

Commentary & Notes on Genesis

The commentary and notes below are adapted from the teaching materials of Annie Kartzozian (1906-1989). In 1934 Annie became a missionary in China with OMS. During World War II she spent 21 months in a Japanese concentration camp as a prisoner. She was repatriated in 1943 and sailed on the famous vessel Gripsholm. In 1949 she made a miraculous last-minute escape from Beijing before it fell to Mao's Communists. When she could no longer enter China, Annie went to Taiwan. Annie and her family have been life-long friends of our family. In 1989, while pastoring with the United Armenian Congregational Church of Hollywood I had the honor of participating in her funeral. It was during those years in Los Angeles that Annie gave me her teaching notes (the commentary below) - laboriously typed on what is now yellowed paper with hand written marginal notes, many of which are in Chinese. - Pastor Steve

INTRODUCTION

The Three basic Promises & Covenants of the Old Testament

In founding of the Hebrew nation God's ultimate purpose was to bring a Savior into the world; His immediate purpose was to establish in the Hebrew nation an example of the worship of the one true God in the midst of a world of idolatry (Genesis 3:15; Deuteronomy 6:4).

1. God's Promise To Abraham - Genesis 12:2,3

God founded the Hebrew nation for the specific purpose of making it a Messianic nation to the world; that is, a nation through which one day a great and wonderful blessing would come from God to all the nations.

2. God's Covenant with the Hebrew Nation - Deuteronomy 11:26-28

If Israel would be true to Him they should prosper in the land of Canaan; if they forsook Him and served idols they should be removed out of the land. The Old Testament is an account of God's effort to establish in the world of idol-worshippers the thought that there is one true and living God by building a nation as a living example.

3. God's Promise To David - 2 Samuel 7:16

That David's family should reign over God's people forever. God selected on family from whom would come the Messiah.

Name Of The Book

Genesis is the book of beginnings

Author Of The Book

The author of the book is Moses.

I. His Name

"Moses" means "drawn out" (Exodus 2:10). His name at court would be "Ramoses" as the King on the throne was Rameses II (see below).

II. His Life

1. The son of Levi - Exodus 2:1

The son of Levi, born of that union, became the greatest man among mere men in the

whole history of the world (Numbers 12:3). How far he was removed in genealogy from Levi, it is hard to know: only four generations (Genesis 46:11; Exodus 6:16-20); at least ten or twelve generations (Exodus 12:37; 38:26). This is probably because in some lists only the important heads of families are given. The names of the immediate mother and father of Moses are not certainly known. The mother "*saw that he was a fine child*" (Exodus 2:2); so they defied the commandment of the king (Exodus 1:22) and for three months hid him instead of throwing him into the river.

2. Adopted prince - Exodus 2:5-10

The princess of Egypt saved the child by adopting him. Thus he would receive her family name. The usual meaning of this royal name was that he was "born of" a royal princess through the intervention of the God Ra. But, since he was not "born of" the princess they fell back upon the primary meaning of the word "drawn out" (Exodus 2:10 - see above). The family name was "Mes" or "Moses." Pharaoh's daughter was probably the sister of the king on the throne. She would then be lineal heir to the throne, but debarred by her sex. Josephus relates (Ant. II, IX, 7) that she had no natural son, and thus Moses became heir to the throne, not with the right to supplant the reigning Pharaoh, but to supersede any of his sons.

Very little is known of Moses' youth and early manhood at the court. He would certainly be educated as a prince. "Instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22).

3. Friend of the people

The faith mentioned in Hebrews was at work (Hebrews 11:23-28). See Exodus 2:11-14; Acts 7:24. He became practically a traitor and endangered his throne rights and probably his civil rights also. He thought to do right and be a nobody than to be a tyrant and rule Egypt.

4. Refuge in Midian - Exodus 2:15

We are told nothing of the escape and the journey, how he eluded the vigilance of the court guards and the frontier sentinels. The friend of slaves is strangely safe while within their territory. He reached the Sinaitic province of the empire and lived there. There God mellowed and matured the haughty prince instructed in the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was transformed into the wise, well-poised, leader, statesman, lawgiver, poet and prophet. God usually prepares His great ones in some quiet place away from the haunts of men and near to the "secret place of the most High" (Psalm 91:1).

