practical technologies) (*The Genesis Record* 77).

. . .GOD determined to give to the man about to be created in His likeness the supremacy, not only over the animal world, but over the earth itself. This agrees with the blessing in verse 28, where the newly created man is exhorted to replenish the earth and subdue it .(Keil 64).

First, we note a twofold responsibility is placed upon the newly created humans: (1) they were to “multiply and replenish” (populate) the earth and (2) they were to “subdue it.” Another purpose for Adam and Eve’s creation was to propagate life. Man is told “to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.” Just as with all living things God created, those He made in His image were able to multiply themselves; they were to fill the earth.

Replenish is an Old English word that has been used by some to teach the Gap Theory, i.e., that God created a world (Gen 1:1-2) that stood for billions of years with living creatures (dinosaurs, pre-humans, etc.), but destroyed it and started over with a new creation which is described in Genesis 1:3-31). Thus Adam and Eve and the rest of the animals were to “replenish, refill” the earth that had been destroyed. The Hebrew word is *male*, and means “fill,” “fulfill,” or “be filled.” It is used more than 300 times and the KJV translates it seven times as “replenish” and these could have been (perhaps, *should have been*) translated as “fill.” This word does not lend itself to the erroneous Gap Theory. (Morris 76).

Second, we see that the glory and dignity of man are clearly implied in the text.

Man is designed to bear the image of God; men (mankind) are described as persons, but our lives involve relationships. We are able to love other persons in a God like way. We have a marvelous capacity for language, we can converse, share thoughts, convey and discern attitudes, and share experiences with others. Animals cannot do these things in the same sense people can (MacArthur 164).

As MacArthur further points out,

Man's very posture, standing upright, distinguishes him from four-footed beasts and creeping things. The animal's natural posture directs their gaze downward, toward the earth. Man, on the other hand is naturally positioned to look upward, toward the heavens where he can contemplate the glory of God displayed there (165-166).

C.C. Crawford lists five things that show that man is the crowning revelation of God in Genesis one. He insisted,

Man's nobility, in the plan of God, is evidenced as follows:

1) *By the time of his appearance in the Creation.* He came into existence after all inferior kinds had been created: he was the last and fairest of the Divine work.

2) *By the solemn circumstances of his making.* With respect to other phases of the creative activity, there was a simple expression of the Divine Will, such as, "Let there be light," "Let the waters bring forth," etc. But the creation of man necessitated a Divine Counsel in which the three Persons of the Godhead were heard to decree among themselves, "*Let us make man in our image, after*

our likeness.” The creation of man was of special consideration.

3) *By the dignity of his nature.* Created in the image of God, endowed with the essential elements of personality, he is the highest and noblest of all creatures of the earth (2:7, Job 38:2; Psalm 8:3-8; 139:14).

4) *By the circumstances of his early environment.* Eden, with its delights, was especially fitted up for his occupancy, signifying his early state of innocence, happiness, exemption for physical death, and unhindered access to God.

5) *By the extent of his dominion which is universal.* Everything on earth was placed under his rule and authority. The Scripture makes it crystal clear that man was the crown of the Creation for whose sake all else was called into being (358).

We might ask, “Why was man created as he was, *i.e.*, with all these God-like qualities and characteristics? Why wasn’t he created sin-proof?” In reading through the Bible one comes to the conclusion that God made man as something to love and to give love in return. If God had made man without the power of choice, he would be simply a robot, nothing more than a living machine. As man is made, he is able to respond to the loving overtures of a loving God. Man is able to direct his will, emotions and actions to give love, loyalty, obedience and service.

Marcus Dods wrote,

Man is dear to God because he is like Him. Vast and glorious as it is, the sun cannot think God’s thoughts, can fulfill, but cannot intelligently sympathize with God’s purpose. Man, alone among God’s works, can enter into and approve of God’s purpose in the world, and can intelligently fulfill it. Without man the whole material universe would have been dark and unintelligent, mechanical and apparently without any sufficient purpose. Matter, however fearfully and wonderfully wrought, is but the platform and the material in which spirit, intelligence and

will may fulfill themselves and find development. Man is incommensurable with the rest of the universe. He is of a different kind and by his moral nature is more akin to God than to His works" *Expositor's Bible* (18).

Immediately after he was created, Adam was given assignments that show his power of the rest of the creation; he was to "tend and keep the garden" (2:15), and to name the animals and birds. "Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field" (2:19).

Third, the teaching of this passage emphasizes that everything God made was for man's use and benefit. The earth and all that are in it, and perhaps with enough time, even outer space may be conquered and subdued by man. Marcus Dods observed, "...Man was the chief work of God, for whose sake all else was brought into being. The work of creation was not finished till he appeared: all else was preparatory to this final product. That man is the crown and lord of this earth is obvious" (7).

There is a difference of opinion on verses 29-30 as to whether these verses indicate that only a vegetable diet was permitted for man's sustenance. It is this writer's opinion that man began eating the flesh of animals with the beginning of animal sacrifice in chapter 4. Others would contend that animals for food were not authorized until after the flood (Gen. 9:3). Various dietetic regulations were placed on the children of Israel with the giving of Moses' law. However in the New Testament Paul says that false teachers would arise, "commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4:3-6).

Man's Dominion Incomplete Without Christ

Genesis 1 and Psalm 8 clearly establish God's intent for Adam and Eve and their descendants to rule and exercise dominion over the earth. "In comparison to the size of the universe, man is exceedingly small. If his size determines man's worth in the universe, he does not count for much" (McCord 4). But man's high estate is seen in two areas (1) his being made just a little lower than the angels; and (2) his being given authority over the world. The writer of Hebrews, said that the great and wonderful God "put all things in subjection under his feet" (Heb. 2:8), and continued by saying, "For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him."

From the time of Adam, the steady march of time has seen man subject every animal, and he has conquered land, sea, air, and space. So many things have been accomplished by human beings that even the greatest skeptics and doubters refuse to say, "It can't be done."

Yet from Adam until the time of Jesus, there remained one unconquerable foe: **Death**. There were a few exceptions; two men that *never* died – "And Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:24; cf. Heb. 11:5), and Elijah who, "went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (II Kings 2:11). There were some few in both the Old and New Testaments who by God power and might and for his glory that were raised from the dead (1 Kings 17:21; 2 Kings 4:35; 13:21; Jairus' daughter Luke 8:46-56, the widow of Nain's son Luke 7:11-14, and Lazarus John 11:43-44). But their return to life was only temporary, and the pall of death still hung over the human race. Death still had dominion! How could man be delivered from the horrible specter of death?

Through God's great love and wisdom He sent his Son as the answer to the problem of sin and death accompanies it (John 3:16). He did not come as an angel, for angels were not made to have dominion over the earth, nor do they die (Luke 20:36). It would be only by experiencing death and overcoming, it could be conquered forever.

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. 2:14-15).

Christ’s resurrection was different from all others, in that “death has no more dominion over him” (Rom. 6:9), He did not see corruption (Acts 2:27; 13:34), and He could promise that “because I live, you shall live also” (John 14:19).

Jesus, our Helper, assures us that man’s dominion ever over death is complete. God original promise to Adam to have dominion over the earth and to subdue it, and that repeated by David in Psalm 8, would have fallen to the ground had it not been for the grace of God intervening on behalf of man through Jesus the Christ. Our thanks is to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Radical Thought Stemming From Man’s Acceptance of Evolution

The idea that man is to subdue the earth is seen as absurd and ridiculous by so-called positivists, naturalists, humanists, ecological extremists, and others of their stripe. The very idea they say, is consummate egotism on man’s part. Contrary to Bible teaching radical men and women treat their animals better than their children. The modern animal rights movement is wholly given to evolution and demonstrates how evolution is degrading to humanity. “If evolution is true, humans are just one of many species that evolved from common ancestors. We are no better than animals, and we ought not to think that we are . . . We are nothing more than protoplasm waiting to become manure” (MacArthur, 33). This is the rationale of the modern animal-rights movement whose sole reason to exist is the utter degradation of the human race.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

This radical group maintains that killing any animal for food is the moral equivalent of murder; eating meat is virtually cannibalism; and man is a tyrant species, detrimental to his environment. PETA opposes the keeping of pets and “companion animals” – including guide dogs for the blind . . . ”Companion animals are like slaves, even if well-kept slaves” (*Fettered Kingdoms*, John Bryant, as quoted from MacArthur, 33).

“Ingrid Newkirk, PETA’S CONTROVERSIAL FOUNDER, SAYS, “There is no rational basis for saying that a human being has special rights . . . A rat is a pig is a dog is a boy.” She told a Washington Post reporter that the atrocities of Nazi Germany pale by comparison to the killing of animals for food: “Six million Jews died in concentration camps, but six billion broiler chickens will die this year in slaughterhouses.” Clearly Ms. Newkirk is more outraged by the killing of chickens for food than she is by the wholesale slaughter of human beings (MacArthur, 33).

An article in *Wild Earth Magazine*, a journal promoting radical environmentalism, included a manifesto for the extinction of the human race. The article said,

“If you haven’t given voluntary human extinction much thought before, the idea of a world with no people in it may seem strange. But, if you give it a chance, I think you might agree that the extinction of Homo sapiens would mean survival for millions, if not billions, of Earth dwelling species . . . Phasing out the human race will solve every problem on earth, social and environmental”

There is even an organization called The Church of Euthanasia. They have one commandment: “Thou shalt not procreate.” Their four foundational Pillars are: Suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy. Their slogan: Save the Planet, Kill Yourself.

Christian friends, let us use the knowledge God has given us in the Holy Scriptures with all wisdom as to the use of the earth and all God's creation within it. Let us practice good steward-ship of the world God has made for us. As Christians we must object to those who would rape the land, waste our resources, and have no concern for the next generation. We are thankful for clean water, clean air, and the protection of endangered animals, and places. We must be environmentally concerned, but let us also avoid the extremes of radical environmentalists whose policies would cause us to reject the Way of Christ and civilization, and revert to the ways of the jungle, do away with jobs, put animals and other creatures on the same level as humans, and who would also be content with doing away with mankind together.

Addenda on Global Warming From junkscience.com

“Junk Science” refers to spurious information being posted as science, *e.g.*, global warming that places the blame on man, environmental advocates whose recommendations have not been proved, and so forth. (ebd).

The Great Global Warming Swindle...is now available on DVD – only at the DemandDebate.com Store! Supplies are limited. Get your copy while they last! Court finds 11 inaccuracies in Al Gore's movie.

Source: New Party web site

The decision by the government to distribute Al Gore's film ***An Inconvenient Truth*** has been the subject of a legal action by New Party member Stewart Dimmock. Although a full ruling has yet to be given, the Court found that the film was misleading in 11 respects and that the Guidance Notes drafted by the Education Secretary's advisors served only to exacerbate the political propaganda in the film.

In order for the film to be shown, the Government must first amend their ***Guidance Notes to Teachers*** to make clear that:

1. The Film is a political work and promotes only one side of the argument.
2. If teachers present the Film without making this plain they may be in breach of section 406 of the Education Act 1996 and guilty of political indoctrination.

3. Eleven inaccuracies have to be specifically drawn to the attention of school children.

The inaccuracies are:

1. The film claims that melting snows on Mount Kilimanjaro evidence global warming. The Government's expert was forced to concede that this is not correct.

2. The film suggests that evidence from ice cores proves that rising CO₂ causes temperature increases over 650,000 years. The Court found that the film was misleading: over that period the rises in CO₂ lagged behind the temperature rises by 800-2000 years.

3. The film uses emotive images of Hurricane Katrina and suggests that this has been caused by global warming. The Government's expert had to accept that it was "not possible" to attribute one-off events to global warming.

4. The film shows the drying up of Lake Chad and claims that this was caused by global warming. The Government's expert had to accept that this was not the case.

5. The film claims that a study showed that polar bears had drowned due to disappearing arctic ice. It turned out that Mr. Gore had misread the study: in fact four polar bears drowned and this was because of a particularly violent storm.

6. The film threatens that global warming could stop the Gulf Stream throwing Europe into an ice age: the Claimant's evidence was that this was a scientific impossibility.

7. The film blames global warming for species losses including coral reef bleaching. The Government could not find any evidence to support this claim.

8. The film suggests that the Greenland ice covering could melt causing sea levels to rise dangerously. The evidence is that Greenland will not melt for millennia.

9. The film suggests that the Antarctic ice covering is melting; the evidence was that it is in fact increasing.

10. The film suggests that sea levels could rise by seven meters causing the displacement of millions of people. In fact the evidence is that sea levels are expected to rise by about forty centimeters over the next hundred years and that there is no such threat of massive migration.

11. The film claims that rising sea levels has caused the evacuation of certain Pacific islands to New Zealand. The Government is unable to substantiate this and the Court observed that this appears to be a false claim. ... Yet another reason to watch "*The Great Global Warming Swindle*"! Ω

Biographical Sketch

Brother Daugherty was born in Philippi, WV January 12, 1939. He was baptized February 5, 1950 by Miris Wright in Warren, OH. He married Judith R. Null, July 16, 1958 and to their union was born: Bruce (Gayle), who preaches for the 10th & Clairmont church of Christ in Cambridge, OH; Ramona (Stephan) Haynes, at Fishinger-Kenny church of Christ, Columbus, OH; Rachel (Maken) Cornell, at Alkire Road, Grove City, OH; Rebecca Poe, husband Brad preaches at Rome church of Christ, Proctorville, OH. The Daugherty's have eight grandchildren, four boys and four girls, and one great-grandson. Emanuel graduated from Braceville HS, Trumbull County, Ohio 1956, Getwell Road School of Preaching (Memphis School of Preaching) 1968, Alabama Christian School of Religion (Southern Christian University) in 1982. He has preached at Alkire Road Grove City, OH 1968-1989, Dewey Avenue St Marys, WV 1989-1994 and served as **Director of West Virginia School of Preaching** (1994 -2003). Emanuel is the author of a *Commentary on the Book of Daniel* and *Notes on the Minor Prophets*. He continues to serve as a faculty member at West Virginia School of Preaching and has preached for the Salem church of Christ, Marshall County, Glen Easton, WV since 2003.

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Militant Atheism

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Introduction

Amid militant cries by evolutionists to ban God from science, the public school, and America, how ironic that such talk is permissible only because America was founded by theists. For some fifty years now, atheistic evolutionists have been chipping steadily away at belief in God and the Christian religion throughout the public school and university system of this country. They have successfully indoctrinated many young people with their godless theory. Virtually every department in state universities has been infiltrated by godless, humanistic presuppositions. Study and research are conducted from an evolutionary, relativistic framework that either jettisons the notion of God altogether, or dilutes it sufficiently to exclude the biblical portrayal of deity. Many American universities are now firmly under the control of atheists, agnostics, and skeptics, who forthrightly reject belief in God, embrace a materialistic view of origins, and are determined to eradicate any residue of belief in God that may linger in their victimized pupils.

The United States is different

But the United States was born under such drastically different circumstances. Indeed, the foundational premise for severing ties with England, and the central rationale and justification for establishing a new nation, was articulated by the Founders in their declared intention to establish their independence (*Declaration of...*, 1776). In the very first sentence of that seminal document, they insisted that “the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle[d] them” to achieve “the separate and equal station” of a new nation. The “Nature’s God” to whom they referred was the God of the Bible. In the second sentence they declared that they had been “created” (not evolved) by their “Creator” who invested them with “certain unalienable Rights.” In other words, the American Republic had a right to exist on the

basis of the authority of the God of the Bible. Further, they their intentions by “appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world.” And they staked the entire enterprise on “a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.” Four times in the brief literary missive that launched the United States of America, the Founders alluded to the God of the Bible; yet now, over two centuries later, evolutionists are waging defiant warfare on those who believe in that God!

The architects of this country would be outraged—and thoroughly alarmed for national survival. Consider some of their remarks on the matter. John Adams played a central role in the birth of our nation, as delegate to the Continental Congress (1774-1777) where he signed the *Declaration of Independence*, as signer of the peace treaty that ended the American Revolution (1783), as two-time Vice-President under George Washington (1789-1797), and as second President of the United States (1797-1801). In a letter to Thomas Jefferson on April 19, 1817, John Adams insisted: “Without religion this world would be something not fit to be mentioned in polite company, I mean hell” (1856, 10:254). He declared in 1778 that atheism ought to be treated with “horror” and those who embrace it are traitors, hypocrites, and guilty of treason:

The idea of infidelity cannot be treated with too much resentment or too much horror. The man who can think of it with patience is a traitor in his heart and ought to be execrated as one who adds the deepest hypocrisy to the blackest treason (1977-1989, 6:348).

Writing to Noah Webster on July 20, 1798, Dr. Benjamin Rush, medical doctor and signer of the *Declaration of Independence*, said: “I anticipate nothing but suffering to the human race while the present systems of paganism, deism, and atheism prevail in the world” (1951, 2:799). Another signer of the *Declaration*, Samuel Adams, stated in a letter written in 1772: “I have a thorough contempt for all men...who appear to be the irreclaimable enemies of religion” (1906, 2:381). Signer of the *Constitution*, Gouverneur Morris, insisted in 1816:

There must be religion. When that ligament is torn, society is disjointed and its members perish. The nation is exposed to foreign violence and domestic convulsion. Vicious rulers, chosen by vicious people, turn back the current of corruption to its source. Placed in a situation where they can exercise authority for their own emolument, they betray their trust. They take bribes. They sell statutes and decrees. They sell honor and office. They sell their conscience. They sell their country. By this vile traffic they become odious and contemptible. But the most important of all lessons is the denunciation of ruin to every State **that rejects the precepts of religion**” (*Collections of...*, 1821, pp. 32,34, emp. added).

Speaking to the senior class at Princeton College in 1775, *Declaration* signer John Witherspoon declared: “Shun, as a contagious pestilence,...those especially whom you perceive to be infected with the principles of infidelity or [who are] enemies to the power of religion” (1802, 6:13).

With uncanny anticipation of the audacious, avowed determination by evolutionists to rid the nation of belief in God, Alexander Hamilton, another signer of the federal *Constitution*, condemned France in 1798 for a comparable aspiration: “The attempt by the rulers of a nation to destroy all religious opinion and to pervert a whole people to atheism is a phenomenon of profligacy.... [T]o establish atheism on the ruins of Christianity [is] to deprive mankind of its best consolations and most animating hopes and to make a gloomy desert of the universe” (1799, 21:402-404). Also describing France, John Jay, first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, explained:

During my residence there, I do not recollect to have had more than two conversations with atheists about their tenets. The first was this: I was at a large party, of which were several of that description. They spoke freely and contemptuously of religion. I took no part in the conversation. In the course of it, one of them asked me if I

believed in Christ? I answered that I did, and that I thanked God that I did. Some time afterward, one of my family being dangerously ill, I was advised to send for an English physician who had resided many years at Paris. But, it was added, he is an atheist.... [D]uring one of his visits, [he] very abruptly remarked that there was no God and he hoped the time would come when there would be no religion in the world. I very concisely remarked that **if there was no God there could be no moral obligations, and I did not see how society could subsist without them...** (Jay, 1833, 2:346-347, emp. added).

Even Benjamin Franklin chided the French with the near absence of atheism in early America:

[B]ad examples to youth are more rare in America, which must be comfortable consideration to parents. To this may be truly added, that serious religion, under its various denominations, is not only tolerated, but respected and practiced. **Atheism is unknown there; infidelity rare and secret;** so that persons may live to a great age in that country, **without having their piety shocked by meeting with either an atheist or an infidel** (1784, p. 24, emp. added).

Atheists and Thomas Paine

Atheists like to flaunt the name of Founder Thomas Paine in front of college students, since he styled himself a deist and opponent of Christianity. Yet, he repudiated the atheism being perpetrated by today's evolutionists. In his *Age of Reason*, he claimed to believe in God and afterlife: "I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life" (1794). He also wrote:

Were man impressed as fully and as strongly as he ought to be with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of that belief; he would stand in

awe of God and of himself, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either (1794).

Paine not only believed in “the certainty of his existence and the immutability of his power,” he asserted that “it is the fool only, and not the philosopher, or even the prudent man, that would live as if there were no God.” In fact, he stated that it is “rational to believe” that God would call all people “to account for the manner in which we have lived here” (1794). So according to Paine, today’s atheistic evolutionists are imprudent, irrational fools. The psalmist articulated the same conclusion centuries ago when he wrote: “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psa. 14:1; 53:1).

College professors who like to bring up Paine conveniently ignore “the rest of the story.” For example, John Adams’ sentiments regarding Paine’s writing were, to say the least, blunt: “The Christian religion is, above all the religions that ever prevailed or existed in ancient or modern times, the religion of wisdom, virtue, equity and humanity, let the Blackguard Paine say what he will” (3:421, 1856). “Blackguard” was an 18th century term for a thoroughly unprincipled person—a scoundrel. Zephaniah Swift, who was a member of the U.S. Congress from 1793-1797, offered a strong reaction to Paine:

[W]e cannot sufficiently reprobate the beliefs of Thomas Paine in his attack on Christianity by publishing his *Age of Reason*.... He has the impudence and effrontery to address to the citizens of the United States of America a paltry performance which is intended to shake their faith in the religion of their fathers.... No language can describe the wickedness of the man who will attempt to subvert a religion which is a source of comfort and consolation to its votaries merely for the purpose of eradicating all sentiments of religion (1796, 2:323-324).

John Jay’s Affirmation

John Jay was another brilliant Founder with a long and distinguished career in the formation and shaping of American

civilization from the beginning. He not only was a member of the Continental Congress from 1774-1776, serving as President from 1778-1779, he also helped to frame the New York State Constitution and then served as the Chief Justice of the New York Supreme Court. He co-authored the Federalist Papers, was appointed as the first Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court by George Washington (1789-1795), served as Governor of New York (1795-1801), and was the vice-president of the American Bible Society (1816-1821). In a letter dated February 14, 1796, he affirmed:

I have long been of the opinion that the evidence of the truth of Christianity requires only to be carefully examined to produce conviction in candid minds, and I think they who undertake that task will derive advantages.... As to The Age of Reason, it never appeared to me to have been written from a disinterested love of truth or of mankind (Jay, 1833, 2:266).

Several of the Founders were severe in their denunciations of Paine. John Witherspoon, member of the Continental Congress (1776-1782) and signer of the *Declaration of Independence*, insisted that Paine was “ignorant of human nature as well as an enemy to the Christian faith” (1802, 3:24). Another signer of the *Declaration*, Charles Carroll, pronounced Paine’s work as “blasphemous writings against the Christian religion” (as quoted in Gurn, 1932, p. 203). *Declaration* signer, Benjamin Rush, called *The Age of Reason* “absurd and impious” (1951, 2:770). William Paterson, signer of the federal *Constitution* and U.S. Supreme Court justice appointed by George Washington, became so indignant over those few Americans who seemed to agree with Paine, that he declared: “Infatuated Americans, why renounce your country, your religion, and your God? Oh shame, where is thy blush? Is this the way to continue independent, and to render the 4th of July immortal in memory and song?” (as quoted in O’Conner, 1979, p. 244). [NOTE: Observe that Paterson believed that independence **depended** on loyalty to the Christian religion and God.] In a similar vein, John Quincy Adams, referring to

Paine's *Rights of Man*, insisted that "Mr. Paine has departed altogether from the principles of the Revolution" (1793, p. 13). Patrick Henry described Paine's writing as "the puny efforts of Paine" (as quoted in Arnold, 1854, p. 250), and the President of the Continental Congress, Elias Boudinot, published *The Age of Revelation* in direct rebuttal to *The Age of Reason* (1801).

Even Benjamin Franklin, one of the least religious of the Founding Fathers, though a longtime friend of Paine, viewed Paine's piece with great disfavor:

For without the Belief of a Providence that takes Cognizance of, guards and guides and may favor particular Persons, there is no Motive to Worship a Deity, to fear its Displeasure, or to pray for its Protection. **If Men are so wicked as we now see them with Religion what would they be if without it?** I intend this Letter itself as a Proof of my Friendship.... (1840, 10:281-282, emp. added).

Derided by the public and abandoned by his friends on account of his religious views, Thomas Paine died in Greenwich Village, New York City, on June 8, 1809. At the time of his death, most U.S. newspapers reprinted the obituary notice from the *New York Citizen*, which read in part: "He had lived long, did some good and much harm." Only six mourners came to his funeral ("Thomas Paine," n.d.).

Contrast Then and Now

If atheistic evolutionists have their way in this country by having God expunged from public education, according to the Founders of America, this country will become a nightmare—a "gloomy desert," or as John Adams believed, a living "hell" on Earth. Yet here we are over 200 years later and the forces of infidelity are stronger than they have ever been in this country. Consider the following irony. Russia went down the same road of atheistic evolution a century ago. I well remember when the "space race" between the Soviet Union and the United States was in full swing. I was four years old when my father took me

outside on a dark Arizona night in October 1957, to peer upward in hopes of catching a glimpse of the first manmade object to orbit the Earth—Russia’s Sputnik 1. Sure enough, it streaked across the heavens as a pinpoint of light. By April of 1961, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human to travel into space aboard Vostok 1. Peering through the window of his spacecraft, Gagarin was reported to have made the comment, “I don’t see any God up here” (“Yuri Gagarin...,” n.d.). [NOTE: Yuri’s colleague and good friend, Colonel Valentin Petrov, later insisted that Yuri never made such a statement, though it came to be attributed to him, but was actually the result of a comment by Russian Premiere Nikita Khrushchev in an anti-religious propaganda speech before the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party: “At that time Khrushchev gave all the Party and Komsomol organizations the task to promote this propaganda and said: ‘Why should you clutch at God? Look, Gagarin flew in space and saw no God’” (“Gagarin Never Said...,” 2006).] Because of an unwillingness to discern spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14), Russian astronaut Valery Bykovsky told newsmen in 1963 that **no Soviet cosmonaut believed in God** and none of them had seen anything to change their minds during their space flights (“Soviet Cosmonauts...,” 1963 D7, emp. added). At the time, the spiritual and religious sensibilities of most Americans were **shocked** by such blatant, unmitigated unbelief. Hear the words of the psalmist: “Why should the nations say, ‘Where now is their God?’ But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases” (Psa. 115:2-3). Pride is a deadly pitfall that blinds one to the truth: “The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; all his thoughts are, ‘There is no God’” (Psa. 10:4).

Contrast the 1960s atheistic Russians with their American counterparts at the time. It was Christmas Eve, December 24, 1968, when Apollo 8 entered lunar orbit on the first manned mission to the Moon. Before retiring that evening, the astronauts did a live television broadcast to Earth, showing pictures of the Earth and Moon seen from their space capsule. They concluded the broadcast in the following fashion. Lunar Module Pilot William Anders said:

For all the people on Earth the crew of Apollo 8 has a message we would like to send you.” He then began reading from the Bible, specifically Genesis 1:1-4. Command Module Pilot Jim Lovell then continued the reading with Genesis 1:5-8. Finally, Commander Frank Borman completed the reading with Genesis 1:9-10, and then closed the broadcast with the words, “And from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas, and God bless all of you—all of you on the good Earth (Williams 2007).

Seven months later, on July 20, 1969, with the largest worldwide television audience in history watching, Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong became the first two humans to visit another world when they stepped onto the Moon from their Apollo 11 Lunar Module *Eagle*. Since the infamous atheist Madalyn Murray O’Hair had filed suit against NASA (a suit eventually rejected by the courts) due to the Apollo 8 crew reading from Genesis, Aldrin was asked to forego his plan to read publicly from the Bible while on the Moon’s surface. Nevertheless, while still on the Moon, he radioed to Earth the following:

Houston. This is *Eagle*, the LM Pilot speaking. I would like to request a few moments of silence. Over. I would like to invite each person listening in, wherever and whomever he may be, to contemplate for a moment the events of the past few hours and to give thanks in his own individual way” (“Apollo 11 Astronaut...,” 2007).

While still on the Moon, Aldrin read John 15:5 to himself and then observed the Lord’s Supper (2007). During a television broadcast by the astronauts the evening before splashdown, Aldrin quoted Psalm 8:3-4—“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the Son of Man, that thou visitest Him?” (2007).

Of course, America’s brave astronauts merely reflected the religious convictions shared by the bulk of American culture at

the time and extending all the way back to the beginning of the country. Tragically, that spiritual conviction, so characteristic of American civilization then, has since experienced extensive erosion. Contrast the astronauts in the early days of America's space program with more recent ones. Returning from a 16-day mission in March 2008, crew members of *Endeavor* stated that as space exploration forges ahead, they believed the human race will find life elsewhere in the Universe ("Astronauts Say...," 2008). Mike Foreman, a mission specialist on the *Endeavor*, said, "If we push back boundaries far enough, I'm sure eventually we'll find something out there" ("Astronauts Say..."). Such thinking is typical of evolutionists who must look elsewhere for their faltering theory of evolution (cf. Richard Dawkins in *Expelled*; Stein and Miller, 2008). Foreman continued: "Maybe not as evolved as we are, but it's hard to believe that there is not life somewhere else in this great universe" ("Astronauts Say..."). Another astronaut, Gregory Johnson, asserted: "I personally believe that we are going to find something that we can't explain.... There is probably something out there but I've never seen it" ("Astronauts Say..."). The crew commander, Dominic Gorie, compared their space adventure to explorers in past eras who knew not what they would encounter when they sailed the uncharted seas of the Earth. "As we travel in the space, we don't know what we'll find. That's the beauty of what we do. I hope that someday we'll find what we don't understand" ("Astronauts Say..."). Richard Linnehan, a fellow mission specialist, admitted that it could take a while before human beings come into contact with extraterrestrial life ("Astronauts Say..."). Here is yet another indication of America's drift from God in exchange for fanciful theory and meaningless pursuits. Rather than being dazzled by the marvels of the Universe and acknowledging God as the great Creator, some of our astronauts now are filled with thoughts of little green men.

Fruits of Unbelief in America

Many Americans were incredulous when a Muslim was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006 and sworn

into office with his hand on the Quran (“Rep. Ellison...,” 2007). Now the first national congressman in U.S. history has announced that he is an atheist. Representative Pete Stark, Democrat from California, who actually has been serving in Congress since 1973, was hailed instantly by humanist and atheist organizations (Hoegh 2007). Never mind the fact that, given his avowed atheism, Mr. Stark cannot uphold his own state constitution, which reads: “We, the People of the State of California, **grateful to Almighty God** for our freedom, in order to secure and perpetuate its blessings, do establish this Constitution” (“Preambles to...,” emp. added). The gradual erosion of traditional American values, which most certainly has included belief in the God of the Bible, continues. A recent poll shows that 96% of Americans still believe in God, yet 37% would vote for an atheist for President (Adler, 2007 47). Such is the inevitable infiltration of the nation’s political infrastructure as Christian values continue to be systematically jettisoned from schools, government, and public life (see *SilencingOfGod.org*).

So what? Does it really matter whether the population of the United States, along with its elected representatives and other public officials, maintain belief in the God of the Bible? Isn’t such diversity of ideas healthy and beneficial to the overall well-being of society? Certainly atheists, humanists, and evolutionists answer in the affirmative, insisting that a religionless society is the ideal (e.g., Dawkins’ *The God Delusion*). On the other hand, Christians recognize that any nation that denies the existence of the one true God, and rejects the moral precepts contained within the Christian system, ultimately will meet its demise. The psalmist cut to the chase on this point: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psa. 33:12). “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psa. 9:17). In the final analysis, a widespread refusal to acknowledge the one true God in our society will bring upon us destruction (cf. Deut. 28). Paul’s words form a sad commentary on the transition that has transpired in America:

For since the creation of the world His invisible are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,

even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools (Rom. 1:20-22).

Indeed, the physical evidence remains abundantly clear: the Universe “declares” the plain work of the Creator (Psa. 19:1). Those who see “the things that are made” and deny the very One Who made them—are “without excuse” (Rom. 1:20).

Conclusion

We close with a quick glance back to the founding of the Republic. During the tumultuous years of the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress issued 15 proclamations to the nation, each of which called upon the entire country to render homage to the God of the Bible so that they might be blessed with victory, peace, and prosperity. To see the depth of the Founders’ reliance and dependency on God and Christianity, and the shocking extent to which our nation has veered far afield from that critical dependency, consider just one of those proclamations, issued by Congress on October 31, 1780, the fourth year of war with Britain:

Whereas it hath pleased **Almighty God, the Father of all mercies**, amidst the vicissitudes and calamities of war, to bestow blessings on the people of these states, which call for their devout and thankful acknowledgments, more especially in the late remarkable interposition of **his watchful providence**, in rescuing the person of our Commander in Chief and the army from imminent dangers, at the moment when treason was ripened for execution; in prospering the labors of the husbandmen, and causing the earth to yield its increase in plentiful harvests; and, above all, in continuing to us the enjoyment of the gospel of peace;

It is therefore recommended to the several states to set apart Thursday, the seventh day of December next, to be observed as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer; that all the people may assemble on that day to celebrate the praises of **our Divine Benefactor**; to confess our unworthiness of the least of **his favors**, and to offer our fervent supplications to **the God of all grace**; that it may **please him** to pardon our heinous transgressions and incline our hearts for the future to keep all **his laws** that it may **please him** still to afford us the blessing of health; to comfort and relieve our brethren who are any wise afflicted or distressed; to smile upon our husbandry and trade and establish the work of our hands; to direct our public councils, and lead our forces, by land and sea, to victory; to take our illustrious ally under **his special protection**, and favor our joint councils and exertions for the establishment of speedy and permanent peace; to cherish all schools and seminaries of education, build up **his churches** in their most holy faith and **to cause the knowledge of Christianity to spread over all the earth**. Done in Congress, the last day of October, 1780, and in the fifth year of the independence of the United States of America (*Journals of...*, 1904-1937, 18:950-951, emp. added).

These men believed that the very survival of America depends on the favor and blessings of God. What a far cry from those in America today who are content with atheists in Congress, not to mention in universities all over America. As more and more Americans eliminate belief in God from their lives, as atheism progressively encroaches upon our political and educational institutions, we may expect fully to see the withdrawal of His care.

The Father of our country, George Washington, would be heartsick to hear of the militant intentions of today's evolutionists/atheists:

I am sure there never was a people who had more reason to acknowledge a Divine interposition in their affairs than those of the United States; and **I should be pained to believe that they have forgotten** that Agency which was so often manifested during our revolution, or that they failed to consider the omnipotence of **that God who is alone able to protect them** (1838, 10:222-223, emp. added). Ω

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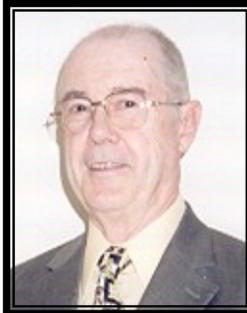
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The Godhead in Creation

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Introduction

Please allow me to begin by thanking the elders and the West Virginia School of Preaching for the opportunity to look for a while at the topic, “The Godhead in Creation,” which I want us to see in contrast to what you may hear on the discovery channel or on NOVA.

“In the beginning matter created the heavens and the earth.” Matter? No, that doesn’t sound possible; if it was the beginning, where did the matter come from? “In the beginning two stars collided and created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was waste and without life until a space rock crashed into the earth and brought with it some DNA.” No, that doesn’t sound right either. . . . “In the beginning was a mixture of hydrogen and oxygen, which a stray bolt of lightning ignited with a Big Bang that started a chain reaction that produced all kinds of gas, radiation, dust, water, planets (including the earth), the heavens (including stars), and an ever-expanding universe.” . . .” Where did the hydrogen and oxygen come from? In the beginning oceans spawned all sorts of microscopic life from hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and other gases bubbling up through fissures or fumaroles in the ocean floor.” No, that wasn’t the beginning, for it assumes that the oceans and the gases were already there.

Now all these theories sound like the speculations of science

falsely so-called! Science is supposed to be “No brag, just fact.” The word “science” means knowledge gained by systematic study of observable facts. None of the above can be observed or established as fact. Here’s what really happened, as recorded by Moses under inspiration from the One who didn’t just see it but who actually did it: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). ((Unless otherwise noted, all quotations are from the New King James Version, 1993 edition).

Who Is This God Who Created?

Who is God? God is not matter, not gas like hydrogen or oxygen, not space dust, not anything material. Jesus said, “God is Spirit” (John 4:24), which describes his essence or nature, as do many other Biblical statements: God is living (Matt. 16:16; 2 Thes. 1:9; Josh. 3:10). God is unlimited in space (Psa. 139:7-10); God is unlimited in time (2 Peter 3:8); God is unlimited in power (Rom. 1:20; Matt. 19:26), and in any other thing that his own nature does not dictate (such as that God cannot lie, Heb. 6:18). God is “the eternal God” (Deut. 33:27). “from everlasting to everlasting” (Psa. 90:2), “both now and forever” (Jude 25). God is self-sufficient; God is not “worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things” (Acts 17:25). “God has no needs beyond Himself. He does not have to go outside of Himself for anything” (Turner, 35).

In an attempt to define God, many list His attributes or characteristics as His substance or essence. God has many attributes; for example, “God is love” (1 John 4:8,16); “God is light” (1 John 1:5); God is good (Mark 10:18); God is holy (1 Peter 1:15); God is faithful (2 Tim. 2:13); God is patient or longsuffering (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:9); God is just or righteous (Psalm 89:14; Rom. 3:26); God is merciful and extends grace to us (Titus 3:5-6; Eph. 2:8-9). Roy H. Lanier, Sr. says,

While the attributes of God are ‘distinguishing characteristics of the divine nature,’ [a definition given by Strong] we must be careful to view them as something apart from the essence of that divine nature. To view the sum of the attributes as God is to deny the personality of

God . . . So we conclude that the divine essence of God is that infinite, eternal, self-existent Spirit Being, who is the source, support, and end of all things, but that the attributes of this Spirit Being are those characteristics, or qualities, of his nature which set him apart from and above all other beings, human or spirit, and which cause him to deserve our love and trust.” (24-25).

God is many things, but God is not a plump black lady who likes to cook and calls herself “Papa,” as in William P. Young’s *The Shack*. Anyone who reads *The Shack* probably also should read *Burning Down ‘The Shack’* by James B. DeYoung. *The Shack* misrepresents the Father (as the black lady), the Son (as a carpenter who likes to lie by the lake and look at the stars), the Holy Spirit (as a flighty girl), and the Gospel of Christ in favor of a kind of universalism that ignores the work and real nature of the Godhead. God is not what Young and some others people want to believe He is—One who loves but never judges, punishes, or enforces rules; One who tolerates and (at least eventually) saves everyone but is opposed to organized religion. Remember the flood (Genesis 6-8; 2 Peter 3:5-7); Remember Sodom and Gomorrah, Nadab and Abihu, Ananias and Sapphira, and the many other examples of God’s judgments of those who disregarded God’s laws. God is loving and gracious and merciful, but He is also the just, moral Governor of the universe Who means what He says!

God in Three Persons

God is one: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!” (Deut. 6:4). Yet Gen. 1:26 speaks of God in the plural—“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. . .’”; and Gen. 11:7 reports the LORD’S saying, “Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.” Even the word translated *God* is plural in Hebrew, as Turner and Myers’ explanation of Deuteronomy 6:4 shows: “Hear, O Israel: Jehovah [singular] our God [Elohim, plural] is one Jehovah [singular]. . . here the plural is called one” (43). The Biblical position, more

clearly set forth in the New Testament but also seen in the Old Testament, is that there exists only one God but that He—and it is always *He*—exists in three persons or personalities. Those who say it is impossible to conceive of this three-in-one concept forget that it only seems impossible to them because it is not perceived by them in their own limited life experiences. They have not seen God, for “No one has seen God at any time” (John 1:18); therefore they do not understand how He can be three persons yet one God. This ultimately comes down to a question of faith, and Christians “walk by faith, not by sight” in such matters (2 Cor. 5:7). We believe the Bible to be inspired by God, so we accept by faith what it tells us that we cannot see because of our human limitations in this world.

If we read carefully, we see Moses reporting two persons in the Godhead at work early on in creation: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:1-2). God working through the Spirit is referred to elsewhere in the Old Testament—“And the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years” (Gen. 6:3). “Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets” Neh. 9:30).

In some Old Testament prophecies, we even see all three persons of the Godhead; it seems to be the Messiah speaking in Isaiah 48:18, saying that “. . . now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me.” Isaiah 61:1-2 was read by Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth and proclaimed fulfilled in God sending the Spirit upon Jesus to preach, Luke says:

“So He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has

sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.’ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing’” (Luke 4:17-21).

Jesus was saying that Isaiah prophesied His (Jesus’) preaching as involving the action of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the Father sent Jesus and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit.

The New Testament is even more precise in describing all three persons of the Godhead at work together. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record the three in visible or audible form being present at the baptism of Jesus:

“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’” (Matt. 3:16-17). Mark 1:9-11 says, “It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from [out of—NASB, ESV] the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ Luke 3:21-23 has, “When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, ‘You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.’”

To insist that the Three were not present is to say that Jesus was a magician and a ventriloquist, deceiving the people into

thinking the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were there.

In His farewell address to His apostles in John 14-16, Jesus refers in each chapter to the Holy Spirit as “the Helper” (Greek: *paraclete*, sometimes translated “Comforter” or “Advocate”). The Helper, the Spirit, is to be sent to them by Jesus (John 16:7), by both God and Jesus (John 15:26), or by God at Jesus’ request (John 14:16). The Spirit’s task would be to guide them into speaking God’s Word, causing the apostles to remember all that Jesus had taught them: “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26). Here we have Jesus affirming that all three Persons (what we often call the “Trinity”) have a part in spreading the Gospel across the world; when Jesus ascends into heaven, the Spirit would be sent by God and Christ to guide the apostles into all truth (John 16:13), telling people what Christ had done for them and what they should do in response. Thus Jesus in “the great commission” said,

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen (Matt. 28:18-20).

Many people—perhaps even most Christians—when they think of God think of Him as the Father. (Atheists, of course, try not to think of God at all, and feminists prefer their own version of god as “she” or “our mother”). Even in the Bible it is more often than not the Father who is referred to as “God”; Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Our Father in heaven. . .” (Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2). John says, “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him” (1:18). Jesus regularly referred to God as “the Father.” He said that true worshipers would “worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him” (John 4:23). He said, “. . . I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father

who sent me. . .” (John 5:30). “And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me” (John 5:37). When He addressed God in prayer, Jesus sometimes said just, “Father” as in, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34) or, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You” (John 17:1). Paul spoke of “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 11:31) and, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:2). While it was Jesus who most often taught people to think of God as Father, the idea of God as Father was not unknown in the Old Testament. In Jer. 31:9 the LORD declares, “. . . I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn.” In Exodus 4:22, the LORD tells Moses, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, Israel is My son, My firstborn.’” God promised David concerning David’s son, “I will be his Father, and he shall be My son” (2 Sam. 7:14).

Many New Testament references to God the Father also include Christ His Son (John 17:1). Paul’s usual salutation is “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Philip. 1:2; Col. 1:2; etc.). But it is not just the Father who is called *God* in Scripture; the Son is also called *God*, which surprises some people, though it should not. If He is the Son of God—the only begotten or only unique Son, the only One of His kind, one should expect the Son to be of the same nature as His Father. Hebrews 1 helps to clarify this, saying that Jesus is the “brightness of His [God’s] glory and the express image of His person” (1:3). The ASV translates it “the very image of His substance”; NASB has “the exact representation of His nature”; ESV says “the exact imprint of His nature.” The writer of Hebrews is saying that Jesus is made of “God-stuff!” Jesus is God—as much Deity as the Father is. The writer cements this by saying, “But to the Son He says, ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. . .’” (Heb. 1:8).

The Father is called *God*; the Son is called *God*; what about the Holy Spirit? Acts 5 reports how Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold a possession, kept part of the proceeds for themselves, and gave the rest to the church, claiming they were

giving all that they got for it. “But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God” (Acts 5:3-4). The punishment was immediate death for both liars, but the point here is that to lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie to God. We must conclude that the Spirit is *God*.

Lanier discusses several passages from the Old and New Testaments that say there is but one God—Deut. 4:35,39; 6:4; Isa. 43:10-11; 44:6; 45:5; 46:9; 1 Cor. 8:4,6; 1 Tim. 2:5; and Rom. 3:20. Then he says,

“From the above scriptures there can be no doubt that there is one God and only one. Yet we have just as positive teaching to the effect that the Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Spirit is God” (45). He lists in a table (given below) six or seven passages in which each person in the Godhead is called *God*.

Again, he says,

“We do not affirm that one God is three Gods; we affirm that there is but one infinite Spirit Being, but within that one Spirit essence there are three personal distinctions, each of which may be, and is, called God; each capable of loving and being loved by the others; each having a distinct, but not separate, part to play in the creation of the universe, and in the creation and salvation of man” (46).

Lanier makes the following table of some Scriptures where he says that each person in the Godhead is called God: (46)

FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
1 Cor. 8:6	Rom. 9:5	Acts 5:3,4
Gal. 1:1	Col. 2:9	Matt. 28:19
John 6:27	John 20:28	2 Cor. 13:14
Phil. 2:11	John 10:30	2 Cor. 3:17-18
John 20:17	John 1:1,18	1 Cor. 2:10-13
Mark 14:36	Phil. 2:6	Rom. 8:9,11
John 11:41	1 John 5:20	

Lanier emphasizes his point that God is one essence but plural personalities by showing that in both Testaments are passages (as in Genesis, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, 1 and 2 Thessalonians) that have a plural subject (*God*) but a singular predicate. After discussing these and passages in Matthew, Luke, and John where all three Persons of the Godhead are used, Lanier says that the reader should study these passages “if more proof is needed: Matt. 28:19; Acts 7:55; Rom. 11:36; 8:11; Eph. 2:18, 21, 22; Gal. 4:6; Heb. 9:14; and Jude 20,21. In these passages all three Persons of the Godhead are either mentioned or necessarily implied, and distinctions are demanded to make sense” (51).

The Three Persons in Creation

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). If we have here established that God is three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—we have established that the Godhead was at work in creation. Like many other things, the exact mechanics of that creation are not revealed. Perhaps if we serve the Lord faithfully, we may eventually have an opportunity to ask the Lord about that—perhaps. What do we know about it now?

God did it *in six days*, apparently the same 24-hour time periods we call days; we know nothing of any lasting change in day-length since time began, though we know of much speculation about it. The six days are described in Genesis 1 and referred to in Exodus 20:11 and Exodus 31:17, with no hint in either these passages or their contexts that they are more than 24-hour days. Burton Coffman seems unsure whether the first six days were 24-hour days, but is certain that the seventh day spans

all of time from creation to the final judgment (29-31). Bert Thompson gives nine reasons why the days of creation should be accepted as 24-hour time periods (190-201), including context and definition of the days as each having a period of light and a period of darkness. No one would have proposed long “geologic” ages for the days of Genesis 1 had it not been for the theory of evolution which posits astronomically large time periods to allow time for everything to evolve gradually into what each is today. Henry Morris argues convincingly that the days of Genesis could not have been long eras, for the darkness of half of each day would make it impossible for plant life to have survived (223-224).

God created the worlds or universe *out of nothing*, and He did it by *fiat command*: “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (Heb. 11:3). He created matter and made it into the earth, the planets, the stars, the universe, just as He made light. “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light” (Gen. 1:3). God said, “Light, be” and light was. Psalm 33:6-9 says,

“By the word of the Lord the heavens were made and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him for He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”

Speaking of the various things and creatures in the created universe, Psalm 148:5 says: “Let them praise the name of the Lord, for He commanded and they were created.”

And that is the way it was; that is what we know about it, but we know nothing of that kind of power. God spoke the visible worlds into existence; He did not make them out of things that are visible. Man has never had nor will ever have that kind of power. And since God just commanded each thing into existence, it is not necessary to suppose that it took Him all of 24 hours to do the things done on each day. Suffice it to say that what God did on

any one day is far more than what all of mankind put together could do in all the time that has ever existed or ever will exist. Creation is the supernatural work of God, not of man nor of any natural processes.

In ways that we do not know, *the Spirit of God* (Holy Spirit) played a role in creation. We know that “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:1-2). And speaking of living things, Psalm 104:30 says, “You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth.” We could speculate that since God spoke the worlds into existence, and since the Spirit was generally God’s agent in inspiring men to speak His Word, the Spirit was used by God through whom to speak in the beginning, but we are not told that, so we don’t know.

We do know that *God’s Son* had a prominent part in creation. This is plainly stated in some New Testament passages, especially in Hebrews, Colossians, and the Gospel of John. John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:1-3). “The Word” here is Jesus; this is clearly stated in verse 14. From this we learn that the task of creation was not parceled out so that each Person in the Godhead had some portion of things to make or create. John 1:3 says that Jesus played a role in every part of creation; nothing was made that did not have His imprint on it; all was done through the Son.

The writer of Hebrews takes note of the work of both the Father and His Son in creation: “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds” (1:1-2). Jesus was clearly an agent in creation; it was through Him that God created the universe, just as it is through Him that God speaks to us today in the New Testament. The eternal nature of the Son and two broad details of His creative work as involving both the heavens and the earth are given in

Hebrews 1:10-12.

“You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But you are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

This suggests that Christ will have a prominent part in the ending of the universe, just as He did in its beginning.

Paul in Colossians declares that Jesus was the agent by Whom everything in heaven and on earth was created and *by Whom all are maintained*: “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17). The ESV, NASB, and NIV translate the last clause in its literal Greek meaning, “In him all things hold together,” which is echoed by the words of Hebrews 1:3 that God’s Son is “upholding all things by the word of His power.” Jesus not only acted to create the universe, but He continues to act to maintain it. Both the Son and the Father work to maintain the universe: When the Jews criticized Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, Jesus said, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working” (John 5:17). If Christ and His Father quit doing their work any time, Sabbath or not, the universe would no longer hold together but disintegrate. No less than this is meant by the statements that Jesus holds all things together and upholds all things by the word of His power.

God had a plan before he began creation. We know this because we know that “He [the Father] chose us in Him [the Son] before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). Before God created the earth and mankind, God knew men would sin and He planned to send Christ to atone for sin and thereby to purify for Himself a people cleansed “by the washing of water by the word” (Eph. 5:26). This is said to have been God’s “eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. 3:11). In other words, God’s plan of creation always had

included—even before He started creating—a means of salvation for the humans He would create and who would sin. Even without this revelation in Ephesians and other Biblical passages, we should have known from the intricate design of the universe that God existed and had a master plan, “because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has showed it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:19-20). The thing we could not have known without revelation is that God’s creation plan would also include a way of salvation from sin.

Fox suggests that the roles of the Persons in the Godhead are similar in creation and in salvation. “The Father plans, the Son executes, and the Holy Spirit organizes and arranges” (39). Perhaps similar roles were assigned in creation as in salvation, but we may be in danger of generalizing beyond our sphere of knowledge. The Holy Spirit works through the Word to convert sinners and guide Christians, so He is in that sense a finisher, but we dare not forget that this is done by the authority of Christ, to whom all authority has been given in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). It is sad that the world’s reaction to the Godhead today is much as it was when Jesus “was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own [things—His creation], and His own [people—His countrymen] did not receive Him” (John 1:10-11). The 21st century shares with the first century a common rejection of Jesus by mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, yet He made both them and their world. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Charles J. Aebi is a native of southwestern Pennsylvania. He was raised with a denominational background, but obeyed the gospel in 1949 and began preaching in 1952. He has a B.S. degree from Penn State, an M.A. from Abilene Christian, and a Ph.D. from Ohio University. Charles has served for 58 years as minister for churches in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and West

Virginia, and has preached and held workshops in several states and in foreign countries.

He has served as an elder for several years each in three congregations. He currently serves as a minister and an elder at the Barlow-Vincent Church of Christ in Vincent, OH which he helped to start in 2003. He taught Bible for 34 years at Ohio Valley College (now University), serving 15 years as academic dean and 6 years as chairman of the Bible Department. He retired from the college in 1998 and has taught at the West Virginia School of Preaching since 1999.

Charles and his wife Imogene have four children and twelve grandchildren. All of the men in the family preach on occasion; all of the men and women teach Bible classes; and all the grandchildren have obeyed the Gospel. Eight of the grandchildren are now college students (seven in Christian colleges, one in medical school); two are married; three are in high school.

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The Tower of Babel

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Introduction

Genesis 11 is a significant chapter in the first book of the Bible. At first glance, one might think otherwise, especially in comparison to the other opening chapters which are more dramatic. Chapters 1 & 2 tell of the awe-inspiring and mind staggering creation at the spoken Word of God! Chapter 3 conveys the tragic introduction of sin and its consequences for the first human pair. Sin brings death and separation as revealed in the murder of Abel by his brother Cain in chapter 4. The plague of sin continued as conditions among men moved God to destroy the world by a flood. But in this destruction the Bible says that “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (Genesis 6:8). The account of Noah and the flood, found in chapters 6-9 of Genesis, thrill the reader at the story of salvation in the midst of judgment and destruction. The hope for a better future coincided with the emerging of Noah, his family, and the animal creation from the ark.

The importance of Genesis 11 and the story of the tower of Babel lies in the contrast of its events with the narrative that follows – the call of Abraham in Genesis 12. It reveals how men operate when they believe they can live without God. In contrast, the Redemption message is carried forward by a man who believed he could only live with God! With respects to Charles

Dickens, Genesis 11 is a tale of two cities, one built by men, the other built by God. It is about a far away time and a far away place, yet as relevant to men as any today.

The City Built By Men

Genesis 11 reveals a united humanity dwelling on a plain in Shinar. This was a Biblical name for the area around ancient Babylon (Woods, 25). The reason for their unity was their ability to communicate clearly with one another. They all spoke one language. The text tells of the decision to make a name for themselves by building a city with a lofty tower. Their building materials were clay bricks and asphalt for mortar to join them together. This area of Mesopotamia lacked stone for building, so bricks were made of mud or clay, but instead of just allowing them to harden in the sun, they were fired in ovens or kilns to make them harder and more durable. It is interesting to note that some of the earliest archaeology in this region of modern day Iraq reported the finding of *ziggurats* or brick towers similar in shape to the pyramids (Lewis, Archaeology, 15). These stepped towers are believed to have been associated with ancient religious purposes and the ziggurat at Babylon has been traditionally associated with the tower of Babel (Lewis, Understanding, 24).

The motives for the people in their building are revealed in verse four: “And they said, ‘Come let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’”

Pride was the reason in this first building project, as has often been seen in buildings since then. Wealthy Tuscans in the late Medieval period built towers in cities like San Gimignano and Siena whose purposes included showing off their wealth and gaining “one up-man-ship” on other noble families. At Shinar, the people sought to glorify themselves in their city and their tower whose top was in the heavens. In making a name for themselves, they purposely left God’s name out. They were a people who did not seek God’s honor and glory, but only their own.

But humanity left alone had its trepidations. Fear was also a

purpose in their building, as they said “lest we be scattered abroad over all the earth.” This was in direct opposition of the command given to Noah to fill the earth (Gen. 9:1, 7). Their disobedience to the command of God was a result of not trusting in God’s care for them. Fear is the opposite of faith. Wherever men are motivated by pride and fear, the result will be that God will be left out and ultimately, will come to a divisive end. But the city and tower on the plain of Shinar is typical of any society of men that is determined to leave God out of their purposes and plans.

Karl Marx had a dream of a purely secular society. He believed it would unify all oppressed workers and end all injustice. But Marx was thinking only in materialistic terms. Marx’s communist system excluded God as he declared, “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the people” (As quoted in Noebel, 71). It is interesting to note Dostoyevsky’s criticism of socialism in his novel *The Brothers Karamazov*: “Socialism is not merely the labor question . . . It is the question of the Tower of Babel built without God, not to mount to Heaven from earth, but to set up Heaven on earth” (As cited in Chapman 37). Marx’s dream crumbled 70 years after the communist revolution in Russia.