5. Leader of Israel - Exodus 3:10

He was given a most appalling commission - to go back home and deliver his kinsman from a terrible slavery at the hand of the most powerful nation on earth. Why was he not arrested as a traitor when he returned to the court?

6. His own family - Exodus 2:16,21,22

7. Death - Exodus 34:7

III. Moses' Place In The Scriptures

Joshua 8:30-35; 24:5
1 Samuel 12:6-8
1 Chronicles 23:14-17
Psalm 77:20; 99:6; 105; 106
Isaiah 63:11,12
Jeremiah 15:1
Daniel 9:11-13
Hosea 12:13
Micah 6:4
Malachi 4:4
Matthew 17:3; 19:8
Mark 7:9-13; 9:4; 12:26
Luke 9:30; 16:29-31; 24:27,44
John 1:17,45; 3:14,15; 5:46
Acts 28:23
Romans 5:14
Jude 9
Revelation 15:3

IV. Moses' Work And Character

1. The Author

The Jewish Church, from its most remote antiquity, has ascribed the work (writing of Genesis) to Moses; and the Christian Church from its foundation has attributed it to him too. Jesus and His apostles have completed the evidence and put the question beyond doubt.

There are a few things in the Pentateuch which were probably added by a later hand: Deuteronomy 1:1-5; 2:12; 34:5-12 (Also Genesis 12:6 "*And the Canaanite was then in the land*"; Numbers 21:14 "*In the book of the wars of the Lord.*"). These were probably the work of Ezra, who according to tradition, collected and arranged the Old Testament canon.

From Adam to Noah there was but one man necessary to the correct transmission of the history of this period of 1656 years. This history was probably known to Methuselah (Genesis 5:21,27), who lived to see them both. In like manner, Shem connected Noah and Abraham, having lived to converse with them both; as Isaac did with Abraham and Joseph, from whom these things might be easily conveyed to Moses by Amram who was contemporary with Joseph. Even on the authority of tradition alone these writings stand upon a foundation of credibility. But the unerring Spirit of God directed Moses also in the selection of facts and the ascertaining of dates. In his writings Moses also constructed everything according to the pattern which God showed him in the mount.

2. The Lawgiver

Moses first gave laws concerning the Passover (Exodus 13). At Sinai Moses gave a code of laws known as the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 24:7). This contains the Moral Law (Exodus 20:1-17). This is followed by a brief code suitable to their present

needs and immediate prospects (Exodus 20:24,26; 21-23).

Some of the laws of Moses relating as they did to passing problems, have themselves passed away; some were abrogated by Christ and others explicitly fulfilled; but most of it is the warp and woof of the best in the great codes of the world to this day. The morality of the Decalogue is unapproached among collections of moral precepts. Its divinity, like the divinity of the teachings of Jesus, lies not only in what it includes but what it omits.

The laws of Moses were not a collection of court decisions, but codes given abstractly and arranged in systematic order.

3. The Prophet

Moses' work and character culminate in the prophetic office. It was as prophet that he held the place of highest eminence in the world until a greater Moses came (Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19; Acts 3:20-23). He gave to Israel a ritual of worship which most completely typified the redemptive mercy of God and which is so wonderfully unfolded in Hebrews, as it has been more wonderfully fulfilled in the atoning death of Christ. Moses' revelation of God is transcendent. The vision that Moses gives of God exalts and glorifies Him beyond expression.