But communism is not the only system of men which seeks to build without God. What of Humanist America? Humanism has been around for a long time. Many ancient Greeks were humanists. In the Renaissance, teachers like Erasmus were called *umanista* as through the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Latin texts, they dedicated themselves to the study of the humanities and arts (Kolenda 340). But Humanism today is a different creature. “Secular Humanism may be defined as a philosophical perspective that removes God from reality and makes man the judge of all things” (Waggoner 14). Since the popularization of the theory of evolution in the second half of the 19th century, secular Humanism has exercised an increasingly negative impact on Western culture. Humanists deny the existence God, the deity of Jesus, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and life after death.

What are the fruits of a society with “man as the measure” and seeking to be free of any restraint and all references to God in

its public institutions? One answer is the percentage increase of decay, degradation and destruction that is seen in our society. Another is the rapid replacement of Christian values with humanistic values. For example, what happens in a society where human life is judged not by a belief that life is sacred, but solely on the basis of its economic impact? “When a culture rejects belief in a Higher Power, whose laws determine how citizens are to be treated? How can the State be forbidden to take human life at will?” (Waggoner 84). But even more than this is the sense of alienation and the restless search for meaning; for significance that goes beyond the proliferation of technology and the accumulation material goods.

God’s Actions at Babel

As God is deeply interested in the purposes and conduct of men, the work and activity of men as they built their city and tower caught His attention. The Bible text is almost sarcastic as it says, “The Lord came down to see the city and the tower” (Gen. 11:5). The great city and tower thought by men to be so tall was puny, insignificant, and barely noticeable in the eyes of the Lord. “This vaunted achievement in the eyes of rebellious men is quite tiny in the eyes of heaven” (Woods 28).

The unity shown in the construction of the city and the tower demonstrated a humanity that would obstruct divine purposes, to a degree (Woods 28). In response to this challenge, Deity responded, “Come, let us go down and confuse their language” (Gen. 11:7). The words “let us” again give testimony to the plurality of the Godhead, just as in Genesis 1:26.

“Confusion of language” was the simple means by which God put an end to their ambitious plans (Eerdman 48). The introduction of a diversity in language brought an end to the building project. Leaving their work unfinished, mankind was scattered “throughout the face of the earth” achieving the result that God had intended (Gen. 11:9). Before leaving this discussion, it is important to note that here at the tower of Babel, as in the other events narrated in the early chapters of Genesis, division is the result of sin and God’s righteous judgment (Shaeffer 153). Sin will divide man from God, man from his

family, mankind from one another, nation from nation, and ultimately will divide man from himself.

The name of the city is also given in verse nine. It was a name with two meanings. The men called it Babel which they intended as “Gate of heaven.” But in Hebrew the name meant “confusion; or shame.” What irony is displayed in this name. Woods comments, “In their misguided attempt to secure for themselves a famous name, these rebellious people succeeded only in obtaining a name, in Hebrew, shameful” (Woods 28). The significance of the two meanings needs to be remembered as one reads the rest of Scripture. “Throughout Scripture, right up to the book of Revelation, the concept of Babylon stands crucial, Babylon saying, ‘We are the gate of God,’ and the Bible answering, ‘No, this is the place where the basic confusion of language occurred. You are confusion” (Schaeffer 153).

God’s Actions at Pentecost

While the actions of a righteous God in response to sin resulted in the scattering of humanity, the actions of a loving, gracious God in His plan of redemption sought to overcome the scattering of sin. The following verses of Genesis 11 delineate the lineage of Shem to Abram. This genealogical record ties chapter 11 to chapter 12, and provides background to the man who would become “father of the faithful” (Rom. 4:11). In addition it correlates Genesis 1-11 to the historical narrative that continues in the rest of the book. Genesis 1-11 is not myth, but true history that tells man of the dilemma of sin and God’s actions to overcome it. To mythologize these chapters is to weaken and change the gospel message (Schaeffer 158-59). The message of redemption continued in the prophets, where God promised to gather all nations in His kingdom. “For I know their works and their thoughts: the time comes, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and shall see My glory” (Isa. 66:18).

This promise was fulfilled with the outpouring of Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 33).

On this day in Jerusalem, Jewish men gathered from all over the Mediterranean world. Their countries of origin are listed by

Luke. Citizens of 14 different countries, divided by language and ethnicity, but united in their love of God heard the twelve apostles speaking in their native languages, proclaiming “the mighty works of God” (Acts 2:5, 11). In contrast to the tower of Babel where men hoped to proclaim their own power and wisdom, the first Gospel message proclaimed the actions of God in sending His Son and offering remission for sin. (Acts 2:22-24, 38).

In a side bar, when this passage is compared to modern day claims of tongue speaking it should be apparent that the “tongue speaking” done on Pentecost was different. This was not worshipers overwhelmed in enthusiasm, not knowing what they were saying, but it was rational men, speaking in known languages and giving a message which could be heard and understood. Let modern day “tongue speakers” make known an intelligible message in a true language and forego their gibberish. Otherwise, let them be silent!

The “good news” of the Bible message is about the undoing of the effects of sin and rebellion against God. Where sin divides and separates, God unites through blood of His Son Jesus. “The gospel is about the gathering of the scattered.” (Chapman 37).

The Church is the new, united humanity in Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). “And have put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created Him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, nor free, but Christ is all, and in all (Col. 3:10-11).

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands; and crying out with a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb (Rev. 7:9-10).

The City Built by God

Genesis 12 opens with the call of Abraham. He was not a son of man desiring to build his own city. He was of the lineage of Shem. He was a son of God. Why? Because he was a man who responded in faith by looking for the city with foundations whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:10, 16).

Dear reader, for what are you searching? A name for yourself? Your fifteen minutes of fame? In what city are you living? If life is confusing, perhaps it is because you are building in the wrong city. “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Matt. 6:19-20).

Would you choose to be a son of God? “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13). “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:26-27). Ω

Biographical Sketch

Brother Bruce Daugherty was born in Warren, Ohio and educated in public school systems. He holds his B. A. degree in Bible from Freed-Hardeman University and an M. A. in Restoration History from Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, TN. He has preached extensively both at home and abroad having served as a missionary in Italy for some seven years. Currently he serves as minister for the 10th and Clairmont congregation in Cambridge, Ohio. Before accepting that work he taught at Florida School of Preaching in Lakeland while serving a congregation in Daytona. He teaches courses in both Church History and Restoration History at the West Virginia School of Preaching. Bruce and his wife Gayle are the parents of two sons, Mike age 25 and Vince age 21. His hobbies are volunteer coaching of high school football and playing tennis with his wife.

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Eve A Helper for Adam

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Introduction

It all began in the garden. On the sixth day of creation week, God created a man and a woman in His own image—the first human beings on the planet (Gen. 1:26-27). After noting this succinct declaration, we turn the page to Genesis chapter two where God expands our awareness of this astounding circumstance. Upon the occasion of the creation of the first man and woman, God set forth His will regarding the interrelationship between the sexes. In Genesis chapter two, we find several features that aid us in comprehending the proper gender roles of man and woman in the home, and particularly the role of Eve as Adam’s helper.

Man Made First

First, we observe that God created the man—the male—before He created the woman (Gen. 2:7). Paul called attention to this very point and used it to support the principle of female subordination to male leadership in worship. He wrote, “Adam was first formed, then Eve” (1 Tim. 2:13). So what? What were Paul and Moses driving at? They were showing us that God’s sequential handling of the creation of human beings was intended to convey the fundamental difference between male and female in regard to their functional interrelationship. In His ordering of creation, God was communicating His intention with regard to gender. Creation chronology expressed His will with regard to functional purpose and order of authority. As Ryrie stated, “The fact that Adam was first formed means that he had first an independent existence and could in no way be subordinate to Eve” (79).

Adam occupied the position of head of the human race (1 Cor. 15:22, 45). His being “first” is the backdrop for the Hebrew custom of *primogeniture* in which authoritative rights, privileges, and responsibilities belonged to the firstborn male. The divinely specified arrangement between Adam and Eve constitutes an

abiding principle of authority/subordination. God could have easily avoided this implication by creating male and female simultaneously. The fact that Adam was formed **first** indicates that God wanted the male to provide leadership in the home and that the woman is to follow his leadership.

Man Received Instruction

Second, notice that God conveyed His will with regard to proper human behavior in Eden **before** the woman was even created. The instructions pertaining to care of the garden and restrictions regarding consumption of the fruit were given to the man (Gen. 2:15-17). The implication is that the man was charged by God with the responsibility of providing leadership for the family. He was to guide and instruct his wife and children. God expected him to be the primary conveyor of the divine will to his family. No wonder Paul charged **fathers** with the obligation to nurture their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Contrary to current culture's expectation by men that their wives be the primary instigators of the rearing of children, God holds the father ultimately responsible (cf. Col. 3:21).

Man Needed A Helper

Third, we see God's intention with regard to male and female in the fact that God said the man should not be alone. Twice it is stated that he needed an "help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18, 20). "Help" means a helper, a counterpart, an associate. "Meet" means suitable or fit. The man needed an appropriate partner. He needed a loyal and suitable assistant. Notice the use of the term "for." The woman was specifically created "for" the man. Paul spotlighted this same feature when he stated, "neither was the man created **for** the woman; but the woman **for** the man" (1 Cor. 11:9). While men certainly possess multiple obligations toward women and for women, the fact remains that Scripture states that the woman was made **for the man**—not vice versa.

God has given to women a unique and very specific purpose. She wields tremendous power and influence over a man—for good or ill. Think of the many wicked women of history who

influenced their men toward evil ends—from Eve to Herodias and her daughter; from Zeresh (wife of Haman) to Drusilla (wife of Felix). The inspired writer tells us concerning Jezebel: “But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, **because Jezebel his wife stirred him up**” (1 Kings 21:25). She prodded, goaded, and encouraged her husband to do evil. In contrast, think of all the wonderful women of Bible history who encouraged their husbands toward righteous and noble ends and who embraced their femininity—like Hannah, Abigail, Vashti, Mary, Elizabeth, and Timothy’s mother and grandmother Lois and Eunice.

So we see at the Creation the foundational function and purpose of the female—to support and assist the male in promoting God’s will on Earth. She is a crucial asset to a husband and is valuable if treated as such. The man should accept and value her input, understanding that she was designed to be responsive. “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord” (Prov. 18:22). “Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord” (Prov. 19:14). The man who recognizes his wife was created for him will trust her to make wise decisions about many things (e.g., money matters, child-rearing, housing, business concerns). “The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain” (Prov. 31:11). Solomon recognized that a wife is capable of making many decisions and engaging in a variety of business transactions (Prov. 31:16, 24).

Woman Out of Man

Fourth, this function is closely linked to the fact that the woman was created out of the man (Gen. 2:22-23). The man was created from the dust of the ground—dirt! But not the woman. She was literally assembled from the man’s own body. She was literally taken out of the man. Paul pinpointed this aspect when he said, “For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man” (1 Cor. 11:8). “Of” is a translation of the Greek preposition *ek* which means “out of.” So the woman being created out of the man, not the man out of the woman, is further confirmation of the divine intention that the man is to be the leader of the home.

Schlier wrote, “the origin and *raison d’etre* of woman are to be found in man” (679).

God Gave Woman To the Man

Fifth, following God’s surgical procedure on the man resulting in the creation of the female, the Bible says that God “brought her to the man” (Gen. 2:22). Notice that God brought her to him, not him to her. This action further underscores the fact that she was created **for** the man and presented by God **to** the man as the man’s assistant. Adam certainly understood it that way, evident from the fact that he responded, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:23). He also referred to Eve as “the woman whom You gave to be with me” (Gen. 3:12).

Man Named the Woman

Sixth, male leadership was implied in the act of naming. Adam declared, “she shall be called ‘woman’” (Gen. 2:23). Adam also conferred upon the woman the name of Eve (Gen. 3:20). These acts of naming implied authority and leadership. The act of naming in the Semitic world was indicative of lordship (Ryrie 8).

Man Was To Lead

Seventh, in his discussion of the role of women in the church, Paul spotlighted the gender role reversal that occurred in Eden. He states, “Adam was not deceived, but the woman having been deceived became a transgressor” (1 Tim. 2:14). This verse is not suggesting that women show greater susceptibility to deception than men. The word “deceived” is used elsewhere to refer to the deception to which all people, both men and women, are susceptible (Rom. 7:11; 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:18; 2 Thess. 2:3).

Gender role reversal caused The Fall. When Adam and Eve failed to act in harmony with the male/female authority/subordination principle, sin was introduced into the world. The man was created in the beginning to exercise religious headship. Eve took the lead in partaking of the fruit and convincing her husband to do the same. She violated God’s designated

arrangement of male/female relations. Whenever God's order of male leadership is repudiated, people are made spiritually vulnerable to additional sin. Daisy Sewell wrote in 1927: "Eve did wrong, first in listening to the tempter, then in failing to respect her head, her husband. Had she respected him, she would have talked it over with him. Perhaps he would have helped her to resist the temptation" (28).

Eve does not bear complete blame. Where was Adam? Where was her husband? Where was her **head**? The text says that Eve "gave also to her husband **with her**" (Gen. 3:6). "With her" suggests that Adam was present and silently listening to the conversation between his wife and the snake. He should have stepped in and taken the spiritual initiative to protect his wife and himself from the wiles of the devil.

Notice that the word "cursed" is used with regard to both the man and the snake, but not the woman. When God confronted the pair, He addressed Himself specifically and initially to the man (Gen. 3:9). In other words, the man was to function as the leader and protectorate of the woman. He was responsible for the spiritual guidance of the home. Consequently, he is designated the representative figure of the human race for the entrance of sin into the world (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22). His prior creation and resulting leadership role meant that the male bore ultimate responsibility.

God's expressed displeasure with Adam includes not only the eating of the forbidden fruit, but his abdication of spiritual leadership. Listen carefully to God's remarks: "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife" (Gen. 3:17; cf. 16:2). God was not saying that men should not listen to their wives. That would contradict the fact that wives were created by God to assist their husbands with thoughtful counsel and assistance (Prov. 12:4; 18:22; 31:10). Rather, God was saying that Adam allowed his wife to take the lead instead of being the head of his family as he was created to be.

While Adam and Eve shared the same transgression of consuming forbidden fruit, their prior sin was the sin of tampering with the created order of male/female relations—God's design for the human race. Once Eve circumvented the divine

arrangement of submission by taking the lead in a spiritual matter and exercising authority over her husband, she yielded herself to the deception by Satan. She should have deferred to the authority of God and the leadership of her husband.

The divine commentary given subsequent to the event is quite revealing: “To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, In pain you shall bring forth children; Yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you’” (Gen. 3:16—NASB). This statement is generally taken to be a threefold pronouncement of punishment, the effects of which would commence at that moment: (1) pain (or, at least, increased pain) would henceforth accompany the act of giving birth to children; (2) the woman would feel a deep attraction (emotional and/or sexual) toward her husband; and (3) the man would begin ruling over the woman, even dominating and subjugating her.

While the pain at childbirth is clearly a penalty for the woman’s action, the latter two pronouncements are simply reaffirmations of the created order that Eve violated. Comparing the grammar of Genesis 3:16 (where God speaks to Eve) with Genesis 4:7 (where God speaks to Cain) is helpful in understanding God’s statement:

3:16 “and your desire shall be to your husband”

4:7 “and unto you shall be his desire”

3:16 “and he shall rule over you”

4:7 “and you shall rule over him”

God was telling Cain that sin (personified) desired to subdue him, but that he can and must resist the lure of sin and, instead, assert himself and achieve mastery over sin. The close biblical parallel to 3:16 is apparent. Eve is being warned that she will continue to feel the urge to subdue the man and act upon her own initiative as spiritual leader. But God reaffirmed His original intention at the Creation: the man is supposed to take the lead and exercise rule in the spiritual realm.

Man As Boss/Dictator?

Of course, this authoritative capacity in which the man is to be the leader in the home and in the church in no way implies a dictatorial attitude or boss-like manner. The Holy Spirit anticipated this tendency among men in his discussion on the subject with the Corinthians. After asserting female subordination to men in worship leadership, Paul states: “Nevertheless, neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord. For as the woman is **of the man**, so is the man also **by the woman**; but all things are of God” (1 Cor. 11:11-12). “Of the man” refers to Eve being taken “out of” (*ek*) Adam’s side. “By the woman” uses the preposition “through” (*dia*) and refers to the fact that all men since Adam have come into this world **through** women by means of childbirth.

Bible teaching with regard to male and female has nothing to do with ability, intelligence, or worth. It simply has to do with assigned responsibilities and designated roles. Men are not superior to women. One could reasonably argue that women are superior to men. Female intelligence and capability has been shown to surpass men in many areas of human endeavor. God’s order of creation as it pertains to gender simply has to do with assigned spheres of activity. He charges men to fulfill certain tasks unique to them, and He charges women to fulfill those tasks that are assigned to them. It’s that simple.

We can see this principle in other areas of life. God has established authority/subordination relationships in many areas of human existence. Citizens are to be submissive to governmental authorities (Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-14). Children are to be submissive to parents (Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20). Students are to be submissive to teachers (James 3:1). Servants are to be submissive to masters (Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22). Members are to be submissive to elders (1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17). Everyone is to be submissive to God and Christ (Matt. 28:18; Rom. 14:11; Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 1:16). The authority/submission principle pervades all of life.

In the final analysis, citizens, children, students, servants, and members have no valid reason for resenting or resisting

designated authority. Those entrusted with authority may abuse that authority and mistreat those who are subject to their authority. They will give account on the Day of Judgment. But their misuse does not exempt us from being submissive to the authority structure that God has set up. We each must strive to possess the humility and submissive attitude that God wants us to have. We must seek to devote ourselves to our proper roles and assigned activities regardless of how those around us (or over us) conduct themselves.

What It Means To Be the “Head”

What does it mean for a man to be the **head** of his wife and home? Here is a listing of eleven practical, concrete suggestions:

1. Acting as protector and guardian
2. Serving as trouble-shooter
3. Acting as facilitator and initiator
4. Demonstrating honor and respect
5. Manifesting sacrificial love
6. Being an active participant in child rearing
7. Keeping sexual appetites in check (Prov. 5:15-23)
8. Displaying tenderness and affection
9. Facilitating the spiritual well-being of the family
10. Bearing up under adversity and suffering
11. Ridding himself of pride and showing humility (Phil. 2:7)

What It Means To Be the Queen/Helper of the Home

If men would take the lead in being the kind of man and head that God intended, most women would fall right into their proper place. God so created the woman—her body, her emotions, her psyche, her will—that she would be naturally (by nature) responsive to a real man. She would literally have to go against her natural inclinations to fail to fit properly into the marriage relationship and the home. So what, specifically, are some features of what it means for a woman to be a “helper” to her husband. Here are three foundational characteristics worth noting:

1. *A wife should willingly subordinate herself to her husband*, encouraging him to be the leader and guardian. Perhaps the feminist rebellion is largely the reaction of disenchanted, frustrated, hurt women who have had bad experiences with the men in the lives. In any case, current culture is pressuring and bullying women to be more aggressive and to abandon “traditional” roles. Even in the church, the push for female worship leaders, deaconesses, praise teams, etc. are placing women in roles that violate the created order. But the Bible still teaches that man was created first and that the woman was created out of the man (1 Tim. 2:13; 1 Cor. 11:8). This priority does not imply superiority or greater worth. Rather, it implies the man’s responsibility to lead.

The multiple admonitions to women to obey and submit to their husbands (Eph.5:22 ,24,33; Col. 3:18; Tit. 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1, 5-6) are referring to the need for the woman to **follow his leadership**. That is not to say that men are smarter, more talented, or more capable than women. But in God’s arrangement of the Universe, He chose to place the male in the leadership role in the home and in the church. Just as He places upon the male an awesome, terribly responsible role as head (and will hold him accountable for his failure to discharge that role properly), so He places the woman in a subordinate role and will hold her equally accountable.

Notice, once again, the restatement of this principle after the Fall. When the woman chose to heed the advice of the snake and her own lusts, and when the man failed to step forward and offer leadership to his wife, sin was introduced into the world (Gen. 3:1-6). When people fail to fulfill their God-ordained responsibilities, sin results (1 Tim. 2:14). Consequently, afterwards God reminded the woman (and all women) that she must suppress the desire to take the lead and instead submit to the leadership of her husband: “thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Gen. 3:16). How difficult it is for a woman to comply with this arrangement in a society where, on the one hand, the feminist clamor is deafening while, on the other hand, her husband refuses to be the man, the head, and the leader that God expects him to be.

2. *A wife should give careful attention to how she dresses.* The Bible seems to go out of its way to stress to women (more than men) proper attire. In contexts stressing female subordination to the leadership of the male, both Paul and Peter refer to appropriate female attire (1 Tim. 2:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:3-4). Women seem to have a natural tendency to give attention to external beauty. They enjoy attending to clothes, makeup, jewelry, hair, nails, perfume, etc. They tend to do the same for their husbands and children. Women like to decorate—everyone and everything. They are style conscious. They notice artistic detail and symmetry. That’s okay! God simply warns women to make certain that they keep that natural inclination in proper perspective. He stresses very strongly that she must so adorn herself that she does not unduly distract others—especially males with their stronger sexual appetites. And He wants her to understand that external beauty inevitably fades—it is fleeting and frivolous (Prov. 31:30).

In addition to her attention to external beauty, she must place a greater emphasis upon internal beauty, attitude and spirit, and demeanor. She must cultivate the attributes of godliness (1 Tim. 2:9-10, 15; Tit. 2:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:2,4). In the final analysis, after a man’s initial appraisal of a woman in terms of the sexual and physical wears off, what he finds most attractive about a woman is her femininity brought under the control of Christ: “a meek and quiet spirit,” “chaste behavior,” “holiness with sobriety,” “shamefacedness”—a gentle, mature woman whose purity and femininity is bolstered by a buoyant spirit that remains persistently and firmly fixed in the will of God.

3. *A wife should actively promote the well-being of her family.* The Bible nowhere teaches that a woman must “stay at home.” “Keepers at home” in Titus 2:5 (KJV) is a Greek word that means “home-worker.” In other words, she has work pertaining to the home for which she is responsible. Whatever else she may do with her time, she must not neglect her domestic responsibilities (just as the man must not neglect his domestic responsibilities). Of all people who pass through her life, she should want her husband and children to make it to heaven.

Therefore, she will give her foremost attention to this goal (Tit. 2:4).

The best overall description of the many activities of an effective wife is Proverbs 31:10-31. Here was an industrious woman who devoted her time and attention to advancing the best interests of her family. As a result, they called her “blessed” and praised her. Whatever a woman thinks the world has to offer her by means of the corporate ladder and the business world, she will never find a more satisfying, fulfilling meaningful pursuit in life than serving her family in preparation for eternity.

Conclusion

So much more needs to be said and clarified, but these few principles will hopefully point us in the right direction. We live in a world and at a time when a correct understanding of marriage and family roles is nearly nonexistent. The biblical art of rearing and proper discipline of children has almost completely evaporated in American culture—even in the church. Likewise, the role of woman as a “helper” is virtually a relic of the distant past. Nevertheless, God’s Word was designed to assist every generation and every culture in knowing what it’s all about. The Creator has provided us with the necessary information to negotiate this life successfully in order to arrive safely on the eternal shore. He has given us key ingredients to make our marriages and families successful. May God bless us to that end.
Ω

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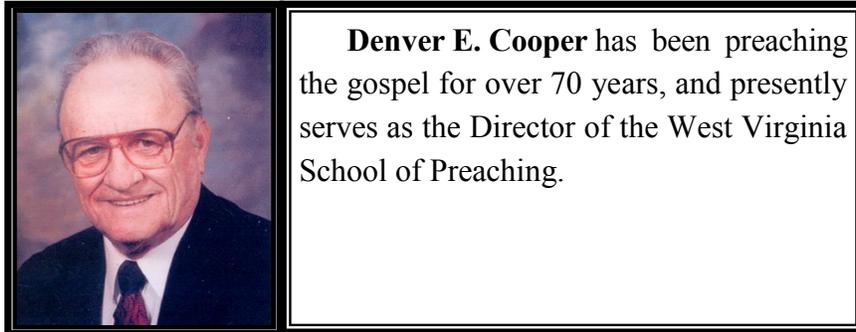
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Marriage as God Designed It

Denver E. Cooper



Introduction

The very foundation of society is the home. It is the foundation that was established by God. Women's Liberation movements had nothing to do with the design or the rules which regulate the duties and responsibilities of marriage. It is all God's design.

In the very beginning of time God had all the creatures which He had created pass before Adam to see what he would call them. However, "there was not found an help meet for him" (Gen. 1:20). It was because God saw "that man should not be alone that He caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto man. And Adam said, 'this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh'" (Gen. 2:21-24).

Adam said and Jesus affirmed it, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). This order cannot be ignored and have a successful marriage. Many a marriage has been ruined by either man, the woman or both. It was not meant

for couples to live with their in-laws. Marriage is for the emotionally mature. Those who are not mature enough to leave the home of their fathers and mothers and make a home for themselves are not ready for a successful marriage.

It has often been said that “absence makes the heart grow fonder,” but young couples are much more subject to unfaithfulness and alienation of affection when they are separated than when they cleave (are cemented) closely.

Jesus said, “for this cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no longer twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt. 19:6). Though man in our day and age in most countries of the world has made it easy with one or more rules of divorce, the law of God remains “let not man put asunder.” “God hates putting away” (Mal. 2:16).

Husbands and Fathers

It is obvious from God’s arrangement that man was placed at the head of the family. The Apostle Paul declared, “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3). He further stated, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body” (Eph. 5:22-23). The husband must learn that he is not a “boss” or a slave driver, but must learn to be gentle, kind and courteous. The husband and wife must put to practice the principles of love which we find in 1 Corinthians 13; “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things. . . Charity never fails.”

There are several blessings which are obtained only in marriage. Just as the human body naturally craves food and water it also has physical urges provided by God for the benefit of a man and his wife. Only in marriage can these drives and urges be

satisfied in a way that is satisfying and beneficial. The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:2-5:

Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

Christians refrain from premarital and extra-marital relationships because of the teachings of God.

Man needs food, water, air and the like, but because he is more than an animal he needs love. The late Batsell Barrett Baxter, in an article entitled, "The Blessings of a Christian Home" (*Spiritual Sword*) quoted Dr. Karl Menninger, dean of American psychiatrists, as saying that all mental illness can be traced to a failure to give and receive love (48). Man feels a need to love God and be loved by God in return. On the human level man needs to be loved and to bestow his own love and this can best be done in marriage. When husbands love their wives they know and practice commitment, fidelity, constant dedication and consecration to the valiant vows taken so seriously and solemnly at the marriage altar. Like Job "they have made a covenant with their eyes not to lust after another woman," (Job 31:1). They are the type of men who can be trusted whether they are a thousand miles from home or next door. In a *Spiritual Sword* article entitled, "What the Bible Teaches About Being a Good Husband," brother Robert Taylor Jr. remarked as follows: "Distance never gives justification for them to wander into forbidden paths or wander into stolen waters" (7). A successful marriage cannot be maintained for sixty-five years if either mate is unfaithful.

As heads of their families they will not even think of abandoning their wives and children. It is sad, but true that in our nation such is all too common a practice. God requires that they provide for their families. They know that they are to provide for their own wife and children. Work is good. A young man contemplating marriage ought first of all have a job that makes enough to care for his wife and children properly (1Tim. 5:8).

Good and godly husbands love their wives as Jacob loved Rachel while working seven years for her hand in marriage. That seven year period of labor for Laban “seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had for her” (Gen. 29:20). Though there must have been several seven year periods in his life each of them, except one, seemed longer than the other. Why did one seven year period pass so quickly? In the same article mentioned above, brother Taylor, commenting on Jacob’s love for Rachel, observed that the second seven years Jacob labored for Rachel seemed much shorter, then asked why and answered, “Because of the love that tugged at his heartstrings for the beautiful Rachel” (7). Love speeds time away.

Godly husbands are honorable. Boaz is a good demonstration of this in the way he conducted himself to Ruth. He was honorable in his courtship and marital preparation. Young ladies, there is no indication that he ever demanded that Ruth prove her love for him by being an immoral person. Boaz’s conduct brought beautiful blessings to that marriage. Less respect is most generally experienced when couples are intimate before marriage, we are told.

Elkanah expressed his love for Hannah by asking her, “am I not better to thee than ten sons?” (1Sam. 1:8). Ten is a word for completeness. Again referring to brother Taylor’s above-mentioned article, we quote: “Elkanah loved completely—not partially. No man can love just partially his wife and be the kind of husband she needs and the Almighty requires” (8). Elkanah loved Hannah as much as any man could and that is the way to have a great marriage and one that God expects.

David wrote on one occasion, “I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way” (Psa. 101:2). Do you suppose if he had followed that practice all his days that he would not have had to say, “For I

acknowledge my transgressions; my sin is ever before me”? (Psa. 51:8). Do you suppose that his mind was troubled by the thought that he had Uriah murdered, then in an attempt to cover up his adulterous and deceptive act he failed and had to admit it to God? “Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight” (Psa. 51:4a).

It ought to be the thought and intention of the husband for him and his wife to “exalt his name together” (Psa. 34:3).

The love that Christ has for His Bride will be duplicated by a good husband toward his wife. He should “love his wife as his own body” (Eph. 5:28). The home life of millions of Americans could be turned around and most divorces eliminated if the last part of Ephesians were to become a part of every husband’s life.

Husbands should keep in mind Peter’s statement in 1 Peter 3:7, “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

Fathers

Usually it isn’t long after marriage takes place that the godly fathers have the opportunity to show their skills in parenting. I must admit that I have many times looked back on my life and wished I had a second chance at bringing up children. We have but one chance and it comes pretty fast and will pass by more quickly than we realize. We learn as we rear our children and we make many mistakes. It is imperative that we let our children know that we are by no means perfect. We love them, even though we make mistakes which we thought were the right decisions, but probably would do differently if we indeed had another chance. Most of the time children understand what we are saying if we are “big enough” to tell them that we thought we were doing the right thing, but if we were doing it again it might be different. Father may take ever so many classes in psychology, but because of a lack of experience he will not be the father he would like to be. Being honest with the child may help him or her to do differently and to do better in rearing their children.

Fathers should accept the responsibility of being a father with joy. Solomon said, “Children’s children are the crown of old men” (Prov. 17:6). I realize that Solomon had in mind grandchildren here, but if we dote over the grandchildren why should we not do the same for our children? There is a beautiful passage in Numbers 11:12. God had sworn that He would give the children of Israel the land to which they were journeying. They asked that He carry them in His bosom “as a father beareth a suckling child.” I well remember when our first Child was born and we attended church in a basement building which had a cement floor. I had a diaper over my shoulder, but it did little good when the baby finished his bottle. He attempted to throw it. Part of it went on my suit and the other part went on the cement floor. While that was terribly embarrassing to me, several in the congregation got a good laugh. As a young preacher, I was often away from home two weeks or more per month in meetings. I’ve often thought I missed a great part of their lives. Fathers, spend all the time you can with your children. Always include time enough to teach them God’s Word and pray with them. You will be blessed when they obey the Gospel.

There will be some trying times with your children. Some things you can’t imagine that they will be involved in and you will need a lot of patience. A good father will not “provoke his children to wrath” (Eph. 6:4).

A good father will teach by example. It may seem strange, but it is true, that good examples often sound louder than words! If a father doesn’t want his son to drink beer, he had better not keep it in the refrigerator. If he doesn’t want the children to curse and swear he had better not show them how. If he doesn’t want the children to lie and cheat he had better live honestly and truthfully himself.

A good father will not withhold discipline from the children. Solomon said, “Withhold not correction from a child” (Prov. 22:13). He also said, “For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth” (Prov. 3:12). We sometimes say, “it is harder on me to correct you than it is on you.” Most of the time that is true if we love our sons and daughters. Some refuse to discipline their children, saying they

love them too much to do so. This is a serious mistake, but parents should be agreed on such matters. A good father must not be guilty of violence, sensuality and greed lest he lose his soul and the souls entrusted in his care.

Wife and Mother

Now, what does the Bible teach about being a good wife and mother, *i.e.*, a truly ideal wife in the sight of God?

First of all, ideally she must believe in God with all of her heart, soul, mind and spirit (Deut. 6:5; Psa. 145:20; Heb. 11:6; Matt. 22:37-40). She must believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 8:24; 20:30-31). She must be a faithful Christian (John 3:3-5; Matt. 16:15-16; Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-4). No woman who rejects being a Christian can really be the kind of person who makes an ideal wife and mother.

A good wife must realize that she must be willing to make a commitment in marriage which involves staying with one husband until he or she dies (Rom. 7:1-3; Matt. 19:4-6). Jesus made it clear that unfaithful companions may lead to divorce. One who believes she may divorce her husband for any trifling reasons cannot be an ideal wife.

A good wife is one who shares the joys and sorrows of life. She is by her husband in times of sickness and health, however long that may be. If there are riches or poverty she stands by his side because she, along with him, desires and expects to go to heaven eternally.

A good wife is by no means inferior because she is subject to her husband. Though the modern women's organizations speak to the contrary, she is fulfilling the duties which God has provided for her; she is making her calling and election sure by so doing. The degradation of woman in today's society has resulted from paganism of the past and atheism of the present day, all of which results in moral incompetence and continued separation from God. One godly woman who is living in subjection to God and Christ can do more than ten thousand screaming "women's liberationists."

Mothers

While woman was made to be a wife to man, it normally follows marriage that God so designed her that she would be the one to birth a baby. Even the name woman is said by many linguists to mean man with a womb.

It was according to God's order that the first human pair "multiply and replenish the earth" (Gen. 1:28). Throughout the Scriptures this is represented as a great privilege on the part of man and his wife. God creates and He empowers them to procreate. It is a great honor to produce one who is in the image of God. When Eve, the first woman, conceived and bore Cain, she said, "I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah" (Gen. 4:1). Then when Seth was born she said, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, who Cain slew" (Gen. 4:25).

Barrenness was considered an affliction and fruitfulness a blessing. Sadly, it was said of Abraham's wife, Sarah, "she had no child" (Gen. 11:30). Isaac was given a name which meant "laughter" because of the joy his birth brought to his parents and their friends.

John the Baptist was miraculously conceived and born to Elizabeth in old age. She said, "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men" (Luke 1:25).

Abortion as a means of birth control, as in our time, is unknown in Scripture, and surely so among godly women of any age. A life of an unborn child must not be taken by either the unmarried or married. In fact, even the act that results or may result in conception is sin outside of marriage, on the part of both the man and the woman.

The most important thing outside of giving birth to the child is nurturing that child (1Tim. 5:10). One may be a good and godly mother who has brought up children whom she has not borne.

Of course, training of children is not left only to the mother. "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (Prov. 1:8). "Children, obey your parents (plural par. added) in all things" (Col. 3:20). Abraham Lincoln said, "All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother." Most all of us who have had godly mothers who went to

the edge of death to give us birth and spent many hours in prayer and concern for us as we grew to maturity, could say the same. She knew we one day would leave home and prepared for it.

The godly wife is her husband's companion in sexual delight (cf. Prov. 5:15-19). The right relationship in this regard can be of untold value to both the husband and the wife. Paul made it clear (1Cor.7:1-5) that neither the husband nor the wife should ever, without good reason, reject and fail to satisfy the desire of the other. Wise is the husband who lovingly considers the feelings and desires of his wife so that he does not allow himself to become over demanding, and wise is the wife who, out of deep concern and appreciation of her husband does not allow herself to be guilty of deprivation. The Bible commands passion in the marriage relationship but not selfishness. Unfortunate is the man who does not love his wife as Christ loves the church. Unfortunate is the man who does not give up himself for the sake of his wife. Unfortunate is the wife who does not realize the power for good in obedience to Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5.

Children

Every parent wants good children. Think of the prodigal son of Luke fifteen. Even when things became bad for him he remembered. With whom did he desire fellowship? Why, with his father and family at home. A good son is always a son, thoughtful to parents, concerned for their welfare, seeking the warmth of their love. In later years loneliness may come on the parents, but the good son remembers, assists, cheers their souls, and is a comfort and encourager to them. He will remember the "good old days" of his youth and try to live so that the parents can see the crown in a faithful and loving son.

"Many daughters have done virtuously but thou excellest them all" (Prov. 31:29). So many parents are forced to say, "our daughter (son) has brought us shame and disgrace." What we are able to say about our daughters (sons) is largely dependent on their loyalty to the Bible. As with sons, daughters must be obedient to their parents (Eph. 6:1). In Colossians 3:20 Paul said, "this is well pleasing to the Lord."

It is often the case that the world considers a young lady “good” because she is intelligent, beautiful and popular, but she is not good if she is not obedient to her parents. A similar passage which relates to the daughter is found in Ephesians 6:2: “Honor thy father and mother.” The reason we are seeing so much disrespect for law and order in society today is the direct result of sons and daughters who have ignored the instructions of God’s Word regarding obedience. In addition a good daughter is kind, honest, polite and of good behavior. When she is such, society is blessed and she will find it natural to obey the laws of the land (1Pet. 2:13). She will also be a good employee (Eph. 6:5-6).

A good daughter must be modest. There is nothing wrong with a good daughter adorning herself in lovely and attractive garments, but she should take the advice of the Apostle Paul who said that she will “adorn herself in modest apparel” (1Tim. 2:9). She will not appear in public in garments that are indecent, such as bikinis or form fitting jeans. Sweat shirts with sexual innuendos will not be a part of her wardrobe. She will have the courage to refrain from customs even if it appears that “everybody is doing it.”

A good daughter remembers the Apostle Peter’s saying that most important is “the hidden man of the heart in which is a meek and quiet spirit” (1Pet. 3:4).

A good daughter is one who is trustworthy. Integrity excludes every form of deception; lying, stealing, cheating. “Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool” (Prov. 19:1). Parents believe her when she tells them where she is going. When the time comes for her to seek employment it won’t take long for the employer to notice that she is honest. When she marries “the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. . .” (Prov. 31:11). Some have thought that the 31st chapter of Proverbs suggests that the woman should seek fulfillment outside the home, but I believe a careful investigation of the chapter will reveal just the opposite.

A good daughter is one who wants to grow spiritually. As she grows in knowledge she will grow to become a wife and mother. In so doing she will encourage her husband to grow and become an elder.

Activities in the home are most important. It is a good place to teach children how to work. Once there was outside work which kept children busy and made them ready for rest and relaxation. Now, most of the work will need to be done in the home. My good wife taught all the children to cook and keep house. There were enough children that she could pass the work around so that all got to share in the best and worst of it. The responsibility of keeping the home should not be looked upon as boring and unfulfilling, but rather an activity which God created especially for the woman.

The home should be a place of love, joy, understanding, cheerfulness, consideration and happiness. It ought to be a place where the husband and children look forward to coming for a quiet and peaceable time to share the fun and happiness.

Conclusion

It is God's will that the home be a happy place and one of spiritual strength. "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor with Jehovah" (Prov. 18:22). It not only serves God, but it serves man's best interest. "Ye husbands in like manner, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being joint heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered" (Pet. 3:7). Brother Guy N. Woods observed in his commentary on the Epistles of Peter:

Where strife and discord obtain in a home, prayer is cut into and interrupted—the message to heaven is short-circuited! Bitterness, division and bickering are opposed to the spirit of prayer and operate to terminate all efforts in that respect. Only where peace and harmony prevail can the husband and wife join their effort in united prayer to the throne of grace (93).

May God help us to be good husbands and fathers, wives and mothers, sons and daughters because the world needs a better foundation on which to continue to build. Ω

Biographical Sketch

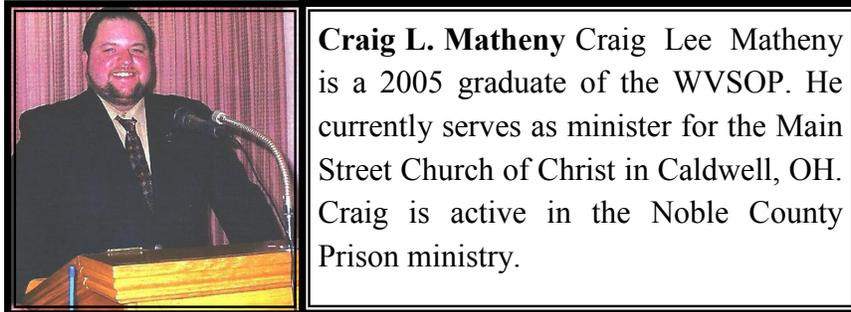
Denver E. Cooper was born in Cairo, WV April 2, 1923 to parents Jesse and Sarah Cooper. He was raised in Parkersburg, WV beginning one year after his birth until he was eighteen, when he graduated Parkersburg High School and entered Freed-Hardeman University in August of 1941. He married Florence Smith on March 25, 1945. To this union was born eight children: Edward, Denver Jr, Kelly, Timothy, Becky, Jesse, Prisca (deceased) and Denise. Florence passed to eternity on August 23, 2010. They adopted one daughter, Martha Noland who is married to Bob, preacher at Hanoverton, Ohio. Most of his life has been spent preaching in the Ohio Valley. He will celebrate seventy years of preaching September 21, 2011. He is now Director of West Virginia School of Preaching in Moundsville, West Virginia.

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How Then Ought We to Live?

Craig L. Matheny



Mankind is challenged from the very beginning to act in accordance with God's Word.

Introduction

At the very onset of reading the Bible, man is faced with two serious situations that he must address: first, there is an all-powerful God—the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Second, man is faced with how he ought to live here on earth which was created by God through Christ. Man reads that he was created by God in His image, and therefore possesses great intelligence in science and mobility. Man can move freely upon the earth and examine the evidence of God; also, he has the intelligence to understand the will of God. This author was in a conversation with a gentleman who asked, “How am I to live?” He was guided to read the book of Ecclesiastes authored by King Solomon. King Solomon was one who prayed and received great wisdom, he concluded after much examination of the “life under the sun.” “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil” (Eccl.12:13-14).

Fear God

Mankind was created for the purpose of “fearing God and keeping His commandments.” Sadly, Adam and Eve did not keep the commandments and therefore lost Paradise and a relationship with God that we can only dream of. Adam and Eve soon found out why we should fear God. Jesus, the Son of God, instructed His disciples as to why they should fear God, “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt.10:28).

It is interesting to note that Jesus also exercised godly fear. “...who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Heb.5:7-8).

The “fear” that we speak of is not of one that modern people consider as being “scared of.” Nowadays some go to a spook house to be scared. Others may watch a scary movie. The fear of which we speak means to act cautiously or circumspectly beware, to fear, to reverence, to stand in awe of. This is the “fear” that Jesus had and it is the one that all should have. We learn this reverence when we open our Bible to the book of Genesis where one discovers these examples of how then we ought to live. First, we ought to live “to find God.” Second, we ought to live to familiarize ourselves with God’s Word. Third, we ought to live in “fear of God.” Fourth, we ought to live to find God’s salvation.

As soon as one opens the Word of God he is literally knocked to his knees by the power of the Word of God. Moses wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of the creation account.

“The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now a river went out of

Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads” (Gen 2:8-10).

Familiar With God

Whilst we read the formation of mankind we find we ought to live “to find God.” Adam and Eve’s son Seth had the great privilege to call upon God. They found God, although He was not far; He was near enough to converse. We find this truth in Genesis four, beginning in verse twenty-five.

“ And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, for God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed. And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began *to call* on the name of the LORD” (Gen 4:25-26).

The Hebrew word *call* indicates proclamation or to summon one. Those mentioned in the Genesis four found God, have you?

I suggest today “how then we ought to live”. We ought to live to familiarize ourselves with God’s Word. The word familiarize does not appear in our Testaments, yet the meaning is evident, familiarize can be summed up well as acquainted, familiar or recognizable. For example, I am familiar with my old car. I know the parts that are questionable, the parts that are new and I can even tell you how many times you have to pump the gas pedal to get it started on cold mornings. Therefore, I am familiar with that old car. The Scriptures should be no different. God’s Word should be familiar to us, comforting, and edifying. I suggest to you that Adam and Eve stand as examples of those who should have familiarized themselves with God’s Word. God commanded that no one eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

“Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:15-17).

Became Familiar With Satan

This, I believe, is simple enough. They should have thoroughly known the commandment, and the result of breaking it. I believe this is where Adam and Eve failed to familiarize themselves, because in no time the serpent (Satan) came “slithering” with false doctrine on his forked tongue.

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, Has God indeed said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. Then the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings” (Gen 3:1-7).

If Adam and Eve had “familiarized” themselves with God’s commandment “...but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die,” they would not have sinned and been ejected from the Garden of Eden. If more people would familiarize themselves with God’s Word, there would far fewer people enter eternity unprepared! If more Christians would familiarize themselves with the Bible, there would be far fewer churches leaving the pattern of the New Testament. If more preachers would familiarize

themselves with the Scriptures, there would be far fewer “mam-be pam-be” preachers.

Fear God

I suggest to you how then we ought to live; we ought to live in the “fear of God” as we said a moment ago. The word fear is not being scared, but a deep reverential fear of God’s power. The fear that we speak of means to act cautiously or circumspectly; beware, to fear; to reverence, to stand in awe of.

Cain an Example of No Fear for God

I believe that Cain stands as a timeless example of a person who did not fear God. Yet, when he experienced God’s anger he quickly learned why he should have feared. Cain murdered his brother Abel. Abel was one who found, familiarized and was fearful of God and His Word. We read that Cain acted with no regard to familiarization and fear of God.

“So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth. And Cain said to the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear! Surely you have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me” (Gen 4:11-14).

We notice that Cain’s punishment was warranted, yet he thought it was unbearable. Cain stated that it is far greater than what he could bear. If more people would read Cain’s life, they would come to the realization that they should fear God and His judicial punishment.

Noah an Example of Fearing God

I suggest to you that the people in the time of Noah are also great examples of a lack of reverential fear. The people of Noah’s

time had become wicked, the word wicked means sinful—active in vices and crimes. They certainly had not found or familiarized themselves with the Word of God and could not realize Godly fear. They lived in direct opposition of God, and thus we find that God destroyed all except for eight righteous souls.

“ And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons wives with you. And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them. Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did” (Gen 6:17-22).

Noah and his family were spared. We read in Genesis the sixth chapter, verse twenty-two “thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.” Noah found God because he was familiar with the Word of God and was fearful. The result was that he and his family were spared. If more families were found familiar with the Word of God and understood the fear of God, more families would be spared on the great Judgment Day. It frustrates this writer greatly when parents do not know and teach their children the Bible. If one never owned any other book of the Bible save Genesis, an individual could draw the conclusion to fear God and keep His moral and ethical commandments. We have seen that one must find God, familiarize himself with God’s Word and be fearful if he is to live as he ought.

Finding God

Moreover we ought to live to find “God’s salvation,” We have spent some time perusing Genesis to learn why we should find, become familiar with and fear God. We would be amiss if we did not speak of God’s Salvation. In each point of “how then we ought to live” there is an underlying theme—salvation. Therefore, we ought to live to find God’s salvation.

When Adam and Eve transgressed God’s commandment, they sinned! Sinners are separated from God, and are His enemies. Such was the case with the Nation of Israel, “Behold, the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear” (Isa 59:1-2).

Adam and Eve were separated from God, but God is not without compassion and love for mankind. Immediately after the fall we find the fabulous announcement of a Savior and the defeat of Satan.

“So the LORD God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Gen 3:14-15).

Who is going to bruise Satan’s head? From this time onward the people of God were looking forward to the defeat of Satan through Christ’s death, burial, resurrection and coronation. The Apostle Peter speaks of finding, familiarizing, fearing God and finding His salvation.

“Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and

the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things which angels desire to look into. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, Be holy, for I am holy” (1 Pet 1:10-16).

Conclusion

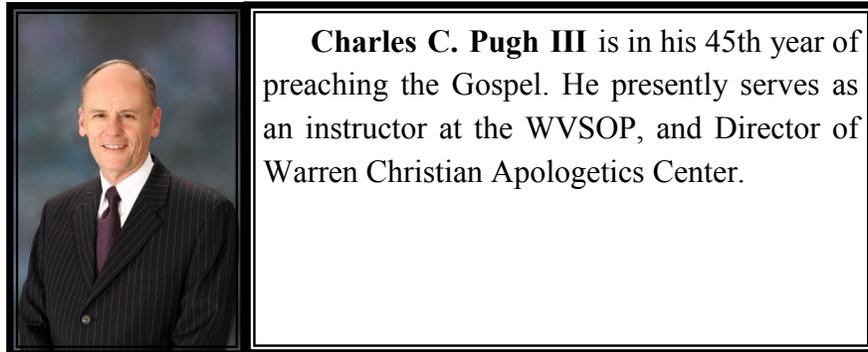
The answer to how then we ought to live is: We ought to strive to live a life that is approved of God. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Craig Lee Matheny is a 2005 graduate of the West Virginia School of Preaching. He has served as full time minister for the Church of Christ in Laings, OH and currently serves as minister for the Main Street Church of Christ in Caldwell, OH. He is married to the former Eugenia Marie Stout. They are the parents of three children, Gracie Marie, Maganson Mansfield and Callahan Lee Matheny. Craig is active in the Noble County Prison ministry, Summit Acres Nursing Home, and volunteers his services for the McVay and Perkins Funeral Home. He has spoken in several Gospel Meetings, Vacation Bible Schools, and Lectureships in the Ohio Valley.

Did God Create Evil?

Charles C. Pugh III



Introduction

. . . The world, we are told, was created by a God who is both good and omnipotent. Before He created the world He foresaw all the pain and misery that it would contain; He is therefore responsible for all of it. It is useless to argue that the pain in the world is due to sin. In the first place, this is not true; it is not sin that causes rivers to overflow their banks or volcanoes to erupt. But even if it were true, it would make no difference. If I were going to beget a child knowing that the child was going to be a homicidal maniac, I should be responsible for his crimes. If God knew in advance the sins of which man would be guilty, He was clearly responsible for all the consequences of those sins when He decided to create man. . . . I would invite any Christian to accompany me to the children's ward of a hospital, to watch the suffering that is there being endured, and then to persist in the assertion that those children are so morally abandoned as to deserve what they are suffering. In order to bring himself to say this, a man must destroy in himself all feelings of mercy and compassion. He must, in short, make himself as cruel as the God in whom he believes. No man who believes that all is for the best in this suffering world can keep his

ethical values unimpaired, since he is always having to find excuses for pain and misery. (Russell 29-30)

The above words were written by Bertrand Russell (1872-1970). Russell was a Nobel Prize winning British philosopher and mathematician. Some say he “vehemently expressed atheism” (Briggs 630) while others have claimed he “identified himself as an agnostic rather than an atheist” (Sztanyo 7). His biographer, Alan Wood, says Russell “remarked . . . that ‘I am not sure whether I am atheist or agnostic, so I sometimes call myself one thing and sometimes the other’” (232). Whether atheist or agnostic, in the above paragraph Bertrand Russell sets forth the basic challenge issued by anti-theism to those who affirm the existence of God. The challenge is that God, if He does exist, is responsible for evil. Russell flatly says, “He is . . . responsible for all of it.”

The effort to respond to this basic challenge to the existence of God is a *theodicy*. A *theodicy* “seeks to explain the ways of God to man expressly concerning the origin of evil” (Stambaugh 374). Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716), a German mathematician and philosopher, has been identified as the first to use *theodicy* as descriptive of the resolution of the “problem of evil.” In a 1697 letter he first joined the Greek words for *God* and *just* to form *theodicee*. “The idea being, in light of all manner of evils, how do we ‘justify God,’ while keeping His attributes of omnipotence and omni-benevolence intact?” (Ury 400). Leibniz made an important contribution to the field of apologetics through his *Theodicy*. He pictured God as “considering an infinite array of possible worlds he might create. Being perfect goodness, God would create the best of these. . . . The evils in it [i.e. this world] contribute to the goodness of the whole. . . .” (Sturch, *Leibniz* 401). Clarke states, “It is not necessary in the administration of . . . God that the world at present be the best possible world, but only that it be *the best world for the present* need and *purpose*” (154, emp. added). Cf. Warren, *Atheists* 19, 23, 44-45, et al. Former atheist, the late Antony Flew, prior to becoming a theist stated, “[Theodicy] Attempts ‘to justify the ways of God to men’ by solving the problem that evil presents to the theist. . . .

Given that a perfect and omnipotent Being must have created ‘the best of all possible worlds,’ how can one reconcile this with both the visible facts of this world and traditional beliefs about the next?” (*Dictionary* 326).

Trueblood says that the “first mature theodicy was the Book of Job” and adds:

The problem of the justification of evil after it has appeared is closely connected with the problem of its origin. If God is the Creator of the world, He would seem to be responsible for everything in it. But sin and suffering and other forms of evil are in it. Therefore, God must be the author of sin and evil. On the other hand, if there is something in the world which God did not create, how do we account for it? (234)

In developing a sound theodicy (i.e. seeking to understand the omnipotence [power] and omnibenevolence [love] of God in light of the origin and continued existence of evil and suffering) our first matter of emphasis is that the existence of evil and suffering, in a very crucial sense, involves “a separate issue from the question of God’s existence. . . . Nature may have its imperfections, but this says nothing as to whether it had an Ultimate Source” (Flew, *God* 156).

Varghese explains:

I say that evil doesn’t impinge on God’s existence because regardless of the evil in the world, we still have to explain three things: the fact that the world exists, the intelligence in the world, and the reality of conscious thought. The greatest evils can’t erase questions of origin, and these origin questions point clearly to an eternally existent, infinitely intelligent being.

But once we recognize the inevitability of God’s existence, we’re baffled by the fact that there’s evil in the world he created. While I admit that no theoretical explanation of evil and pain can alleviate its misery, I still think that we have some idea of why there is evil. (379)

The existence of an absolutely necessary being (God) is the only rational explanation of the universe. No anti-theistic philosophy works with the facts available, because such a philosophy is self-contradictory.

. . . Naturalism discards the existence of God on the ground that the theistic explanation is incompatible with the presence of evil in the world. But in a naturalistic universe, there *is* no evil in any ultimately significant sense . . . for evil exists only as over against an ultimate standard of goodness which has no validity for the naturalist. It follows that the naturalist has denied God's existence on grounds which are valid only in terms of the position he is trying to subvert. If evils *are* real, then they cannot be used as a basis for denying the existence of an ultimate standard of good, or what is ultimately the same thing, God: for evils exist only on the supposition that such an absolute good exists. On the other hand, if evils do not exist, they certainly cannot form the basis for a denial of God's existence. . . . Thus the naturalistic solution to the problem of evil is self-contradictory, because it necessarily assumes as a premise what it denies in the conclusion.

. . . If there is really no ultimate *good*, then there would appear to be no significant basis for declaring that this world is evil; and just for the reason that unless there is an absolute good, all attempts to call an entity, an experience, or a world evil, are baseless. In other words, the assertion that this is the worst of all possible worlds is self-contradictory in an ultimate context, because it can be significant only by assuming the existence of the very good it denies: or in brief it can be true only by being false. (Hackett 337-38)

Thus, Jackson correctly concluded, "Actually, no atheist can, *consistent with his own philosophy*, even introduce the problem of evil" (115). There is the sense in which the problem for any anti-God philosophy is not ultimately evil in the world, but rather

the ultimate good that is implied by real, objective evil. I do not wish to minimize the depth to which the evil and suffering in the world reaches human lives and results in profound pain, sorrow, and honest questions. However, intellectually, it is not the theist who has the problem explaining evil. As Chad Meister has stated, “Everyone must provide an account of the evil which exists in the world, and of the various worldview options . . . the atheistic account is the least successful. . . . [W]hen it comes to the existence of evil in our world it’s the atheists who should be on the defensive!” (108).

My negative answer to the question before us—“Did God create evil?”—should not be interpreted to mean that any mere human knows every detail concerning the problem of evil and suffering. However, there is sufficient evidence available to enable one to rationally come to this negative answer concerning whether God created evil. I will now proceed to justify this answer setting forth evidence that relates to three areas I identify with the following: (1) a metaphysical explanation, (2) biblical revelation and (3) practical application.

Metaphysical Explanation

An understanding of the origin of evil must involve a correct metaphysical foundation. Hackett says metaphysics is “the study of the nature of ultimate and subordinate reality with their mutual interrelations” (20). Metaphysics is concerned with ultimate reality and how remaining reality relates to such. Ultimately it is concerned with reality beyond experience (cf. Sturch, *Metaphysics* 428). D’Souza addresses the literal meaning of metaphysics stating, “Our world looks so physical, and yet we know . . . that it was the result of a force beyond physics. This is the literal meaning of the term *metaphysics*—that which is after or beyond physics” (*What’s So Great* 125).

The moral argument proves that God is the Ultimate Good Who must exist in view of objective moral values. In an essay written in response to Professor W. T. Stace of Princeton University, the late Thomas B. Warren said,

. . . [L]et each reader imagine that two men are walking down a road. As they walk along, they see two three-year-old children lying in a ditch. Upon examining the infants, they learn that each of the children is very ill—“burning up” with a high fever. It is clear to each of the two men that the children are not only ill, but are suffering from both malnutrition and exposure and thus, are in great need of water, food, medical care, and love. Let it now be supposed that, in reaction to the conditions and needs of the children, the first man (man A) murders one of the children by stomping its head into the mud. On the other hand, the second man (man B) takes one of the children into his arms, and cares for the infant night and day with tenderness and loving care. Is there a man anywhere who would say that the difference in the action of man A and the action of man B is nothing more than one’s likes and dislikes? Would anyone dare say that the difference was mere social convention? Nothing more than a mere instinct, which might urge one thing in one man and another thing in another man? I submit that everyone who insists that the action of man B is truly better than the action of man A is thereby admitting that there is some ultimate objective standard to which men ought to comply. I further submit that to admit the existence of such evaluation is to admit the existence of the ultimate good, who is God! Still further, I submit that the action of man A was neither worse nor better than the action of man B is to take a patently absurd and false position. I further insist that everyone who might say that he subscribes to such moral subjectivity neither really believes (unless he is completely reprobate, with a seared conscience) his own contention nor avoids contradicting himself in affirming what he really knows to be the case. All of us really do know that it is really better to lovingly care for a child than to viciously murder him!

And, it is surely the case that we can know that there is objective right and wrong as surely as we can know anything! As surely as I know of my own existence and of

the existence of other human beings (comprised of both body and mind—with rational, moral, and spiritual capacity) I know that there is ultimate objective good (God)! (*We Can Know*, 10-11)

The Ultimate Good (God) must be perfect in goodness. Any being that is imperfect falls short of what it ought to be, and such a situation implies the actual existence of the being which is the ultimate perfect good. God is “that eternal, self-existent being who is infinite in all his attributes: infinite in power, *infinite in love and goodness*, infinite in knowledge and wisdom, infinite in presence, etc.” (Warren, *Atheists* vii, emp. added). Before something can be described as objectively evil there must exist an objective standard of reference by which good and evil are defined. “. . . [T]he ultimate standard must be the Absolute Good” (Nash 211).

In view of the above facts, I submit the following argument as proof that God did not create evil:

1. If God is infinite and perfect in goodness, then only that which is good (not evil) can flow from God.
2. If only that which is good (not evil) can flow from God, then evil must originate from a source other than God.
3. If evil must originate from a source other than God, then God did not (cannot) create evil.

The first premise (1) is true. That this is the case is seen from the moral argument. By the very nature of the case, infinite and perfect goodness cannot be the origin of evil. *Whatever* has its origin in God must be good. The second premise (2) is obviously true. Therefore, the third premise (3) is also true. Therefore, metaphysically one can know that God did not (cannot) create evil. The above argument proves the proposition I am affirming in this lecture—“God did not create evil.” The argument is valid. The premises are true. Thus, the argument is sound.

Biblical Revelation

As faith seeks understanding (cf. Warren, *Atheists* 36, 66, 92), if one is to have details concerning the origin of evil in addition to what can be known metaphysically, then special revelation is essential. Thus, I now give attention to the revelation of the Bible which is in harmony with what one can know metaphysically concerning the origin of evil. [It is recommended that the reader consult: Pugh, Charles C. III. "Metaphysical Dualism and the Origin of Satan." www.warrenapologeticscenter.org. This paper is a response to metaphysical dualism as an explanation of the origin of evil. Metaphysical dualism holds that good and evil coexist eternally. In this paper I present evidence within the framework of valid arguments proving that *Satan and evil* are *not eternal* in the sense of coexisting non-contingently with God.]

Biblical information makes it clear that God did not create evil. The Bible acknowledges the existence of evil, but it also teaches that God did not create evil. Thus, God is not morally responsible for the existence of evil. Furthermore, the Bible provides information that enables one to understand the *true* origin and identity of evil as well as the identity of other crucial things which *seem* evil to some people, but are not *intrinsically* evil. Although many biblical passages could (should) be considered as one studies these matters, I will only give consideration to some basic statements from the Genesis account because of the limitations of this assignment.

Concerning Genesis 1:1-2:3, Leupold says,

It requires no deep insight to discern the basic character of this . . . for the book as well as for all revelation. Man will go back in his thinking to the point where the origins of all things lie. . . . Here is the record, complete and satisfactory from every point of view, even if it does not perhaps answer every question that a prying curiosity might raise. (35)

Seven times in the first chapter of Genesis there is the affirmation of the goodness of "everything that He [God] had made" (1:31). Blocher, in the *New Dictionary of Biblical*

Theology, calls the reoccurring phrase, “God saw that it was good” the refrain in the prologue (Genesis 1), and he further observes:

. . . [It] is heard seven times, with a concluding superlative (v. 31). Scripture contains countless songs of praise and . . . commendation of cosmic orderliness, summed up in Paul’s statement that “Everything God created is good” (1 Tim. 4:4, NIV; cf. Titus 1:15a). Since in biblical monotheism only God and his creatures exist, this means that everything is good. (465)

The seventh and final reference made by the writer of Genesis to the goodness of everything God created is made with greater emphasis than the preceding six. He states, “And God saw everything that He had made and *behold*, it was *very good* . . .” (Gen. 1:31, emp. added). Leupold comments,

. . . [T]his stronger statement to the effect that it was “very good,” making a total of seven times that the word is used—seven being the mark of divine operation [implies that the] thought that God might be the author of evil . . . must be guarded against strenuously. (99-100)

Keil and Delitzsch add the following observations:

By the application of the term “good” to everything that God made, and the repetition of the word with the emphasis “very” at the close of the whole creation, the existence of anything evil in the creation of God is absolutely denied, and the hypothesis entirely refuted, that the six days’ work merely subdued and fettered an ungodly, evil principle, which had already forced its way into it. (67)

In view of the above biblical information, I set forth the following argument that proves one can know from the revelation in the Bible that God did not create evil:

1. If the Bible is the word of God, and the Bible teaches that everything God created is good, then one can know that God did not create evil.
2. The Bible is the Word of God, and the Bible teaches that everything God created is good.
3. Therefore, one can know that God did not create evil.

The argument is valid. If the premises (1, 2) are true then the conclusion is true. Premise (1) is obviously true. If evidence that proves the Bible to be the word of God is available, then the conjunction of such evidence with the above biblical information concerning the goodness of everything God created proves the second premise (2). [A basic argument that proves the Bible to be the word of God was formulated by Thomas B. Warren. The argument may be referenced at: “Divine Origin of the Bible.” Warrenapologeticscenter.org; “The Bible is God’s Word—The Meaning of and Basic Argument for this Claim.” *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*. 1971 Bible Lectureship of Harding Graduate School of Religion. Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1971; *Spiritual Sword*. 1. 2 (Jan. 1970).] One can know from the Bible that God did not create evil. Blocher summarizes, “The Genesis narrative separates the origin from the act of creation: evil entered the world later as a . . . parasite (cf. C. S. Lewis 35; Nash 210) . . . not present in the beginning. Evil entered history in the abuse of created freedom . . .” (466). Clarke’s explanation sheds light on the meaning of evil entering history through the abuse of created freedom:

. . . [T]he manner of its [evil’s] origin we know in general from its nature. Moral evil is fault in free beings, whether in act or in character, and can have come only by wrong action of free-will. Some impulse or suggestion that was not worthy to be acted upon by beings who had power to do otherwise. . . . Sin first came by the act of created free spirits willing wrongly. . . . [T]here was no

sin until the spirit, capable of responsible action, accepted and chose the inferior thing. (155)

Just as goodness flows from the Ultimate Good, who is God (cf. Warren and Flew 32), evil flows from man's misuse of his (i.e. man's) freedom.

Practical Application

Having observed from (1) a metaphysical argument, and (2) a biblical argument that God did not create evil, I will now make five basic points of practical application. [The most helpful source I have found in the practical application of these matters is the theodicy of my teacher the late Professor Thomas B. Warren as set forth in the books, *Have Atheists Proved There Is No God?* (1972) and *Sin, Suffering, and God* (1980). The former work was praised by the late Frank Pack as "one of the best logical refutations I have ever read, and draws together some of the best insights of modern theistic thinking" (86). Professor J. D. Bales said it is "the best . . . I have seen in showing the existence of evil is not contradictory to the biblical revelation of God" (*Gospel Advocate* 751).] The following points are crucial in seeking to understand how there is no contradiction between the infinite power and love of God and the existence of evil, pain, and suffering.

The *possibility of evil* is not evil. Given the existence of the free will of a finite (limited) being (man), evil must be a possibility. To demand, as atheists do, that God should have made man free, yet He should have guaranteed that man would always make the right decisions is "one of the most absurd ideas" (Warren and Flew 125) imaginable! Man would be free, and man would not be free. The idea is self-contradictory. "No power, not even infinite power, can create a being who is a free moral agent and who is yet beyond even the possibility of sinning. This is the case because the possibility of evil is analytical to the definition of moral agency" (Warren, *Atheists* 33). God created "free-will beings for whom moral evil was a possibility. Why did God do this? . . . God was willing to risk the

free choice of evil in order to have freely chosen love and worship” (Cottrell 220-21).

2. The *properties of evil* are basically two. One of the fundamental properties of evil is it must have connection with a will. Warren says, “Although there are many things (actions, events, states) which *seem* evil to some . . . according to Bible teaching, sin is the only *intrinsic* evil” (*Atheists* 39). Nothing that “occurs on the purely physical level (such as tornadoes, earthquakes, etc.) or on the *animal* level (such as animal suffering pain or one animal killing and devouring another) is intrinsically evil . . . *nothing subhuman* is intrinsically evil” (40). Sin, which is the transgression (violation) of God’s law (1 John 3:4) is the only intrinsic (real) evil. Edwin Lewis wrote, “. . . God’s expectation from men is for *sonship* and *brotherhood*. . . . [I]n the Christian view, sin is in whatever is *unfilial* (contradicting sonship) and *unfraternal* (contradicting brotherhood)” (32, emp. added). What are often referred to as “natural evils” are not intrinsically evil. They exist from “the rational exigency [requirement] that God created according to natural laws” (Reichenbach 181).

In a 2003 book, *Rare Earth*, Peter Ward and Donald Brownlee, a paleontologist and astronomer respectively at the University of Washington, discuss why natural disasters occur. They are the result of giant plates—plate tectonics—that move under the surface of the Earth and ocean floor. “Plate tectonics . . . help regulate the earth’s climate, preventing the onset of scorching or freezing temperatures that would make [human] life impossible. . . . [P]late tectonics are a necessary prerequisite to human survival on the only planet known to sustain life” (D’Souza, “Earthquakes” 58).

The *pain of Earth* is not intrinsically evil. Pain can either be *instrumentally* good or evil. Warren explains why it is the case that pain and suffering are not intrinsically evil:

If pain *per se* were intrinsically evil, then *every* instance of pain (including those inflicted by kindly skilled surgeons and by loving mothers) would be evil. Yet, such instances of inflicting pain are *not* evil. Why is this the case? . . . [B]ecause the *motives* and *actions* of

those inflicting the pain in these cases were in harmony with the will of God. It seems clear, therefore, that no logical contradiction is involved in the infliction of pain by a perfectly good being. . . . [A]t least in some circumstances, the inflicting of pain is the only thing which a good will could do. . . .

There is no compelling reason why men cannot believe that it is good for them to live in a world in which it is at least *possible* for pain and suffering (as well as sin) to occur. . . . Men can even believe that the *possibility* of pain and suffering coming into their lives is a thing for which they can (and *ought* to) *thank* God. (*Atheists* 40-41)

Because Earth is a “vale of soul-making” (i.e. the development of the soul’s character) the world—such as the one in which we live that develops character—needs to be one of struggle and resistance containing obstacles to overcome, battles to be won, and problems to solve (cf. Rom. 5:1-4; James 1:2-4, et al). The spiritual practicality of these challenges is illustrated in the following:

. . . If the men who made the flight to the moon had not faced the necessity of gaining knowledge and developing skills, and if, making that flight had involved absolutely no danger (of severe injury, suffering or death) to them, other men would not have been so thrilled and inspired by their feat. If man’s environment did not provide situations in which he faced the possibility of suffering some truly terrible loss (of property, well-being, life), then it would not provide a situation in which such virtues as fortitude and courage could be developed as they now are. These facts make it clear that the *ideal* environment for man is one which makes it possible for man to suffer—and, not merely to suffer, but to suffer *intensely*. And, it must not only allow men to suffer intensely, but to suffer intensely over a *long period* of time. This particular point is closely related to the possibility of developing sympathy. . . .

The ideal environment is one which allows man to face the challenge of becoming a true son of God. The basic purpose of human life is to have the opportunity of becoming a true (spiritual) son of God. (Warren, *Atheists* 72)

A little girl told her music teacher that it hurt her fingers to practice the piano. Her teacher replied: “I *know* it *hurts*, but it *strengthens them too*.” The child then said: “Teacher *it seems* that everything that strengthens, hurts!” (Cowman 191). The Psalmist experienced the practical value of pain and suffering: “It is *good for me* that *I was afflicted*, that I might learn your statutes” (Psa. 119:71, ESV; cf. v. 67, emp. added).

4. The ***punishment in eternity*** is not evil. Antony Flew, as an atheist, wrote, “Our actual wickedness therefore remains intractably a major part of the evil which has to be reconciled with the thesis of creation by an infinitely good Creator. . . . The whole issue becomes immeasurably worse if you want Hell too. Creation apart it would be hard enough to excogitate any tolerable justification for punishment . . .” (*Philosophy* 67-68). Flew then manifested the atheist’s utter disdain for the doctrine of eternal punishment when he said, “[T]o concede that your God creates some creatures intending to subject them to eternal torments, of whatever sort: then your apologetic task is hopeless from the beginning” (68). Countering such challenges by Flew in their 1976 debate, Dr. Warren retorted:

. . . To show that God does *not* exist, you must find some logical contradiction, as this seems to be your basic approach, between the concepts of that God. I have already charged that you cannot do so, that you cannot take the concept of God alone and take one attribute of God and to weigh it against another attribute of God and show that they contradict one another. That as a matter of fact that you, along with all other atheists, will refer to some empirical fact or something that God does—such as punishment. . . .

Let me suggest, Dr. Flew, in all concern for you as a person, that we can know what *sin* deserves in only two ways. Not by looking at rocks, not merely by intuition, not merely by some deduction from some concept or from some empirical fact, but only (1) by what it costs to get man out of it—the death of the Son of God—and (2) the punishment that must be meted out for those who live and die in it (sin). But Dr. Flew projects himself, not only outside the *physical universe*, but outside of *God* as well, looks down upon the universe and God and judges God to be unfit and unworthy, “monstrous,” even “satanic” (as he put it last evening) and I submit to you that he has no springboard on which to stand to make such a judgment. (Warren and Flew 169)

5. The *place of explanation* of evil and suffering is ultimately in the cross and the empty tomb. “The heart of the problem is not found in words like ours in a book, but in the words from the cross: ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ It is a problem not on paper but on wood” (Kreeft and Tacelli 123). Pinnock says, “[T]he Christian answer . . . to the problem of evil is not found in any superior ability in philosophical reasoning, but . . . [in] divine action against evil in the person and work of Christ” (115). This is not to say we must not use logic, reason, and revelation, as we deal with matters such as origins, ethics, suffering and death for which science does not have the answers. The environment in which we live is ideal for the purpose for which it was created—an ideal “vale of soul-making.” Through the proper use of our minds we can come to know our Creator (cf. Rom. 1:20). However, when it comes to the adversity and suffering that is very much a part of this ideal environment, we do not have a detailed explanation of every incident of suffering. But, in the person and work of His Son, particularly in His death and resurrection, God provides a “supreme instance” by which all lesser events can be properly interpreted (cf. Warren, *Atheists* 46).

The cross and the empty tomb are the “plus signs” of life that enable one to deal with all evil and suffering, and the intense

losses that often are the result of such. Drawbridge eloquently describes the empowering nature of “the supreme instance” conjoined in the cross and the resurrection:

. . . Christianity deliberately singles out the most unique, and the most undeserved, and the most terrible instance, not only of physical suffering, but also of mental, of moral and of spiritual anguish, all of which were suffered by an innocent Person on behalf of others, and, having singled out this unique case, deliberately raises this greatest of all tragedies into bold relief and makes every effort to attract the attention of all humanity to it. Then, underneath this terrible picture of the greatest of all tragedies, Christianity writes with warm enthusiasm and with intense conviction:—“God so loved the world (that He gave His only begotten Son”).

It is in the light of the Crucifixion that Christians contemplate lesser sufferings. Countless millions of people, of many different races and in many different centuries, looking upon that picture of Jesus Christ in Gethsemane and on Calvary, and accepting the Christian interpretation of the Great Tragedy, have gloried in pain and have rejoiced in anguish: they have thanked God for having counted them worthy to walk in the footsteps of the suffering Christ, and to suffer with Him. (69)

Conclusion

Did God create evil? The answer is a resounding no! In view of a true metaphysical explanation and a correct handling of biblical revelation we can know that evil is not a creation of God. Warren excellently summarizes:

It is true that there is evil in the world, but it is not evil for which *God* is blameworthy! Everything which God created was good, including man. Man, by the misuse of his own free will, was guilty of sin (disobedience, that which is unfilial). Man, not God, is blameworthy for man’s sin. By showing that such matters as natural

calamities, animal pain, and human suffering are not intrinsically evil, I protect the view that God is not blameworthy for anything. In doing so, I show that the problem of evil cannot be used to prove that the infinite God does not exist. (*Atheists* 95)

The Psalmist was right: “You [God] are good and do good . . .” (Ps. 119:68, ESV). Jesus took it as far as it can go: “There is only One who is [Ultimately] good . . .” (Matt. 19:17, NASV). His apostle sealed it: “For EVERYTHING CREATED BY GOD IS GOOD . . .” (1 Tim. 4:4; ESV, emp. added).

You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory, and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created.
(Rev. 4:11, NKJ) Ω

Biographical Sketch

Charles C. Pugh III is in his 45th year of preaching the Gospel of Christ. He is one of the founders of West Virginia School of Preaching where he serves as an instructor. He has studied and taught for more than 35 years in the field of Christian Apologetics and teaches three apologetics courses at WVSOP as well as other courses. He is director of the recently formed Warren Christian Apologetics Center, an informational theistic center that exists for the purpose of affirming and defending the Christian worldview while aiming to challenge the growing global influence of atheistic thought (www.warrenapologeticscenter.org). The Warren Center facility, when completed, will be located in Vienna, WV.

Since 1999, due to a vocal fold disease, much of his work has been concentrated in the areas of writing and publishing. He is the author of several books and tracts and owner of Threefold Publications. He preaches several Gospel meetings yearly and appears on various lectureships. He and his wife Sharon live in Vienna, WV, and have two daughters, one son, three granddaughters, and one grandson.

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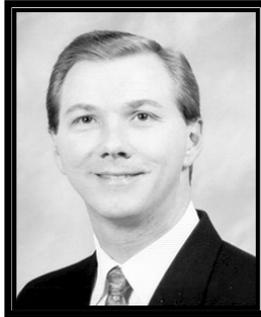
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Redemption in Genesis

Terry G. Jones



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Introduction

The greatest book in all of history is the Bible. Genesis is the first book of the Bible and serves as the foundation upon which the remainder of the inspired record rests. The Book of Genesis is the book of beginnings. It provides God's account of the origin of the universe, the origin of life, and the origin of human sin. The importance of Genesis to the history of the world is immeasurable. Henry Morris astutely observed:

The Book of Genesis is probably the most important book ever written. The Bible as a whole would surely be considered (even by those who don't believe in its inspiration) as the book that has exerted the greatest influence on history of any book ever produced. The Bible, however, is a compilation of many books, and the Book of Genesis is the foundation of all of them.

If the Bible were somehow expurgated of the Book of Genesis (as many people today would prefer), the rest of the Bible would be incomprehensible. It would be like a building without a ground floor, or a bridge with no support. (17)

The inexhaustible depth of the Book of Genesis has challenged the minds of mortal men for centuries, thrilling the souls of honest seekers of truth and torturing those whose desire is to discredit and destroy it. Among its great themes is the subject of redemption.

At the very mention of redemption, the natural inclination is for the mind to race to Calvary and the sacrifice of our Lord for our eternal salvation. There are several pertinent passages that quickly come to mind relating to our redemption. “Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:18-19). In Ephesians 1:7, Paul stated, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” So we clearly see that redemption is directly the result of Christ’s death. However, the story of God’s plan of redemption began much earlier. As a matter of fact, we must go all the way back to the beginning – The Book of Genesis.

The Plan of Redemption

God’s plan to redeem sinful man is the scarlet thread that can be traced all the way through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It has been observed that the *Anticipation of Redemption* can be seen throughout the Old Testament in type and prophecy. The Gospels record the *Accomplishment of Redemption* by the death of Christ. The *Application of Redemption* to the needs of man is made in Acts and the Epistles. And, finally, the *Achievement of Redemption* in eternity is visualized in Revelation.

It must be understood, however, that God’s plan of redemption was not an emergency plan put into place following the fall of man. God formulated a plan to save man before the creation of the world. The Apostle Paul attested to this fact when he wrote, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without

blame before Him in love” (Eph. 1:3-4). To Timothy he said, “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began” (2 Tim. 1:8-9). Because of the foreknowledge of God, He knew that man would sin. That is not to be confused with the Calvinistic contention of some that God foreordained man to sin. Because of the foreknowledge of God, He knew that man would sin. Therefore, He foreordained a plan to redeem man when he sinned. “The New Testament does not teach that God planned for man to sin so that he could save him. Rather, Paul clearly tells us that God knew man would sin and purposed a redemptive plan which included Christ as the one to carry it out.” (Wharton 25)

So, God’s plan of redemption was not an afterthought. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” It is beyond human comprehension that God was willing to create man, knowing that He would have to save man by sending His only begotten Son to die to save him from his sin. The Lord instructed John to write, “And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8). On the day of Pentecost Peter proclaimed, “Him, being delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death” (Acts 2:23). The sacrificial death of God’s Son was not an accident, it was an appointment. Redemption was planned out in the mind of God before the world was created. “The scope of God’s great eternal purpose to redeem us from sin extends from eternity before the worlds began to the eternity after the consummation of the ages when the saints will be glorified according to that purpose.” (Wharton 28)

The Problem Necessitating Redemption

The first two chapters of Genesis tell the story of creation. At the conclusion, when God observed all that He had made, His assessment was that it was very good (Gen. 1:31). He prepared the Garden of Eden to be the wonderful home for Adam and Eve. It was a place for them to live together in happiness. We are not told exactly how long this wonderful circumstance lasted, but in Genesis 3 it all came to an abrupt halt. That is because Satan arrived on the scene. Genesis 3:1 says, “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” He has but one objective, and that is to destroy the eternal soul of every human being. Peter warned, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). This he has been doing since the Garden of Eden.

When God placed Adam in the garden, the record states, “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen. 3:16-17). That is all Satan needed to formulate a plan to lead man into sin. He dangled that forbidden fruit in front of Eve and lied to her about the consequences of eating it. “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate” (Gen. 3:6). The next verses reveal that their eyes were opened, they were ashamed of their nakedness, and they were on the run from God. They soon found out that you can’t hide from the all-seeing eye of the Creator. Now they would have to suffer the consequences of their sin. They would be driven from the garden to toil by the sweat of the brow, to suffer sorrow and pain in childbirth, and death was brought to the human race. “Following in the wake of sin there fell a curse upon the world and upon man’s toil; then followed separation from God and finally death upon all the human family. All the woes, sorrows, tears, disappointments, miseries and separations by death are the consequence of sin.” (Hailey 28)

The fall of man by the entrance of sin into the world necessitated a divine plan of redemption.

The Prophecy of Redemption

God cursed the serpent for the role he played in the fall of man, and said, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15). Herein we find a prophecy concerning God’s plan for redeeming man and a promise of ultimate victory over Satan by the Seed of the woman. In these few words, God revealed the ongoing spiritual warfare that would exist between the Seed of the woman and Satan, along with the declaration of the Devil’s defeat and the redemption of man. Coffman provides a wonderful summary of this verse:

Thus, this twenty-seven word promise of healing for the sins of Adam’s race conveyed limited information, but the significance of it is *unlimited*. In the light of subsequent events, it comprises as comprehensive and definite a statement of God’s Plan of Redemption as could have been devised in so few words. Here is a summary of what was included: (1) it outlines the doctrine of the Incarnation, (2) and of the Virgin Birth, (3) has a prophecy of the crucifixion, and (4) of the final overthrow of Satan and hell, (5) announces the ultimate overthrow of evil, (6) the long agony of the human race, and (7) provides a message of hope and salvation for fallen humanity. (68)

This verse should make a deep and lasting impression upon the mind of every mortal who shall read it. It is a testament to the uniqueness of God and the depth of His tender love for man that no sooner had sin occurred that He began to unveil a plan to redeem him.

Thus it will be seen that in the oracle of Genesis 3:15 we have *the first intimation of Redemption*. This is the one optimistic note in the context of gloom, decay, and

death. In this spiritual conflict of the ages (often designated “The Great Controversy”), the Old Serpent’s seed will *strike* or bruise Messiah’s *heel* (Matt. 23:33, John 8:44, 1 John 3:10), signifying a mean, insidious, vicious, yet generally unsuccessful, warfare (the heel is not a particularly important part of the anatomy); whereas the Seed of the Woman shall ultimately *crush* the Old Serpent’s *head* (the ruling part of the person and personally), signifying the ultimate complete victory of Christ over all evil (Rom. 16:20, 1 Cor. 15:25-26, Phil. 2:9-11, Matt. 25:31-46, Rom. 2:4-11, 2 Thess. 1:7-10, 2 Pet. 3:1-13, etc). (Crawford 332)

The redemption of man would be accomplished through the seed of the woman which could refer only to Jesus Christ. The power of Satan was broken through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. “Though Christ was put to death physically, His victory over Satan was complete. He was raised from the dead and glorified at God’s right hand, while Satan was bound (Matt. 12:29; Luke 11:21-22), ultimately to be destroyed in the lake of fire” (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). (Hailey 32). The Apostle John said, “He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).

The Preservation of Redemption

Once sin entered the world, the floodgates were opened and wickedness swept through the human race. How saddened the heart of God must have been as He observed the multitudes rejecting Him in favor of wickedness.

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man

and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them (Gen. 6:5-7).

Sin is like cancer. It never stays the same, but is constantly growing and destroying everything with which it comes into contact. That is exactly what wickedness had done to God's creation. God's remedy was to destroy every living creature by sending a world-wide flood. But what would that do to the prophecy of God in Genesis 3:15 and the promise of deliverance? What about the Seed who would crush the head of the Serpent?

Thankfully, verse eight states, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Because "Noah walked with God" (Gen. 6:9), God commanded Noah to build an ark for the saving of his house from the flood. "Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did" (Gen. 6:22). During the time of the flood, not only was Noah and his family preserved safely in the ark, but so was the Seed that eventually would redeem sinful man.

Conclusion

God's great plan of redemption was devised prior to creation and the unfolding of that plan is developed throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Redemption is made possible by the death of God's Son who was crucified on the cross of Calvary. All who would render obedience to the gospel that He has given are redeemed back to God.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Christ, who has gone into

heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him (1 Pet. 3:18-22). Ω

Biographical Sketch

Terry G. Jones was born in Parkersburg, West Virginia and was raised in Toll Gate, West Virginia. He is the son of Glenn and Linda Jones. He married Melinda S. Hilvers on August 10, 1985. They have two sons - Austin and Quintin.

Terry is a 1986 graduate of East Tennessee School of Preaching in Knoxville, Tennessee. He received the A.A. and B.A. degrees from Ohio Valley College in 1996. He worked with the church in Mountain City, Tennessee from 1986 to 1989. He then moved to Pennsboro, West Virginia where he has been preaching to the present.

He serves as secretary on the board of directors of West Virginia Christian Youth Camp and is on the faculty of West Virginia School of Preaching. In addition, he is a writer for West Virginia Christian and has served as its lectureship director on five occasions. He also has made missionary trips to the countries of Moldova and Ukraine.

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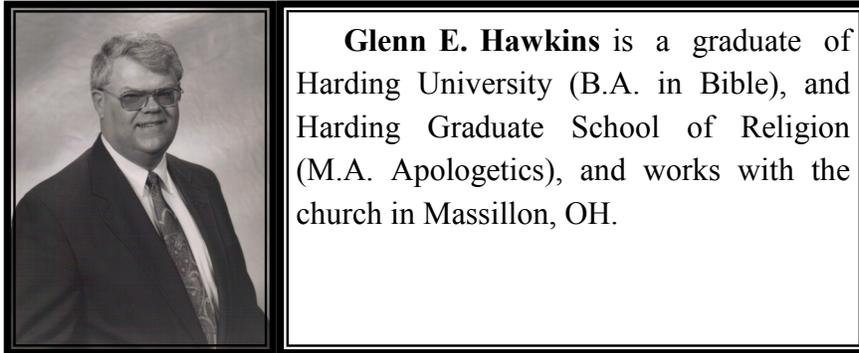
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Has God Really Said?

Glenn E. Hawkins



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Introduction

I want to express my appreciation to the elders here at Moundsville and to brother Denver Cooper for the invitation to speak on this lectureship. I appreciate so much the good that is being done by this school in preparing men to preach the Gospel of Christ. It was a little over 50 years ago that I had the opportunity to preach my first sermon and I am grateful for all the great and good men who had a part in my own preparation and instruction.

The theme of the lectures this year is: The Need For Redemption Genesis 1-11. The particular subject assigned to me at this hour is, “Has God Really Said?” This statement comes from Genesis 3:1- “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (All quotations unless noted are from the KJV)

The New King James Version renders the question “Had God indeed said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” The English Standard Version renders the question, “Did God actually say, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?” The Modern Language Bible- The New Berkley Version renders the question, “So, God has told you not to eat from any tree in the garden?” In

H.C. Leupold's commentary on Genesis, he translates the question as follows: "And (is it really the case) that God has said ye shall not eat from every tree of the garden?" (1 140).

The Question

In this question, "Has God really said. . .?", the devil, through the serpent, places doubt in the mind of Eve about the absolute truth God had given her and her husband about what they could and could not eat in the garden. As Leupold in his commentary wrote,

The thought aimed at by the suggestive question is that there must be something about God's restraint of man that puts a very unwelcome curb and check upon man. The circumstances that God has permitted man to make use of all the trees is pushed aside as negligible. The fact that man is definitely barred from the one tree is dragged into the forefront and magnified into a grievous and very unwelcome restraint that could hardly be thought of as imposed by God" (Leupold 143-144).

In other words, this question by the serpent put in our common vernacular could be rendered, "Did God really say such a thing as that?" The serpent was questioning the word of God and the goodness and love of God by implying that God would surely not withhold something from the man and the woman that was good for them. Inherent in the serpent's question was a very subtle mocking- "You can't really be serious. . ."

Eve was taken in by the serpent's cunning and partook of the forbidden fruit. Adam also partook and their sin brought death into the world upon all men. By implying that surely God did not really say what He said, Satan was able to persuade Eve and Adam to

Ignore God's absolutes. This was the first time that God's word and His integrity were questioned but it was not to be the last.

In Numbers 12, we find the story of Miriam and Aaron challenging the position Moses held. Notice their words, "So

they said, Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it" (Numbers 12:2). The Modern Language Bible translates the question, "Has the LORD spoken exclusively through Moses? Has He not also commanded through us" (Numbers 12:2).

Miriam and Aaron were saying essentially the same thing as Satan said to Eve. Did God really say that Moses was His exclusive spokesman? In their minds, they could not accept this, after all Aaron was the high priest and had even been a spokesman for Moses before Pharaoh and Miriam had watched over Moses as a baby and was herself a prophetess and had led the women of Israel in song after the deliverance from the Red Sea.

The LORD reacted swiftly and suddenly. Notice Numbers 12:6-8,

“And he said, Hear now my words, If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”

Since Miriam was mentioned first, God punished her with leprosy and she was removed from the camp for seven days. God's word was vindicated once more. Moses was God's exclusive spokesman and leader of Israel.

In the Matter of a Savior

There are certain matters of doctrine plainly revealed in the New Testament that people continue to question as to whether God really said what He said about a certain teaching.

For example, some people who have accepted the post-modern idea of there being no such thing as absolute truth, especially religious truth, would question if God really said that there is only way to Him and eternal life in heaven and that Jesus is that way. Surely, we are told, there is more than one way to

heaven. What about sincere and honest Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and even Jews? After all, how can anyone be sure that the Bible is the only revelation from God? What about other gods and other revelations?

While it is outside the scope of this lecture to deal with such matters as the existence of the God of the Bible, the deity of Jesus Christ, and the inspiration of the Bible, these can be proved to be true. Christianity is the one true religion of the one true God. So the question, “Did God really say that there is only one way today to Him and eternal life and that Jesus is that way?”, is answered with an emphatic “yes”.

At the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, when He came for baptism at the hands of John the Baptist, God spoke from heaven saying, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”(Matthew 3:17). On the mount of transfiguration, God again spoke from heaven concerning His Son, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” (Matthew 17:5). It is interesting to note that there with Jesus stood Moses and Elijah, representatives of the law and prophets, yet God said we are to hear Jesus.

Jesus Himself acknowledged that He was and is the only way to the Father when in John 14:6 He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” One cannot read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John carefully without coming away with the truth that Jesus is God’s Son and that He and He only is the way to the Father and eternal life.

The apostle Peter affirmed as much when he said of Jesus, “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). From the book of Acts one, the New Testament makes plain that Jesus is the only way to the Father and eternal life.

In the Matter of Redemption

In the matter of redemption, salvation from sin, the question of “what must I do to be saved?” is one that receives much attention, especially in the book of Acts. In the course of answering this question, when studying this matter with someone in private or even in public preaching and teaching, the question

as to the nature and purpose of water baptism always arises. When the teaching of Jesus and His apostles is taught about the necessity of baptism for salvation, many people react with, “Did God really say that?” So, even in the matter of one’s own salvation, people question God and His word.

One passage of Scripture in the New Testament which is a battleground on the connection of baptism with salvation is Mark 16:16. It reads as follows: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Often the rejoinder is made that Jesus did not say in the last half of the verse, “He that believeth not and is not baptized shall be damned.” For a full discussion of how denominational writers treat the subject of baptism, especially in the popular “study Bibles”, I recommend the last chapter in Owen Olbricht’s book, *Baptism: A Response of Faith*.

When looked at from a grammatical standpoint, Mark 16:16 becomes very clear about the connection between both belief and baptism and salvation. The simple subject of the whole sentence is: “he will be saved.” “He”, the simple subject, is modified by an adjective clause, “that believeth and is baptized.” This clause tells who will be saved. The one who will be saved is the one who believes and is baptized. Notice the coordinating conjunction “and” which joins things of equal rank and value. Both belief and baptism are necessary to be saved.

In the Greek text of Mark 16:16, we find that this is also true. The word “believeth” and the word “baptized” is what is called aorist participles. The aorist participle denotes action coming before (proceeding) the action of the main or leading verb; in this case “shall be saved.” The Greek text literally says, “the having believed and having been baptized one, will be saved.” The New American Standard version correctly translates “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned” (Mark 16:16).

In answer to the quibble that the Lord did not say in the last half of the verse “and is not baptized shall be damned”, is the fact that there can be no scriptural baptism without faith or belief. The person who does not believe won’t be baptized if he could, and he couldn’t be baptized if he would. Think of the following

parallel statement: He that buys a ticket and gets on the airplane shall go to Atlanta, but he that buys not the ticket shall be left. If there any reason to add, “he that buys not a ticket and get not on the plane shall be left? If you don’t buy the ticket, you are not going to get on the plane.

Yes, God has really said that baptism is necessary or in order to be saved. Where God has put a period, man should not put a question mark.

In the Matter of Worship

In the matter of worship to Almighty God, we find that people have questioned what and how God demands of His people. In the Old Testament, we have the story of two priests, Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, who “offered strange (unauthorized, ESV) fire before the LORD which he commanded them not” (Leviticus 10:1). I am not sure what their motive or reasoning was in doing something God had forbidden, but they did it anyway. Perhaps they were thinking that fire is fire no matter where it is from and it will burn the incense just as well. But we know how God reacted when Leviticus 10:2 says, “And there went out fire from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.” Yes, God did really say where the fire to burn the incense was to come from.

The matter of worship in the New Testament is also an area where all kinds of changes and innovations of men have appeared. Nowhere is this more blatant than in the kind of music God wants Christians to offer him. Even to suggest that singing is the only kind of music God will accept is to bring down an avalanche of quizzical looks and questions. Had God really authorizes singing as the only kind music that He will accept as worship? Surely God would never do that. After all He accepted instrumental music in Old Testament worship. If I have a talent for playing a musical instrument why would God not want me to use that talent in worship?

There are two major New Testament passages that deal with the matter of music in corporate worship- when the church assembles to worship. One is Ephesians 5:19 which reads, “Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs,

singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” The other passage is Colossians 3:16 which reads as follows: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

There is no doubt that the grammar of both passages refers to corporate worship. Notice the use of the reflexive pronouns and the term “one another.” For a thorough discussion of this, see Dave Miller’s book, *Singing And New Testament Worship*, pp 1-26.

Historically speaking, a cappella music was used in the early church for approximately 1000 years before organ, pianos and other musical instruments were brought in to the worship of God. Dr. Everett Ferguson has documented this in his book, *A Cappella Music In The Public Worship of the Church*, pp. 47-87. The great reformers such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley and a host of others were opposed to it. For further information, see Owen Olbricht’s book, *A Cappella Music, Why? Music Of God’s Choice For Christian Worship*, pp. 112-117.

The reason that musical instruments being used in the worship of God is sinful is very simple- it is not authorized by a direct statement, approved example or inference in the New Testament. It certainly cannot be introduced as an aid, because it is a different kind of music altogether. Instruments of music are no more of an aid to singing than running is an aid to walking.

Our brethren have defended this position in debate after debate with those of the Christian Church and they have not been able to introduce one single direct statement, approved example or inference from the New Testament approving the use of such.

Yet, despite the overwhelming evidence that God wants singing and singing alone, some churches of Christ have introduced instrumental music into their worship. The most notable example, perhaps, is the Richland church in the Dallas, TX area where the preacher, Rick Atchley presented a three part series on why Richland Hills was going to use the instrument. Two of our brethren have responded to that series of sermons.

Dr. Dave Miller has written a book, *Richland Hills & Instrumental Music, A Plea To Reconsider*. Here he deals with the arguments presented by Atchley in his three sermons as justification for bringing in the instrument.

Dr. Thomas Alexander has also written a book entitled, *Music In Worship, A New Examination Of An Old Issue*. He too deals with Atchley's sermons.

Let it be said, having read both books, that Atchley has not put forth any new arguments in favor of instrumental music in worship. The old arguments may be put in new form or words, but they still the same old arguments. As Everett Ferguson wrote, "No new arguments have been advanced in favor of instrumental worship in the assembly. In that regard, the case is where it stood 100 years ago, the facts have not changed; attitudes have." ("Still The Greatest Threat", *Gospel Advocate*: July 2006: 26).

Jack Lewis said essentially the same thing when he wrote, "There are no new arguments to present on the music question: the ground has been thoroughly plowed and replowed without convincing most instrumentalists. However, here as elsewhere in life there is always a new king arising who does not know Joseph (Acts 7:17-19). This fact keeps us redoing what we have done many times before. In my opinion we now have a generation who do not know the lessons of the past. They need to be taught the issues on the music question" (14). Again, why must men put a question mark, where God has put a period?

The Matter of Marriage

Another issue which I will touch briefly on is the issue of marriage, divorce and remarriage. Did God really say that divorce for any reason is unacceptable and that only fornication on the part of one spouse gives the innocent spouse the right to divorce and remarry? Surely God wants me to be happy. What if my spouse is abusive? What if my spouse deserts me? Can't I divorce him or her and remarry?

Jesus is very plain on this issue. In Matthew 19:9, He said, "Whosoever shall put away (divorce GEH) his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

How could Jesus have made it any plainer than that? The fact remains that after man has misinterpreted and reinterpreted this passage, it still teaches what it teaches. And the rest of the New Testament does not contradict it in any way. Paul does not contradict Jesus and Jesus does not contradict Paul.

Conclusion

As I have said before, let us not put a question mark where God has put a period. God is capable of saying what He means and meaning what He says. Futhermore, human beings made in the image of God, are capable of reading and understanding what God has said. Ω

Biographical Sketch

Glenn Hawkins was born in Dexter, MO on October 16, 1943 to Jack and Frona Hawkins (both deceased). His father, Jack, was a Gospel preacher for almost 60 years. Glenn is a graduate of Ohio Valley University (1963), Harding University (1965) and hold the M.A. degree in Apologetics from Harding Graduate School of Religion. He is married to the former Hope Shutts of Parkersburg, WV (June 1965) and they have two sons: Ken and his wife Susan and daughter Addison of Canton, Ga. and Adam of Massillon, OH. Glenn is now in his 37th year with the church in Massillon, OH where his father was the first located preacher the church had.

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Genesis: Myth or History?

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Introduction

What do we mean by “myth”? German theologian Rudolf Bultmann popularized the notion that the New Testament must be stripped of its mythical elements, specifically, its supernatural features (e.g., *Jesus Christ and Mythology*, 1958). “Myth,” therefore, in theological circles refers to a traditional story in a particular culture that manifests that culture’s world view. The story serves as a vehicle to convey a truth, without necessarily being historically true. The Bible’s depictions of heaven, hell, demons, evil spirits, and Satan are viewed as symbols for deeper meanings rather than being literally existent. Many theologians, and now many Americans, insist that the Bible is a pre-scientific document that is riddled with the errors that accompanied early man’s quest for knowledge.

With the onset of modern scientific discovery and understanding has come a widespread tendency to compromise the biblical text of Genesis 1-11. Even our own brethren have not been immune from this deadly cancer that ultimately undermines the entire Bible and one’s ability to arrive at the truth. In the 1980s, it was discovered that evolution was being taught by two ACU professors. One of the biology professors provided his class with a handout that included a photocopy of the first page of Genesis. In the margin he scrawled the words, “Hymn, myth” (Thompson, 1986, p. 16). The university mobilized in their attempt to discredit the charge and sweep it under the proverbial carpet, but the evidence was decisive (see Morris, 1987, 16[5]:4). The fact is that evolution has been taught on other Christian college campuses as well. The lack of outcry testifies to the fact that even members of the church and their children have been adversely influenced by secular education.

It is amazing, even shocking, to see the extent to which the authority of the biblical text in general, and the book of Genesis in particular, has been undermined in the minds of the average American, especially in the last half century. In virtually every

quarter of our country, relaxed and compromised views of the Bible prevail—even among otherwise conservative Americans and those who profess to be Christian. Before leaving office, President Bush (“W”) was interviewed by Cynthia McFadden on ABC’s “Nightline.” When asked if the Bible is literally true, he responded: “You know. Probably not.... No, I’m not a literalist, but I think you can learn a lot from it, but I do think that the New Testament for example is...has got... You know, the important lesson is ‘God sent a son’” (“Bush Says...,” 2008). When asked about creation and evolution, Bush said:

I think you can have both. I think evolution can—you’re getting me way out of my lane here. I’m just a simple president. But it’s, I think that God created the earth, created the world; I think the creation of the world is so mysterious it requires something as large as an almighty and I don’t think it’s incompatible with the scientific proof that there is evolution (“Bush Says...”).

Myriad instances could be cited in which Americans manifest the degrading effects of skepticism, atheism, evolution, and liberal theology.

What a far cry from most of America’s history. It is hard to believe that—up until the 1960s—American education was thoroughly saturated with the biblical account of Creation (e.g., *New England Primer*, 1805, pp. 31-32; *The Elementary Spelling Book*, 1857, p. 29). The book of Genesis was taken as a straight-forward account of the formation of the Universe and the beginning of human history. People took God at His word. Though liberal theology swept Europe in the late 19th century, which included attacks on the verbal, inerrant inspiration of the Scriptures, and though the Creation account began to be openly challenged at the 1925 Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee, still, the majority of Americans continued to accept the biblical account right on up to World War II. Since then, however, sinister forces have been chipping away at belief in the inspiration and integrity of the Bible. They have succeeded in eroding confidence in its trustworthiness and authority.

But there are no excuses. The evidence is available, and it is overwhelming. No one can stand before God at the end of time and justify himself for his rejection of Genesis as a straightforward record of literal history. Failure to take Genesis at face value will inevitably result in acceptance of views and/or practices that will jeopardize one's standing with God.

New Testament Proof that Genesis Is Literal History

If we had no other means by which to determine whether Genesis is myth or history, the New Testament alone is ample proof. Depending on how one calculates the material, the New Testament has at least 60 allusions to Genesis 1–11, with over 100 allusions to the entire book (Cosner, 2010). Jesus and the writers of the New Testament consistently treated Genesis as **literal history**. As a matter of fact, every New Testament author refers to Genesis, and nearly every New Testament book does as well. Their handling of the Genesis text demonstrates that they considered the events to have actually occurred, rather than being mythical or legendary folklore that merely contained useful lessons.

Jesus

Consider a sampling of allusions made by Jesus:

- He indicated the foundation of the marriage institution, quoting Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 as historical precedent and proof that *carte blanche* divorce is unacceptable to God (Matt. 19:4-5; Mark 10:6-8). Did He mean to ground marriage on fairytales?
- Jesus mentioned Abel as a real person whose blood was shed on account of his righteous behavior, just like other historical personages in human history (Matt. 23:35). If Abel was not an actual person who lived on Earth, neither was Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom Jesus said the Jews “murdered between the temple and the altar”—an actual physical location.
- Jesus declared Satan to be a “murderer from the

beginning” and the father of lies—referring to the Fall (John 8:44; Gen. 3:4,19; cf. Rom. 5:12; 1 John 3:8).

- Jesus referenced Moses’ writings as genuine representations of history (John 5:46-47).
- Jesus spoke of the “days of Noah” and the Flood as an actual historical event that has many parallels to the future coming of the Son of Man in terms of what people will be doing with their time (Matt. 24:37-39).
- Jesus compared Capernaum to Sodom, saying, “for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment than for you” (Matt. 11:23-24). Sodom would have had to have been an actual city for it to “have remained until this day” and for it to fare more tolerably in the Day of Judgment (cf. 10:15).
- The genealogical lists of Jesus’ physical lineage identify actual historical persons in the first century all the way back to persons originally named in Genesis, including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and Tamar (Matt. 1:1-2), as well as Adam, Seth, Enoch, and Noah (Luke 3:36-37).

Paul

Paul, likewise, treated persons, places, and incidents in Genesis as if historically real. Here is a sampling of some of his allusions:

- He quoted Genesis 1:3 to note how God caused light to shine out of darkness (2 Cor. 4:6).
- Quoting Genesis 2:7, Paul said Adam was the **first** human being on Earth (1 Cor. 15:45).
- He claimed that Adam was made from dust (1 Cor. 15:47)—as Genesis records.
- He noted how the woman is “from” (*ek*—out of) man (1 Cor. 11:8,12), referring to the fact that Eve was literally taken out of Adam’s body.
- Paul quoted Genesis 2:24 to verify how a man and woman “become one flesh” (1 Cor. 6:16),

- comparing marriage to the church (Eph. 5:31).
- Adam was as historically real as Christ and Moses, having introduced sin into the world, causing death to reign during the historical interval “from Adam to Moses” (Rom. 5:14-15).
- Paul identified Adam and Eve by name, noting that Adam was created before the woman was created, and also noting the deception to which Eve succumbed (1 Tim. 2:13-14), which occurred via the “serpent” (2 Cor. 11:3).
- Paul claimed that God’s deity and attributes have been evident “since the creation of the world” (Rom. 1:20).
- Paul said that Jesus fulfilled the promises that had been made to “the fathers,” i.e., Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Rom. 15:8).
- Paul quoted the promise God made to Abraham concerning Sarah giving birth to Isaac (Rom. 9:9), and also mentions Jacob, Esau, and Rebecca by name (vss. 9-10).

Peter

Peter, too, endorsed the historicity of Genesis:

- He alluded to the watery mass at Creation from Genesis 1:12, 6-7, 9 (2 Pet. 3:5).
- He regarded the Flood as an actual historical event, mentioning Noah by name and specifying the number of survivors as eight, and the Flood’s extent being global (1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6).
- Peter believed in the historical personage of Lot and that God actually turned “the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes” to make them “an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.” The incident also serves the purpose of demonstrating how God “knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations” (2 Peter 2:6-9). If the incident was not historical, it would serve no legitimate parallel purpose.
- Peter also noted the actual, historical relationship

sustained by Sarah and Abraham (1 Pet. 3:6).

Hebrews

The writer of the Hebrews letter bases his entire argument on the historicity of Genesis and the Old Testament system:

- His quotation of Psalm 102 includes the fact that even as God created the heavens and the Earth, so they will perish (1:10). Both circumstances require literal historicity.
- Alluding to the fact that God “finished” His creative activities—a direct allusion to Genesis 2:1—he then quotes Genesis 2:2 to call attention to the literal cessation of God’s actions on the 7th day of the week (4:3-4; cf. vs. 10—“as God did from His”).
- The comparison of Christ to Melchizedek in contrast with Aaron demands that both of these figures were actual historical personages (5:1-10; 6:20; 7:1-21).
- God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 22:17 was a literal promise to a literal person (6:13-14).
- God’s creation of the Universe was by His “word” (11:3)—even as the Genesis record indicates that God spoke the created order in existence (“God said...”).
- Chapter 11 is a veritable “Who’s Who” of historical personalities from Genesis whose historicity is assumed: Cain and Abel (vs. 4), Enoch (vs. 5), Noah (vs. 7), Abraham (vss. 8-10), Sarah (vs. 11-12, who literally produced a multitude of descendents), Isaac (vss. 17-20), Jacob (vss. 20-21), and Joseph (vs. 22).
- Esau sold his birthright for food (12:16).
- Abel’s shed blood is as historically real as Christ’s (12:24).

Other New Testament Writers

The other writers show the same respect for bona fide history portrayed in Genesis. James refers to Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac

(2:21). Jude mentions Cain, Enoch, and Sodom and Gomorrah (vss. 7, 11, 14). John notes that Cain murdered his brother because of his own sinful actions (1 John 3:12). Even the book of Revelation, though highly figurative, nevertheless contains numerous allusions to Genesis that indicate an historical understanding of the book (e.g., 5:5; 10:6; 20:2; 22:2). To suggest that the book of Genesis is actually a compilation of interesting fables, myths, folklore, popular anecdotes, and stories, rather than actual history, is to suggest that the doctrines of Christianity are rooted in and dependent on fairytales and imaginary stories.

Linguistic Proof that Genesis Is Literal History

In addition to the New Testament's inspired treatment of Genesis as an actual account of history, one could also simply examine the literary genre of Genesis. Many in our day insist that Genesis should not be read as literal history because it is written in poetic form and is not a literal description of actual events. But such a claim is itself, linguistic gobbledygook. Written language, whether from man or God, can be deciphered in terms of its genre. One can identify the author's use of linguistic elements and extract intended meaning from the words that are used. In other words, though the 50 chapters of Genesis contain figurative language—as does the entire Bible—nevertheless, one can easily distinguish between the literal and the figurative.

Entire volumes have been written on human communication, how human language functions, and how to derive meaning from written language. Many books have been produced that expound the discipline of hermeneutics—the process of interpreting language. These volumes provide self-evident, easily discernible rules and procedures for detecting figurative language. D.R. Dungan's classic work, *Hermeneutics*, written in 1888, contains chapters on "Figurative Language," "The Various Figures of the Bible," and "Figures of Thought" (pp. 195-369). Clinton Lockhart's 1901 volume *Principles of Interpretation* contains chapters on "Figurative Language," "Poetry," and "Types" (156-197, 222-228). Outside churches of Christ, many books demonstrate the means by which biblical language may be understood, including Bernard Ramm's *Hermeneutics* and Milton

Terry's 1883 volume *Biblical Hermeneutics*. Ascertaining whether Genesis and, specifically, the Creation account are "poetic," "hymn," or "myth" is not a matter of confusion or uncertainty—except for those who have an agenda and wish to concoct an elaborate smokescreen to avoid the obvious import of God's Word.

Does Genesis 1 contain any figurative language? Certainly. But not anything that makes the chapter non-literal in its basic import. For example, the term "face" in Genesis 1:2, which is actually plural in the Hebrew (*pah-neem*—"faces"), is an idiomatic instance of *pleonasm*, a form of *amplificatio*, in which more words are used than the grammar requires: "And darkness was upon the faces of the deep." The noun "deep" (which, itself, is a figurative term for the sea or ocean) is enhanced or emphasized by means of a second, redundant noun "faces." Instead of simply saying, "darkness was upon the deep," adding "faces" makes the statement so much more forcible and emphatic (Bullinger, 1898, 406). The use of "saw" in Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25 is the figure of speech known as *anthropopatheia* in which human attributes are ascribed to God, specifically in this text, human actions (Bullinger, p. 888). The expression in 1:9,10, "Let the dry appear," is the figure of speech known as *antimereia*, the exchange of one part of speech for another, in this case, an adjective for a noun. "Dry" in the verses refers to the "land" (see Bullinger, p. 495). Genesis 1:11 uses *polyptoton* in which the same part of speech is repeated in a different inflection, specifically, the verb "seeding" is repeated by means of its cognate noun "seed": "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed," literally, "seeding seed" (see Bullinger, p. 275). In other words, vegetation was created by God in a state of bearing seed, and not vice versa—which militates against the notion of evolution and underscores the instantaneous nature of the Creation. Indeed, this **figurative** language testifies to the **literal** nature of Creation week!

So, yes, Genesis 1 (and perhaps every other chapter in the Bible) contains figurative language. But that language is detectable, discernible, and decipherable. None of the language even hints that the events described were imaginary as opposed to

being actual historical occurrences. In fact, simply take your Bible and turn to Genesis chapter 1 and notice how many terms are used that have an obvious, undisputable literal import, including “earth,” “darkness,” “Spirit of God,” “waters,” “light,” “day,” “night,” “evening,” “morning,” “first,” “seas,” “grass,” “herb,” “seed,” “fruit,” “tree,” “seasons,” “years,” “stars,” “fowl,” “fish,” “cattle,” etc. Distinguishing between figurative and literal language is not that difficult! [As a side note, Steven Boyd conducted a statistical analysis using logistic regression, in order to ascertain whether Genesis 1:1-2:3 is Hebrew poetry or historical narrative. He concluded: “The biblical creation account clearly is not poetry but instead is a literal description in real time of supernatural events” (2005 168).]

Corroboration by Other Bible Passages

If the events described in the book of Genesis were not intended to be understood as literal history, one would expect the rest of the Bible to give some indication of that fact. Yet, on the contrary, several passages scattered from the Old Testament to the New Testament allude to the events in such a way that their historicity is assumed. Take, for example, specific verses regarding the creation of the Universe by God. The distinct impression is given in Genesis chapter 1 that God orally **spoke** everything into existence, rather than using some naturalistic, time-consuming **process**. In what is obviously an actual historical setting, reported to us in a literal context of Scripture, Moses informs the Israelites situated at the base of Mt. Sinai—

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work.... For **in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them**, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it (Ex. 20:8-11, emp. added).

No Israelite listening to this declaration would have ever conceived the notion that God created everything in the Universe

over a period of millions and billions of years. The correlation between the days of Genesis 1 and the six day work week enjoined upon people under the Law of Moses would have been unmistakable and could have been understood in no other way but literally.

Another example is seen in Psalm 33—which is certainly written in standard Hebrew metrical verse—but poetry that conveys literal truth. Speaking of God’s creative powers, David declared:

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them **by the breath of His mouth**. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For **He spoke**, and it was done; **He commanded**, and it stood fast (Ps. 33:6-9, emp. added).

The figurative elements of this poetic passage are seen in the notions of “breath” and “mouth”—physical attributes that would not literally, physically characterize God Who is “spirit” (John 4:24; cf. Luke 24:39). But the oral aspect of God speaking the physical realm into existence is literal, even as God literally and audibly spoke to people throughout history (e.g., Gen. 12:1ff.; 22:12; Ex. 3:4ff.; Matt. 3:17; 17:5).

Still another example is seen in the psalmist’s call for praise by inanimate creation:

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, and you waters above the heavens! (Ps. 148:1-4).

Here is an excellent instance of figurative language. Obviously, the Sun, Moon, stars, and waters cannot literally, audibly praise God. Yet, having been created by God, they reflect their Maker.

They manifest attributes that demonstrate their divine origin (cf. Ps. 19:1ff.). Hence, the next verse declares: “Let them praise the name of the LORD, for He commanded and they were created” (vs. 5). Here is yet another forthright indication that the impression projected by the Genesis account, that God literally spoke the Universe into existence, is an accurate impression.

We must ever remember that the Bible is unlike any other book on the planet. It reflects its own divine origin by the attributes that it possesses. It does not divulge its divine message in a sterile vacuum in which a writer expounds lofty ideals, or a listing of ethical do’s and don’ts. Rather, by means of the Bible, God conveys His message to mankind **in history** (cf. Wharton, 1977). We are introduced to the beginning of the Universe, the beginning of the human race, and thereafter we are treated to a sequential, historical narrative that guides us through 4,000 years of human history, climaxing with God’s own personal visit to the Earth. This is all history! And it is clearly intended to be understood literally.

Conclusion

The book of Genesis explains the Creation of the Universe, the corruption of humanity by sin, the catastrophe of the global Flood, and the confusion at Babel. Amazingly, it provides the foundation for anthropology, biology, astronomy, geology, and a host of other disciplines. Critical doctrines that impact all of humanity are rooted in the events described in Genesis, including the necessity of clothing—human modesty—and why we organize our lives in terms of a seven day week. More crucial doctrines that pertain to eternity are also approached early on, including why humans sin, why humans die, and why Jesus would have to die on the cross. The very meaning of human existence is clarified by examining the book of Genesis.

Listen carefully to Charles Darwin’s autobiographical statement regarding the shift that occurred in his thinking that led to his belief in evolution: “I had gradually come, by this time, to see that the Old Testament from its manifestly false history of the world and from its attributing to God the feelings of a revengeful tyrant, was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the

Hindoos, or the beliefs of any barbarian” (pp. 85-86). The integrity of the entire Bible is seriously undermined when anyone compromises the literal, historical nature of the book of Genesis, with its critical teaching on origins. Obstinate clinging to evolution, theistic or otherwise, and stubbornly insisting on a relaxed, devalued interpretation of Genesis, can only end in a diluted religion.

May we love God. May we love His Word. May we defend it against all efforts to destroy its integrity and message. May we pore over its contents—as if our lives, the lives of our family, and the lives of those we influence **depend** upon it. For, indeed, they do. Ω

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Jealousy and Murder

Ben Jones



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Introduction

The fourth chapter of the book of Genesis supplies an immediate introduction to the harsh new world of man after the fall. The story is full of contrasts; the first birth and the first death, the first brother and the first murderer, the first account of faith and the first innovation. Although early man generally lived for centuries, the text suggests he didn't need long to experience the painful but inevitable results of sin. The account of Cain and Abel demonstrates two fundamental principles of life in our imperfect world; man's need for redemption and the persecution of the righteous by the unrighteous. Abel's faith, in the face of his brother's failure, produced a jealousy which quickly mutated into hatred and contempt. Abel's death became a symbol of righteous suffering (Matt. 23:35), while Cain's "murder of Abel exemplified the violent antipathy which righteousness always provokes in the unrighteous" (Stott 144).

Cain's Sacrifice

After expulsion from the garden, Adam and Eve bore two sons. Cain, the elder, became a tiller of the ground, while Abel, the younger, became a keeper of sheep. Each son brought an offering particular to his vocation before God, but the Lord was pleased only with Abel's offering. Moses' record is characterized

by brevity, which serves as both a hallmark of inspiration and a source of questions from commentators. Chief among these queries is the reason for God's rejection of Cain and his offering. Theories abound, but the Bible serves as its own best commentary in this case. "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks" (Heb. 11:4).

The Hebrews writer revealed that Abel offered a "more excellent" sacrifice than Cain. The Greek adjective *pleion* can mean "more in quantity, number, or quality" (Bauer 689), but in context Vincent explains the meaning as "greater in value in God's eyes" (513). The inspired author also indicated that Abel offered his sacrifice "by faith." This Divine commentary on the Genesis narrative demonstrates three significant lessons. First, there was a particular standard by which God chose to receive the offerings of Cain and Abel. This can be seen in the fact that God rejected one offering but accepted the other, as well as Abel's subsequent commendation of righteousness. Second, Cain and Abel were aware of God's standard. Abel offered his sacrifice by faith, which, according to Paul, comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Third, Cain and Abel were held accountable to the revealed standard by God. This was the basis by which the Lord respected Abel and his offering but did not respect Cain and his offering. These concepts are summarized by Stott in the following comment:

According to Heb.11:4 it was 'by faith' that 'Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did', and since faith is always a response to God's word of promise and command, we may assume that God had revealed his will to the two brothers. By faith Abel obeyed; indeed, his righteousness consisted of his believing obedience. Cain, on the other hand, was willfully disobedient as is indicated in Jude 11 (144).

Cain's Warning

God's rejection left Cain angry and sullen. Yet rather than looking inward at his own guilt, he fixed his rage outward in jealousy. The questions posed by the Lord in verse six, "why are you angry?" and "why has your countenance fallen?" suggest that even Cain's expression betrayed his emotions. Keil comments, "by this God gave him to understand that his look was indicative of evil thoughts and intentions; for the lifting up of the countenance, i.e., a free, open look, is the mark of a good conscience" (70). God warned Cain in verse seven that "sin is crouching at the door" (ESV). Again, Keil remarks, "with evident allusion to the serpent, sin is personified as a wild beast, lurking at the door of the human heart, and eagerly desiring to devour his soul" (70). Cain, therefore, must learn to control his desires before they overpower and control him. The Apostle Paul would later instruct the Ephesians to "be angry and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26-27). Cain's anger was the result of his own failure to offer an acceptable sacrifice; he had no one to blame but himself. But if Cain cannot control his anger it will only lead to greater sin. From this text, two additional lessons may be added to the three mentioned above. First, it was possible for Cain to know whether or not he had been pleasing to God (compare 1 John 2:3). Second, Cain had personal responsibility for the situation. If Cain were now to offer a proper sacrifice, he could be pleasing to God. And if Cain acted rashly in anger, God would hold him accountable. There would be no mitigating circumstances or rationalizations for Cain's actions.

Cain's Sin

Moses again recorded this event with few words, but Cain's deed needed no embellishment for effect. The key elements in a murder are motive and opportunity, as any courtroom television fan can attest. Cain's motive was clearly stated by the apostle John:

"For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the

wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:11-12).

Brothers have been fighting since the time of Cain and Abel, and jealousy can be provoked over the smallest of slights. Perhaps the farmer and the shepherd had argued previously over land. Perhaps Adam and Eve fueled a sibling rivalry by playing favorites. These scenarios are mere speculation, although they were real enough for Abraham and Lot and Jacob and Esau. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that seeds of jealousy may have been planted in Cain's heart long before the rejected offering. Cain's shame and frustration undoubtedly prickled at the very sight of his younger brother. Despite God's warning, Cain allowed his anger to fester until an opportune time presented itself. Alone and unsuspecting, Abel fell under the hand of Cain's misplaced rage. The depth of Cain's hatred can be seen in his defiant and deceitful answer to God, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" The corruption of his character can be seen in his fear that he will be killed by avengers of Abel. Cain had become a murderer and a liar, and by such actions demonstrated that Satan had gained a foothold in his heart. This incident serves as a vivid illustration of Jesus' warning not to be angry at a brother without cause (Matt. 5:22). Sin always finds an opportunity to express itself, and so men should guard their hearts against the motivation at all times.

Cain's Legacy

Though God sentenced Cain to wander the earth as a fugitive, he eventually found a home in Nod and fathered a son. His descendants grew in number and influence, domesticating livestock and inventing musical instruments and metal tools. Unfortunately, they were also adept in the cultivation of sin. Lamech introduced polygamy to the world, and composed a song for his wives which boasted of his willingness to kill anyone who crossed him (Gen. 4:23). The progressive nature of sin's influence can be seen from Adam's shame, to Cain's deceit, to Lamech's bold defiance. Cain's physical descendants soon filled the earth

with evil and were eventually destroyed by God in the flood. The New Testament writer Jude remembered Cain as a byword for sin, enshrined in a hall of shame alongside Balaam and Korah.

The Testimony of Abel

Abel, by contrast, remains an example of the power of an obedient faith. His life story was both short and tragic, and none of his words were recorded in Scripture. Only his name, which means vanity, sets him apart from a multitude of faithful but anonymous servants of God. Yet even in death, Abel's faith still speaks. It teaches men that faith is necessary to please God (Heb. 11:6), that the influence of righteousness endures beyond death, and that actions have consequences. Abel's blood cried out to the Lord for vengeance against Cain (Gen. 4:10), and it cries out still as a warning to all who would scoff at the righteous judgment of God.

The Jealousy / Murder Connection

The account of Cain and Abel reveals important truths about man's relationship with his God. But it also provides insight into the role of faith in man's relationship with his brethren. The source of Cain's murderous jealousy was not sensual lust, as one might expect, but rather the worship of God. The Greek word *zēlos* literally means *heat*, but can be translated as either *zeal*, in a positive sense, or *jealousy*, in a negative sense (Bauer 337). The concept of zeal/jealousy appears frequently in both Testaments, and B.A. Milne offers the following explanation:

Both Hebrew and Greek words refer to an exclusive single-mindedness of emotion which may be morally blame-worthy or praiseworthy depending on whether the object of the jealousy is the self or some cause beyond the self. In the former case the result is envy, or hatred of others, which for the New Testament is the antithesis of love and hence the enemy of true Christian friendship. The Bible however also represents the other possibility, of a 'divine jealousy', a consuming single-minded pursuit of a good end (736).

Biblical context should always be considered to determine the proper meaning of these words. Paul described Israel as having a zeal not according to knowledge (Rom. 10:2) and spoke of his jealousy for the church at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:2). These references illustrate both that words are ultimately defined by their use, and that zeal and jealousy may arise from the same pursuit, but inspire quite different responses. The difference is determined by faith. Faith is built on a desire to be pleasing to God, a correct knowledge of God's will, an obedient response to His will, and trust in His promises. Faith is an individual responsibility between God and man, but the most visible components of a man's faith often involve interaction with other men. When brethren share a like precious faith, it is cause for great joy. But when faith reveals a contrast between men, conflict often follows. The apostle John explains the reason for this conflict. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest:

“Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you” (1 John 3:10-13).

The children of God are those who walk by faith, a walk which can be observed by obedience and love. The greatest expression of Biblical love, as demonstrated by Christ, is self-sacrifice (John 15:13). In turn, the children of the devil may speak about faith, but they do not practice righteousness or love. They are motivated by hatred, which finds its ultimate expression in murder. According to John, the inevitable conflict between these two groups began with Cain's murder of Abel. Righteous Abel demonstrated his faith by offering a sacrifice as God directed. His innocent blood was shed unjustly by Cain, a child of the devil. In this respect, Abel's death foreshadowed Christ's own death (Acts 2:23). By contrast, Cain offered his sacrifice not by

faith, but by sight, and then murdered his brother in bitter hatred. Jesus said that the devil was a “murderer from the beginning” and Cain proved his spiritual parentage through his works (John 8:44). Abel acted with zealous faith, Cain with selfish jealousy. Stott noted it was “not the jealousy which covets another’s greater gifts but that which resents another’s greater righteousness” (144). Therefore, Cain and Abel serve as the prototypes for the children of the devil and the children of God respectively. They cannot simply live and let live, or agree to disagree. The righteous are compelled to act by love, leading to submission and sacrifice, while the unrighteous are compelled to act by hate, leading to persecution and murder. This is not to say that every Christian will lose his life through violence, or every unbeliever will be driven to commit murder. Rather, it is the recognition that all men necessarily choose to walk one of two paths, and that choice holds influence over their thoughts and actions. When these paths inevitably collide, the intensity of conflict is determined by the willingness of one side to yield to the other. For this reason, an unwavering display of faith will either invite curious investigation or callous persecution from the world.

Faith Confirms

Biblical faith is based on reasonable evidence (Heb. 11:1). Faith requires trust, but it is not simply a leap into the dark. Faith is more than a list of facts, but it is nothing without those facts. The apostle Paul explained to the Corinthians that the Gospel of Christ was based on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, and that those events had been predicted by the Old Testament Scriptures and witnessed by more than five hundred people in Judea (1 Cor. 15:1-6). For this reason, Paul customarily began his preaching with Old Testament prophecies concerning the Christ and reasoned toward their fulfillment in the life of Jesus (Acts 17:2-3). Paul’s preaching could be investigated, accepted, mocked, or dismissed, but it could not be successfully denied. The truth of the Gospel is irrefutable, despite the best efforts of men. Faith, therefore, is objectionable to the unrighteous man because it confirms the same truth he attempts to reject. Peter and

John once healed a lame man in the temple, only to be arrested and threatened by the unbelieving Jews. Yet concerning this miracle, the frustrated tormenters were forced to admit “we cannot deny it” (Acts 4:16). The truth was unavoidable, and it stoked the fires of jealousy in their hearts. These same Jews, upon witnessing the resurrection of Lazarus, were so enraged by the effects of the miracle that they plotted to kill both Jesus and Lazarus together (John 12:10). Men may reject God’s Word, but they cannot eliminate it from this world. Peter warned of scoffers who “willfully forget” the truth (2 Peter 3:5), but the example of faith serves as a constant and irritating reminder. Faith confirms the existence of God, the reality of sin, and the need for redemption. Faith is the light cursed by men because they love darkness. For this reason, Paul wrote to Timothy, “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). The world cannot destroy the substance of faith, and so it seeks instead to destroy the faithful.

Faith Contends

Faith proceeds from truth. Paul wrote that faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17) and Jesus remarked that God’s word is truth (John 17:17). Faith, then, requires both correct knowledge and application of truth in the life of the believer. Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians that Peter, Barnabas, and other Jewish Christians who refused to eat with Gentile Christians were “not in step with the truth of the gospel” (Gal. 2:14 ESV). Faith both demands and displays a Divine standard, and exposes anything less as counterfeit. Consequently, faith is objectionable to the unrighteous man because it contends with his inferior standards. Abel’s sacrifice was offered by faith; Cain’s by presumption and innovation. Coffman makes an appropriate assessment regarding this situation:

With all the specious logic of modern innovators, Cain might have tried to justify his action thusly: ‘If God wants smoke, my haystack has that fuzzy lamb beat a hundred ways. If God wants value, my wheat will buy fifty lambs. And all

that messy blood; I never liked that anyway! God can save us if we never go near a drop of blood. Surely, God doesn't care about a thing like that; it's the spirit of the thing that counts anyway!' One may say that Cain would never have spoken like this, but his descendants do. And there is every reason to suppose that he fortified his disobedience with the same sort of rationalizing that men today use to defend their sinful tampering with the laws of God (78).

Faith contends with error, hypocrisy, and self justification. It was faith that provoked envious Jews to stone Paul at Lystra (Acts 14:19) and angry pagans to riot against him at Ephesus (Acts 19:29). Paul's own jealous brethren attempted to divide the church at Corinth and preached from envy and strife at Rome. Paul warned Timothy of a time when the brethren would not endure sound doctrine, but would "heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables" (2 Timothy 4:3). As long as the opponents of truth are allowed to control pulpits, faith will remain under assault by its enemies.

Faith Convicts

Faith requires submission to God's will, a quality best demonstrated by Jesus. In Gethsemane He prayed "not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42) and at Calvary He became obedient to the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8). After His ascension, Christ sent His apostles the Holy Spirit, a Helper who would guide them into all truth, and "convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment" (John 16:8, 13). This indicates that the conviction would be accomplished by the inspired teaching of the Spirit. The word convict literally means "to bring to light". The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament explains that when used with the accusative of person "it means to show people their sins and summon them to repentance" (Büchsel 474). All men have sinned, and so all men are convicted by the truth of God's word. According to Paul, however, there is a difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow over sin (2 Corinthians 7:10). Godly sorrow produces repentance that leads to salvation

through submission to God's will. Worldly sorrow produces anger and fear that leads to death through a stubborn refusal to change. Both the Jews who heard Peter preach on Pentecost and those who heard Stephen preach before the Sanhedrin were "cut to the heart" by the Gospel. But while the former group repented and were baptized, the latter stoned Stephen to death. The unrighteous man objects to both the preaching of truth, which convicts him of sin, and the response of faith, which stands in contrast to his disobedience. Peter wrote that righteous Lot was "oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked" (2 Peter 2:7). According to the Genesis narrative, the reprobates of Sodom were angry with Lot not only because he offered protection to the angels, but because "he keeps acting as a judge" (Genesis 19:9). Whether by his words or deeds, Lot's refusal to endorse the sins of Sodom quickly drew the ire of his wicked neighbors. Modern Sodomites, armed with lawyers and publicists, are no less combative toward those who refuse to grant moral sanction to their sinful actions. The unrighteous seek to normalize the practice of sin in order to desensitize society to the guilt of sin. They attempt to call evil good and good evil. They hate faith because it appears so out of step with their own vile behavior. Jesus warned His disciples of just such a reaction to faith by the world: "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matt. 5:11-12).

Faith Condemns

Finally, faith reveals trust in God and His promises. The author of Hebrews wrote that those who come to God must believe "that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Faith does not provide a man with knowledge of the future, nor the guarantee of an easy life. Instead, it expresses an abiding confidence in God to deliver the believer through the unknown difficulties of this world. According to Hebrews 11:7, it was by faith that Noah prepared an ark for the saving of his household. As previously noted faith is based on sufficient evidence, directed by God's word, and

demonstrated by obedience. Noah was warned by God of “things not yet seen,” given specific plans for the construction of the ark, and motivated to act upon those plans with “godly fear.” Noah did not act on a warning from Doppler radar or bargain for perks in the post-flood world. He acted by faith and in so doing, “condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith” (Heb. 11:7). Noah’s condemnation may be understood in two ways. First, his faith may be seen as a contrasting witness against the evil conduct of the world, in the above sense of conviction. Jesus said the men of Nineveh and the queen of the South would both rise up and condemn the unbelieving Jews who had rejected Jesus as the Christ (Matt. 12:41-42). Second, his faith may be seen as an announcement of the condemnation of the world to destruction. In either case, Noah’s faith communicated his trust in God to men who trusted only in themselves. The unrighteous man objects to faith because it condemns his own futile self-reliance. The righteous man, however, is God reliant. The world expresses the vain belief that “I can do all things.” Paul wrote more correctly “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13). This contrast can be observed effectively in relation to the different views of vengeance. God’s divine right to vengeance is well established in Scripture, yet the unrighteous man claims it as his own. Murder becomes his final recourse and the greatest demonstration of his power. But his apparent triumph will ultimately be revealed as failure by God. The faithful are willing to suffer even death because of their confidence in God’s promise of a resurrection; “those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:29). Faith, therefore, remains a constant enemy for the unrighteous man who defiantly charts his life by the final stanza of William Henley’s poem “Invictus”

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

Conclusion

Suffering is a common human experience, but suffering for righteousness sake is uniquely Christian. Peter wrote “yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter” (1 Peter 4:16). The atoning death of Jesus was the centerpiece of God’s plan for man’s redemption. Abel’s death at the hands of his brother Cain foreshadowed Christ’s death at the hands of His own people. Christ’s sacrifice, however, was infinitely greater in character and value. The Hebrew writer noted that Christ’s blood “speaks better things than that of Abel” (Heb. 12:24). While Abel’s blood called for vengeance against Cain, Christ’s blood calls for mercy and forgiveness for all men. Christians should respond to such love with a willingness to share in His death, and an expectation to share in His life eternally. World War II historian Stephen E. Ambrose once wrote that for soldiers in the infantry, the Purple Heart was not a medal but a badge of office. Suffering is that badge for the Christian, the inevitable consequence of a walk of faith. From Abel to Zechariah, God’s people suffered at the hands of their brethren. Jesus calls His disciples to follow that same path by faith: “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life (Rev. 2:10). Ω

Biographical Sketch

Ben Jones preaches for University church of Christ in Morgantown, WV. He received a B.A. in Bible from Freed-Hardeman University in 1998. Ben has previously served as the minister for the Kaiser and Douglas congregation in Ravenswood, WV, and the associate minister for the Dewey Avenue congregation in St. Marys, WV. He currently teaches a class on the books of Ephesians and Colossians at the West Virginia School of Preaching.

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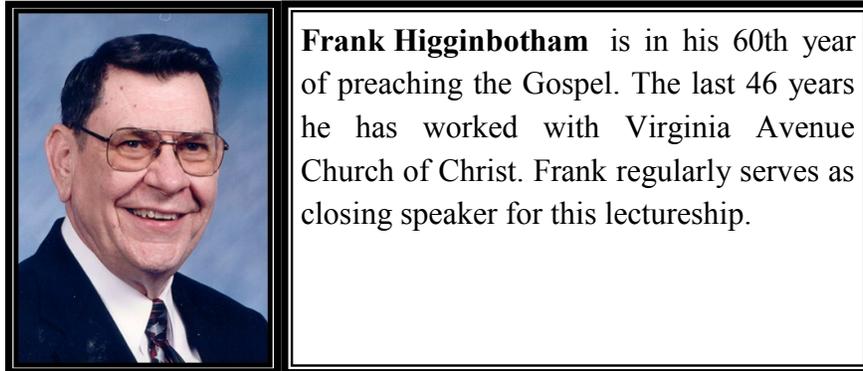
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Jesus In Genesis 1 – 11

Frank Higginbotham



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Introduction

When we think of Jesus, we think of some event or happening in New Testament time. The record of Jesus' life is told in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. At the end of his book, John explained that he had written this record to give evidence of the life Jesus lived and to make believers of those who would read his work. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). However, Jesus' existence is not limited to the New Testament or even to the Old Testament. Jesus is eternal! He has always been and thus we are not surprised to read about Him in Old Testament books such as Genesis.

Jesus Revealed

Our first picture of Jesus is revealed in the very first verse of the Bible. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The word in the Hebrew language for God is 'Elohim'. The word is in the plural form rather than the singular form 'El'.

The original word Elohim, God is the plural form and is believed to imply the plurality of persons in the Godhead--- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Dehoff 7).

The original word Elohim, God, is certainly the plural form of El or Eloah, and has long been supposed, by the most eminently learned and pious men, to imply a plurality of Persons in the Divine nature. As this plurality appears in so many parts of the sacred writings to be confined to three Persons, hence the doctrine of the Trinity, which has formed a part of the creed of all those who have been deemed sound in the faith, from the earliest ages of Christianity (Clarke 27-28).

More than one person is involved in the beginning of all things. The significance of this is seen when later in the account of things that were created, the plural form is again seen. God said let 'us' make man in 'our' image and likeness. (Genesis 1:26-27). All three persons of the Godhead were present and participated in the creation. The New Testament clearly affirms the triune nature of the Godhead (Matt.28:19; 2 Cor.13:14) as present and active in creation (John 1:2; Heb.1:2) (Elkins 6).

God created the world by Jesus. "And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:" (Eph. 3:9). Paul describes the part Jesus had in the creation to the church at Colossee.

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:15-17).

Verse three in Genesis one makes reference to the Spirit moving on the face of the deep. We see all three of the Godhead having part in the creation. The use of the plural term for God is also seen in the account of the tower of Babel. When the people sought to make a name for them, they decided to build a tower to heaven. God's way to make them see their error was to confuse their language. This event is spoken of in this language.

And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech (Gen 11:6 -7).

Jesus Is Eternal

It needs to be understood that Jesus is eternal. He has always existed. He was not one of the created beings. He existed before the creation. Jesus discussed His eternal nature with the Jews and explained that he preceded human existence.

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by” (John 8:56-59).

The Jews were having trouble in accepting the fact that Jesus is eternal. They could not understand how a man who was less than fifty years old could have known Abraham. They were not yet convinced that Jesus is eternal. He existed before Abraham was born. John wrote on this subject in his book. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything

made that was made” (John 1:1-3). The person he was speaking of is identified later in verse fourteen. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” The ‘Word’ who was with God and who was God in the beginning of time is identified as being Jesus. John also makes this same explanation of Jesus’ nature as he begins his letter called 1st John.

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:1-3).

When we open our Bible and begin to read we see Jesus introduced in His eternal nature in the very first verse of the Bible. He possesses the characteristics of divinity.

Jesus Gives Victory

A second reference to Jesus in Genesis that we would like to consider is found in Genesis chapter three and verse fifteen. This is a passage that prophesies of the victory of Jesus over Satan and his attempt to bring about the destruction of mankind.

“And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:14-15).

Man had just sinned in violation of God's law. God had placed limitations on the fruit he was permitted to eat. Man brought sin into the world. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). The punishment for sin was clearly ahead. At this low time in history God gave a promise of hope. The prediction was that the conflict between the devil and the Lord would result in victory for God over the work of Satan. Satan would make a strike on the Lord that was referred to as a wound to his heel but the Lord would deliver the fatal blow to the head of Satan. Christ would be crucified but in His resurrection the Lord would destroy the work of Satan. No greater victory could be imagined by mankind, who was at an all time low, than to think of Jesus as the resurrected Savior of the world. The story of this victory is the subject of Revelation, the final book in the Bible. God and His people will overcome. Victory is ours. Paul stated thanks to God for this great victory.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:54-57).

This promise of victory over Satan and sin is most precious to us because of the fact that we all are guilty of sin. The first chapter of Romans makes clear that the Gentile world falls short of living up to God's law and thus they fall guilty before God. That which is true of the Gentile is also true of the Jew. This is pointed out in Romans two. In chapter three Paul concludes that all fall short of God's will and thus are guilty of sin. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). It is most welcome news then to learn that Jesus provides the answer for us. This is the great announcement that we have under consideration in Genesis chapter three and verse fifteen.

....It shall bruise thy head, or rather He: who? The seed of the woman; the person is to come by the woman, and by her alone, without the concurrence of man. Therefore, the address is not to Adam and Eve, but to Eve alone; and it was in consequence of this purpose of God that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin; this, and this alone, is what is implied in the promise of the seed of the woman bruising the head of the serpent. Jesus Christ died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to destroy him who had the power of death, that's the devil. Thus he bruises his head—destroys his power and leadership over mankind, turning them from the power of Satan unto God; Acts 24:18. And Satan bruises his heel—God so ordered it, that the salvation of man could only be brought about by the death of Christ: and even the spiritual seed of our blessed Lord have the heel often bruised, as they suffer persecution, temptation, etc. which may be all that is intended by this part of the prophecy. (Clarke 53)

The third chapter of Genesis has the most tragic story in the Bible---the sin of man; and, it has the wonderful glimpse of man's redemption. The woman had listened to the words of the serpent and let Satan lead her and Adam into sin. God in cursing the serpent, said hereafter there would be enmity between the serpent and the woman, between his seed and her seed. In the antagonism to obtain between them, it is said that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent and the serpent would bruise his heel, i.e., the heel of the seed of woman. In this marvelous passage, sometimes called the proevangelium, the first gospel proclamation, there is a reference to the coming of Christ, who would eventually overcome the works of the devil. (Elkins 7-8)

The third chapter of Genesis gives the account of the entrance of sin into the world. Adam and Eve violated the law of God by eating of the fruit God had forbidden. Sin with all of its

consequences was now a real problem that had to be dealt with by all of the human family.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12).

Sin is defined as being unrighteousness. “All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death” (1 John 5:17). Since the commands of the Lord are righteous, we conclude that unrighteousness is not keeping the commands of God. “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness” (Ps. 119:172). We sin when we fail to obey the commands of God. Solomon stated this fact in the book of Ecclesiastes. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Eccl. 12:13).

Failure to do the good we know to do also is defined in the Bible as being sin. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (Jas. 4:17). Our lives are to be used in doing the right thing. God’s book makes it clear to us what is right and what is wrong. Without God and his book we would have no idea of what proper moral conduct is. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12).

A violation of our conscience is also defined in the Bible as sin. “And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he* eateth not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23). When we have been taught the right thing to do but go ahead and do what we want in violation of our conscience, we are thus guilty of sin.

The Bible also informs us that we sin when we transgress the Law of God. “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1John 3:4). The word ‘transgression’ means to go beyond boundaries. God has set the boundaries for us in His Word.

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11).

Adam and Eve were clearly at a low point in human history. Adam was responsible for the introduction of sin into the world. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). They were cast from the garden and no longer had access to the tree of life. Man needed a promise that would bring hope back again. This promise was the one spoken in Genesis three and verse fifteen. A Savior was to come and deal with the problem of sin. He would win a victory over Satan that man could not win by himself. Christ was promised as the savior of the world. John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the Savior of the world. “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

Consequences of Sin

At this point, it would be well for us to consider the great consequences that are placed on fallen man because of his sin. First, note that sin causes a separation between man and God. Since man is totally dependent on God, this situation makes great problems for man.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they

should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (Acts 17:24-27)

Even our breath comes from God. Without breath we die. In pointing out the problem Israel had with sin, the prophet Isaiah made this comment in regard to sin. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:1-2). Israel was reminded that the reason that they had not received help from God was not through God's inability to help but was directly related to their sins. Why should they think that God would help them when they were guilty of sin and had turned away from God?

Second, it should be noted that sin brings about spiritual death. The pay for living a life of sin is death. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). To die spiritually is the worse thing we can imagine. We were given a never dying soul from God. It is our most valuable possession. Jesus explained the value of the soul in this statement.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt. 16:24-26).

Some seem to think that they can work at sin and not receive sin's wages. These wages are contrasted with the reward God gives for serving Him. Eternal life is the goal and the reward for living in service to God.

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Matt. 25:32-34)

A third thing to remember is that sin bars us from Heaven. Sin cannot be in the presence of God. Jesus said this to His disciples.

Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins. (John 8:21-24)

Conclusion

The book of Genesis gives us an early picture of the salvation God was going to provide for man. Before the world began God gave thought to His way for the salvation of man and planned the church. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:10-11). The church was in the eternal plan of God. Salvation is available to men in the location that God has specified. For Noah and his family salvation was placed in the ark. (Gen.7:23). The house with the blood on the door provided salvation for those inside. (Ex.12). Today God makes salvation available in the church. The saved are added to the church when they are baptized into Christ. "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Salvation has been placed in Christ. "Therefore I endure

all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10). The purchase of the church was paid for by the blood of Christ. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). The book of Genesis gives us the first picture of this great sacrifice paid for us.

Satan could not have victory over God. God's people will win. With the sacrifice of Christ and His ultimate resurrection from the grave, there is reason for hope. Satan could not hold Christ in death.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Cor. 15:55-58) Ω

Biographical Sketch

Frank Higginbotham was born in New Martinsville, WV, February 21, 1933. He is the son of Mr. & Mrs. A. G. (Bus) Higginbotham. He was graduated from Magnolia High School in New Martinsville and from Florida Christian College in Tampa, FL. First located work was with the Columbia Street Church of Christ in Fairmont, WV. From there he worked with the church in Wellsburg and the West Street church in Weirton, WV. In 1964 he moved to the Virginia Avenue Church of Christ in Chester, WV and is currently in his 47 year with this congregation. Frank has done radio and TV preaching and has been preaching for 59 years. He is speaker at this time for 'Bible Meditations'. This 15-minute program is produced five days a week and has been on the air since 1949. He preaches on various lecture programs and conducts 8 to 10 meetings a year. Frank is married to Rose Marie (King) Higginbotham and they are the parents of three children. Donna (passed away in 1965), Janie Gallagher who is married to

Brent Gallagher (the preacher for the Oakwood Road Church of Christ in Fairmont) and Steve who is the preacher for the Karns Church Of Christ, Knoxville, TN. The Higginbotham's have nine grandchildren.

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Scripture Index

Genesis		1:11-12	82
1	18, 21, 35, 36, 38, 42, 44, 45, 47, 61, 62, 135, 153, 187, 205, 357, 403	1:11	64, 195, 382
1:1	36, 38, 40, 44, 54, 57, 62, 63, 65, 66, 72, 82	1:12	84, 379
1:1-2	255, 286, 293, 344	1:14	190, 193, 205
1:1-3	143	1:15	193
1:1-4	275	1:15-16	82
1:1-10	138	1:16	101
1:1-11	155	1:17	192, 193
1:1-31	63, 64, 66, 79, 84, 87	1:18	84
1:1-2:3	383	1:20	83, 192, 205, 317
1:2	54, 189, 382	1:21	38, 54, 64, 83, 84
1:3	21, 82, 205, 292, 378	1:24	64, 205
1:3-31	255	1:25	84
1:3-4	190	1:26	18, 36, 40, 91, 199, 205, 285, 300
1:3-5	64	1:26-27	39, 40, 44, 55, 87, 199, 305, 404
1:4	84	1:26-28	212
1:5	190	1:26-30	65
1:5-8	275	1:27	36, 38, 54, 62, 63, 65, 233, 377
1:6	192, 205	1:27-28	38
1:6-7	65, 379	1:27-30	254
1:7	82, 193	1:28	39, 233, 324
1:8	193	1:28-30	253
1:9	205, 379	1:29	233
1:9-10	85, 275	1:31	40, 41, 44, 55, 84, 345, 360
1:9-13	194	2	2, 18, 21, 35, 36, 38, 42, 44, 47, 60, 61, 62,
1:10	84		
1:1-10	138		

	<i>135, 153, 205,</i> <i>357, 403</i>		<i>44, 45, 61,</i> <i>62, 135, 153,</i> <i>205, 357, 403</i>
2:1	<i>63, 65, 66,</i> <i>380</i>	3:1	<i>66, 92, 93,</i> <i>313, 360, 365</i>
2:1-3	<i>64, 66</i>	3:1-6	<i>64</i>
2:1-4	<i>66</i>	3:1-7	<i>332</i>
2:2	<i>380</i>	3:1-19	<i>44</i>
2:2-3	<i>65</i>	3:3	<i>96</i>
2:3	<i>58</i>	3:4	<i>94, 378</i>
2:4	<i>54, 62, 63,</i> <i>66</i>	3:4-5	<i>63</i>
2:7	<i>2, 38, 39,</i> <i>40, 64, 91,</i> <i>101, 199, 205,</i> <i>305, 381</i>	3:5	<i>94</i>
2:8	<i>100</i>	3:6	<i>96, 157, 235,</i> <i>309, 360</i>
2:8-10	<i>331</i>	3:7	<i>98</i>
2:9	<i>66, 96</i>	3:8-19	<i>206</i>
2:11	<i>381</i>	3:9	<i>98, 309</i>
2:14	<i>381</i>	3:12	<i>308</i>
2:15-17	<i>42, 43, 44,</i> <i>306, 332</i>	3:13	<i>64</i>
2:16-17	<i>63, 64, 93, 205</i>	3:14	<i>66</i>
2:16-18	<i>38</i>	3:14-15	<i>335, 406</i>
2:17	<i>63, 97</i>	3:14-19	<i>66</i>
2:18	<i>63, 306</i>	3:15	<i>42, 43, 44,</i> <i>46, 47, 61,</i> <i>73, 101, 102,</i> <i>206, 237, 361,</i> <i>363</i>
2:18-23	<i>64</i>	3:16	<i>63, 310, 313</i>
2:19-20	<i>91</i>	3:16-17	<i>360</i>
2:20	<i>306</i>	3:16-18	<i>47</i>
2:21	<i>381</i>	3:16-19	<i>43</i>
2:21-24	<i>317</i>	3:17	<i>309</i>
2:21-25	<i>38</i>	3:17-18	<i>63</i>
2:22	<i>100, 308</i>	3:17-19	<i>47, 66</i>
2:22-23	<i>63, 307</i>	3:19	<i>63, 64, 378</i>
2:24	<i>62, 63, 64,</i> <i>308, 317, 378</i>	3:20	<i>38, 46, 308</i>
3	<i>21, 35, 36,</i> <i>38, 41, 42,</i>	3:21	<i>46</i>
		3:22	<i>66</i>

3:22-24	100, 206	5:17	211
3:23	64	5:18	60
4	35, 61, 62, 135, 153, 205, 357, 403	5:20	211
4:1	324	5:21-24	65
4:3-4	380	5:22	166
4:3-5	65	5:24	259
4:4	62	5:27	211
4:5	238	5:31	211
4:7	310	6	21, 24, 25, 35, 61, 62, 119, 135, 153, 205, 357, 403
4:8	66	6:1-4	37
4:8-11	62	6:1-22	62
4:9	206	6:3	165, 286
4:10	65, 393	6:5	74, 165
4:10-11	206	6:5-6	73
4:11-14	333	6:5-7	363
4:12	160	6:5-12	211
4:13-14	206, 207	6:8	125, 155, 165, 173, 174, 297
4:14	160	6:8-12	65
4:16	66	6:9	147, 165, 171, 172, 173, 363
4:17-21	161	6:9a	127
4:23	392	6:9b	128
4:23-24	161, 208	6:11	211
4:25	66, 324	6:11-12	127
4:25-26	331	6:13	73
5	35, 60, 61, 62, 135, 153, 205, 357, 403	6:13-14	380
5:1	63, 65	6:14-16	65
5:1-10	380	6:14-21	168
5:2	62	6:17-22	334
5:3-24	66	6:20	380
5:3-29	62	6:22	177, 184
5:5	211, 381	7	21, 24, 25, 35, 61, 62, 119, 135, 153,
5:8	211		
5:11	211		
5:14	211		

	205, 357, 403	11	35, 60, 61, 62, 135, 153, 205, 357, 403
7:1	65		
7:1-21	380		
7:1-24	62 65	11:3	380
7:10-23	63	11:4	380
7:11-12	72	11:5	300, 380
7:13	65	11:6-7	405
7:17-24	66	11:7	285, 300, 380
7:23	412	11:8-10	380
8	21, 24, 25, 35, 61, 62, 119, 135, 153, 205, 357, 403	11:9	300
		11:10	148
8:1	125, 168	11:10-26	62
8:1-22	62	11:11-12	380
8:20	72	11:17-20	380
8:21-22	75	11:20-21	380
9	21, 24, 25, 35, 61, 62, 119, 135, 153, 205, 357, 403	11:22	380
		11:27	149
9:1	299	11:30	324
9:1-2	168	12:1	384
9:1-4	212	12:1-3	212
9:1-6	39	12:3	237
9:2-3	65	12:16	380
9:3	258	12:24	380
9:5-6	212	15:16-21	214
9:6	159, 214, 216	16:2	309
9:7	299	19:9	398
9:11	147	20:2	381
9:11-17	75	22:2	381
9:22	363	22:12	384
10	35, 61, 62, 135, 153, 205, 357, 403	22:17	380
		22:17-18	102
10:1	147	29:20	320
10:6	381	39:9	95
		49:10	102
		50:20	84
		Exodus	
		3:4ff	384

4:22 289
 6:24 36
 12 412
 13:9 208
 13:16 208
 20:8-11 188
 20:11 55, 58, 190,
 255, 291
 20:12 214
 20:12-14 214
 20:13 213
 31:15-17 58
 31:16-17 188
 31:17 291

Leviticus

10:1 370
 10:2 370
 11 197
 18:24-25 214
 19:18 214
 20:10 213
 20:13 213
 24:17 214

Numbers

11:12 322
 12 366
 12:2 367
 12:6-8 367
 35:30 214

Deuteronomy

4:35 290
 4:39 290
 5:1-2 154
 6:4 285

6:5 323
 6:8 208
 6:24 234
 7:1-4 214
 10:12-13 174, 178, 223
 10:14-18 178
 11:18 208
 14 197
 19:21 210
 21:18-22 213
 25:17-19 214
 28 277
 29:29 80
 32:43 226
 33:27 284

Joshua

3:10 284
 10:14 58
 24:14 239

Judges

17:6 220
 21:25 220

I Samuel

1:8 320
 15 214

II Samuel

6:6 240
 6:6f 153
 7:12-16 102
 7:14 226, 289

I Kings		7:11	74
2:1-4	102	8	40, 259, 260
17:21	259	8:2	39
21:25	307	8:3-4	275
		8:3-8	205, 257
		8:4-5	212
		8:5-6	90
		8:6	40
		8:6-8	254
		9:17	277
		10:4	274
		14:1	271
		14:1-3	182
		16	226
		16:10	226
		17:5	41
		18:46	45
		18:49	226
		19:1	57, 193, 278
		19:1ff	385
		25:8	84
		29:10	26
		33:6	xii, 57, 205
			225
		33:6-9	292, 384
		33:9	xiii, 40, 57,
			225
		33:12	277
		34:3	321
		38:4-6	121
		38:22	45
		45:6-7	226
		46:10	87
		47:8	213
		50:17-21	71
		51:1-2	121
		51:4a	321
		51:7	121
I Kings			
2:1	172		
2:11	172, 259		
4:35	259		
13:21	259		
I Chronicles			
15:13	240		
Nehemiah			
8:8	244		
9:30	286		
Job			
1:6-11	92		
1:7	101		
1:9	95		
7:17	39		
12:15	26		
13:15	95		
23:12	95		
31:1	319		
38:2	257		
42:3	81		
Psalms			
1:1	183		
1:1-2	174		
2:1	226		
2:7	226		

51:8 321
 51:14 45
 53:1 271
 62:11 72
 70:1-2 205
 82:1-4 214
 88:1 45
 89:14 284
 89:19-37 102
 90:2 284
 95:7-8 226
 101:2 320
 102:25-27 226
 104:4 226
 104:5-9 26
 104:30 293
 110:1 226
 115:2-3 274
 115:16 40
 117:1 226
 119 40, 234
 119:14-16 175
 119:33 248
 119:68 353
 119:71 350
 119:72 179
 119:89 248
 119:97 175
 119:103 179
 119:105 176
 119:127 179
 119:129 175
 119:172 409
 139:7-10 284
 139:14 257
 144:3 39
 145:20 323
 148:5 55, 225, 292

148:1-4 384

Proverbs

1:8 324
 3:12 322
 5:15-19 325
 5:15-23 312
 12:4 309
 14:12 177
 14:34 233
 17:6 322
 18:22 307, 309, 327
 19:1 326
 19:14 307
 20:27 87
 22:13 322
 24:9 121
 24:13-14 179
 31:10 309
 31:10-31 315
 31:11 307, 326
 31:16 307
 31:24 307
 31:29 325
 31:30 314

Ecclesiastes

3:20 205
 5:17 39
 8:12 217
 12:7 39, 200, 205
 12:13 223, 409
 12:13-14 329

Isaiah

1:6 121
 1:18 87

1:18-20	121
2:2-4	247
6:1-5	74
6:8	179
6:9-10	247
7:14	44
9:6	44
11:10	226
13-19	214
13:10	192
40:22	193
43:10-11	290
48:18	286
53:5	121
53:7-8	247
53:10	46
54:4-5	46
55:3	226
59:1-2	45, 335, 411
61:1-2	286
64:6	166
66:18	301

Jeremiah

4:25	192
6:15	228
8:12	228
10:23	41, 79, 224
18:7-10	214
31:3	75
31:9	289
31:22	44

Ezekiel

9:4	208
9:6	208
13:19	219

4:25	192
25-32	214
33:1-11	179

Daniel

2:21	213
4:17	213
4:38	72

Hosea

6:6	245
11:12	173, 176

Amos

3:3	128, 175, 178
-----	---------------

Micah

4:1-3	247
5:1	44
6:8	173, 177

Matthew

1	<i>xiv</i>
1:1-2	378
1:1-17	60
3:16-17	287
3:17	368, 384
5:11-12	398
5:22	214, 392
5:28	214
5:38-39	214
5:43-48	181
5:45	165
6:9	205, 288
6:12	121

6:13-14	174	25:41	362
6:14	121	25:46	47
6:15	121	28:18	295, 311
6:19-20	86, 303	28:18-20	41, 178, 181
7:21	155		288
7:26-27	<i>xii</i>	28:19	36, 291, 404
9:13	245		
10:28	330	Mark	
11:23-24	378	1:9-11	287
12:29	362	10:6	<i>xiv, 2, 59</i>
12:41-42	399		62
13:13-15	288	10:6-8	377
15:8-9	234	10:7-9	62
16:15-16	323	10:18	284
16:16	284	13:19	62
16:24-26	411	14:36	291
17:5	368	16:15-16	181
19	233	16:16	184, 369
19:4	59, 62		
19:4-5	<i>xiv, 377</i>	Luke	
19:4-6	323	1:25	324
19:5-6	62	1:34-35	44
19:6	318	3:6	45
19:8	161	3:21-23	287
19:9	372	3:23-38	60
19:17	353	3:34-36	62
19:26	284	3:36	211
22:30	228	3:36-37	378
22:31	227	3:36-38	62
22:37-38	178	3:38	200
22:37-40	323	4:17-21	287
23:33	362	7:11-14	259
23:35	62, 377, 389	8:46-56	259
24:37	33	11:2	288
24:37-39	26, 62, 378	11:4	121
25:31-46	362	11:21-22	362
25:32-34	412	11:51	62
25:34	45		

15:17	121	5:29	399
17:26-28	xiv	5:30	289
17:27	63	5:37	289
20:36	259	5:46-47	378
22:42	397	6:27	291
23:34	289	8:21-24	412
23:44-45	45	8:24	323
24:13-35	245	8:32	249
24:19	245	8:34	121
24:25-26	245	8:44	63, 103, 362
24:27	245		378, 395
24:39	384	8:56-59	405
		10:07	176
John		10:10	101
1:1	291	10:30	291
1:1-3	58, 63, 293	11:41	291
	406	11:43-44	259
1:2	404	12:10	396
1:2-3	224	12:31	206
1:9	101	12:32	99
1:10-11	295	12:48	41
1:11	238	14:6	176, 368
1:12-13	303	14:15	76
1:14	154	14:19	260
1:16	154	14:26	288
1:17	153	15	139
1:18	286, 288, 291	15:5	275
1:29	410	15:13	394
3:3-5	323	15:26	288
3:16	75, 359	16:7	288
3:16-17	99	16:8	397
4:23	288	16:13	288, 397
4:23-24	239	17:1	289
4:24	284, 384	17:2	41, 42
5:3	40	17:17	175, 396
5:17	294	20:17	291
5:28	46, 47	20:28	291
		20:30-31	323, 403

Acts

2:1-4	301
2:5	302
2:11	302
2:23	359, 395
2:22-24	302
2:24	206
2:27	260
2:28	184, 302
2:32	46
2:33	301
2:38	246
2:39	184
2:40	184
2:47	412
3:15	206
4:12	368
4:16	396
4:24	57
4:25	226
5	125, 289
5:3	291
5:3-4	290
5:4	291
7:17-19	372
7:55	291
8:30	227
8:35	247
9	227
10:34	155
10:34-35	184
10:35	155
11:14	227
13:34	260
13:34-35	226
14:15	63, 224
14:19	397
17:2	87

17:2-3	395
17:17	87
17:23	71
17:24	63
17:24-27	411
17:25	57, 284
17:28	38
17:29	36, 200
17:30-31	40, 47
19:29	397
20:28	413
24:18	408
28:28	45

Romans

1:4	46
1:7	289
1:15-17	181
1:16	180
1:18	123
1:18-32	214
1:19-20	295
1:20	36, 59, 63, 78, 284, 351, 379
1:20-22	278
1:20-26	37
1:22	207
1:25	71, 123
1:26	123
1:28	138
2:14-15	87, 214
2:40-41	262
3:1-2	214
3:20	290
3:23	92, 98, 237, 407
3:25	237

3:26	74, 284	12:19	214
4:11	301	13:1	213, 311
4:16	150	13:1-7	214
4:17	63	13:4	208, 214
5:1-4	349	13:7	219
5:8	75, 379	14:10	40, 47
5:12	41, 42, 55, 63, 92, 309, 378, 407, 409, 410	14:11	311
5:12-14	60, 206	14:12	41
5:14	63	14:17	183
5:14-15	379	15:9-12	226
6:3-4	323	16:18	308
6:4	27	16:20	102, 362
6:4-5	184		
6:6	121	I Corinthians	
6:9	46, 260	1:18-31	80
6:17-18	246	2:1-16	40
6:23	100, 411	2:10-13	291
7	214	2:11-13	227
7:1-3	323	2:14	274
7:11	308	3:18	308
7:12	234	6:16	63, 378
8:2-4	154	7:1-5	325
8:9	291	7:2-5	319
8:11	291	8:4	290
8:20	55, 63	8:6	290, 291
9:5	291	11:3	63, 318
9:9-10	379	11:7	63
9:23	238	11:8	63, 307, 313, 378
10:2	394	11:9	63, 306
10:17	159, 239, 390, 396	11:11-12	311
11:22	74, 127	11:12	378
11:33	236	13	289, 318
11:36	291	15	46
12:1-2	40	15:1-6	395
		15:10	126
		15:21	55

15:21-22	42, 64
15:22	59, 305, 309
15:25-26	362
15:38-39	64
15:45	55, 59, 64, 305, 378
15:47	64, 378
15:49	184
15:54-57	407
15:55	206
15:55-57	44
15:55-58	413
15:57	46, 206

II Corinthians

1:2	289
3:17-18	291
4:4	206
4:6	64, 378
4:7	179, 227
4:16	87
4:16-5:8	205
5:7	286
5:10	40
5:21	46
6:14	121
7:10	397
10	47
11:2	394
11:3	64, 379
11:31	289
13:14	291, 404

Galatians

1:1	291
1:3	289
1:6-10	80

2:14	396
3:8	226, 237
3:8-27	154
3:10	154
3:16	45, 102
3:24-25	214
3:26-27	102, 303, 323
3:28	302
3:29	103
4:4	44, 102, 211
4:6	291
6:1-2	121

Ephesians

1:2	289
1:3-4	359
1:4	45, 294
1:7	183, 358
1:9	73
1:10	211
1:20-22	311
1:20-23	47
2:4	75
2:4-5	75
2:6	27
2:8	126
2:8-9	284
2:18	291
2:21-22	291
3:9	404
3:10-11	412
3:11	294
3:18-19	75
4:13	185
4:26-27	391
5:19	370
5:22	313
5:22-23	318

5:24	313
5:26	294
5:28	321
5:31	379
5:33	313
6:1	325
6:1-3	311
6:2	326
6:4	306, 322
6:5-6	326
6:5-8	311
6:11	92
Philippians	
1:2	289
1-2	62
2:6	291
2:7	312
2:8	397
2:9-11	311, 362
2:10-11	47
2:11	291
4:13	399
Colossians	
1:2	289
1:15-17	404
1:16	57, 224, 311, 371
1:16-17	294
2:9	36, 291
2:12	46
2:13-14	61
3:10	39
3:10-11	302
3:18	313
3:20	311, 324, 325

3:21	306
3:22	311

I Thessalonians

1:7-10	47
4:13	46
4:13-18	47
5:12-13	311
5:23	39

II Thessalonians

1:6-9	214
1:7-9	99
1:7-10	362
1:9	284
2:3	308

I Timothy

2:4	130
2:5	290
2:9	326
2:9-10	314
2:13	60, 305, 313
2:13-14	158, 379
2:14	43, 157, 308, 313
4:3-6	258
4:4	345, 353
5:8	320
5:10	324
6:18	39

II Timothy

1:8-9	359
1:10	103
2:10	413

2:12	396	3:7	226
2:13	284	4:3	65
2:15	248	4:3-4	380
3: 14-17	40	4:4	65
3:16	68	4:10	65, 380
3:16-17	80, 248	4:15	96
4:3	397	5:1-10	380
4:10	92	5:7-8	330
		6:13-14	380
Titus		6:18	284
1:2	39, 45, 184	6:19-20	61
1:5a	345	6:20	380
1:15	121	7:1-2	380
2:5	314	8:5	238
2:11	45	9:4	291
2:11-12	169, 409	9:24	192
3:5-6	284	9:27	87, 211
		9:27-28	47
		10:4	237
Hebrews		10:5	237
1:2	58, 224, 227	10:31	74
	404	11:1	395
1:1-2	41	11:3	65, 191, 205
1:3	40, 225, 289,		292, 380
	294	11:4	65, 159, 238,
1:5-13	226		239, 390
1:6	191	11:4-5	380
1:8	289	11:5	65, 259
1:10	65, 380	11:5-6	174
1:10-12	294	11:5-7	171
2:7-8	65	11:6	183, 323, 393
2:8	259		398
2:8-9a	91	11:7	27, 65, 76,
2:10	224		125, 128, 398
2:14	102, 206		399
2:14-15	44, 45, 46,	11:7-12	380
	206, 260	11:10	303
3:1	103	11:16	303

11:17-22	380		167, 248, 284,
12:3-11	155		379
12:9	39, 200	3:20-21	27, 145, 246,
12:16	380		247
12:24	65, 380, 400	3:21	125, 128, 249
12:28	178	3:21-22	129
12:28-29	73	4:16	400
13:5	93	5:8	360
13:17	311		

James

1:2-4	349
1:13	236
1:14-15	96
1:17	84, 177
1:17-18	101
2:18-20	177
2:26	205
3:1	311
3:9	65
4:7	101
4:12	40
4:14	131
4:17	42

I Peter

1:3-4	46
1:10	45
1:15	284
1:20	45
2:13-14	220
2:24	46
3:4	329
3:7	321
3:18	124, 125
3:18-22	119, 121
3:20	74, 75, 130,

II Peter

1:16-21	40
2:5	130, 145, 178,
	379
2:7	398
2:20-22	121
3	47
3:3-4	26
3:5	379, 396
3:5-7	27, 285
3:6	24, 379
3:6-9	379
3:7-8	27
3:8	51, 68, 284
3:9	130, 284

I John

1:1-3	406
1:5	284
1:6	121
2:3	391
2:4	155
2:15-17	183
2:16	97
3:1-2	103
3:4	42, 177, 348,
	409
3:8	66, 362, 378

3:10	362	19:19-20	103
3:10-13	394	20:10	47
3:11-12	392	20:10-12	47, 362
3:12	66, 381	20:11-15	41
4:8	284	21:6	47
4:16	284	21:18ff.	103
4:19	75	21:23	191
5:3	40	22:1-2	103
5:11-13	61	22:13	47
5:17	42, 409	22:17	181
5:19	182	22:21	45
5:20	291		

II John

9-11	410
------	-----

Jude

3	45
7	381
11	66, 207, 381, 390
14	60, 66, 178, 381
20-21	291
25	284

Revelation

1:18	45, 102
2:10	400
4:11	41, 353
6:10	164
7:9-10	302
7:10	45
12:7-9	102
12:9	42
13:8	45, 359
17:8	45