General Divisions

1. Beginnings of the world 1:1-2:6
2. Beginnings of man 2:7-11:32
3. Beginnings of Israel 12-50

Brief Outline Of The Book

1. Creation - chapters 1,2
2. Fall - chapters 3,4
3. Ten Patriarchs - chapter 5
4. The Deluge - chapters 6-9
5. The Nations - chapters 10,11
6. Abraham - chapters 12:1-25:10
 - a. His call - chapter 12
 - b. Lot - chapters 13,14
 - c. God's promise - chapters 15-17
 - d. Sodom - chapters 18,19
 - e. Heritage - chapters 20:1-25:10
7. Isaac - chapters 25:11-27:46
 - a. God's promise - chapter 26
 - b. His birthright - chapter 27

8. Jacob - chapters 28-36
 - a. His flight - chapters 28-30
 - b. His return - chapters 31-36

9. Joseph - chapters 37-50
 - a. Prophet - chapter 37
 - b. Prisoner - chapters 39,40
 - c. Prime minister - chapter 40
 - d. Reconciliation - chapters 42-45
 - e. Reunion - chapters 46-50

I. CREATION Chapters 1,2

The whole system of the Christian religion depends upon the accuracy of certain statements in Genesis. The credibility of the entire Bible depends largely on that of its first chapters. Genesis is the foundation for all that follows. What happened to the first Adam explains what happened to the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-47). The first promise of the Redeemer is given here and He is shown as coming from Israel and the tribe of Judah.

Chapter 1

Verse 1: *"In the beginning"* - Prior to the creation of the heavenly bodies there was no measurement of time. There is no date for creation as time has to do with man and his history, not with history of creation.

"God" - the Bible is given to enable mankind to believe in God. It does not argue for the existence of God. It assumes His existence. In its first statement it asserts in simple grandeur that God created the universe. The word is in the plural form - the first evidence of the Trinity. It presents the universe as coming into being by the will and act of God who is eternal, independent, and self-existent.

"Created" - This is an account of creation, not growth. *"Bara"* is used 54 times in the Bible - always as the work of God and *meaning "to bring into existence without the aid of pre-existing material."* The verb *"bara"* is joined in the singular number with the plural noun *"Elohim"* which points out the unity of the Divine Persons in this work of creation. In the Trinity there can be but one will, one purpose, and one infinite and uncontrollable energy. *"Asah"* used in Genesis 2:7 (also 1:7) means, *"to fashion or form from existing materials"* - a man's body was formed; his spirit was created.

Note on *"bara"* and *"asah"*

"Bara" - to bring into existence without the aid of pre-existing material:

Genesis 1:1 - God created the heaven and the earth

Genesis 1:21 - God created great whales

Genesis 1:27 - So God created man in His own image

Genesis 1:27 - Male and female created He them

"Asah" - to fashion or form from existing materials

Genesis 1:7 - God made the firmament
Genesis 1:16 - God made two great lights
Genesis 1:25 - God made the beast of the earth
Genesis 1:26 - Let Us make man in Our own image
Genesis 1:32 - God saw everything that He had made

"The heavens and the earth" - Heavens is plural meaning more than one atmosphere - the whole solar system. Astronomers estimate that the Milky Way contains over 30,000,000,000 suns, many of them larger than our sun (as of 2011 that estimation stood at 300 to 400 billion plus - ed.). There are at least 100,000 galaxies like the Milky Way (this number has been revised considerably upward since Annie wrote her commentary - ed.).

Verse 2: *"And"* - Countless ages may have passed between *"the beginning"* and the *"first day"* - an independent period with room for all the geological ages of which the earth gives proof. Verse 2 is not a commentary on verse 1. Verse 2 gives the next event with *"and,"* a word in the Hebrew which separates thoughts.

"Was" - Active form of the verb "to be."

"Without form and void" - Isaiah 45:18 - *"He did not created it empty"* translates the same word for "without form." The words *"without form and void"* are found together in only two other passages. In both they express the ruin brought by some outpouring of the wrath of God (Isaiah 34:11: *"confusion and... emptiness"*; Jeremiah 4:23-27: *"without form and void."*) Was this chaos the result of Satan's first experience in independent rulership (Isaiah 14:12; Luke 10:18)? Is the darkness cause by sin and the absence of God's regulating hand?

"The Spirit of God" - God the Holy Spirit. Some translated the movement as that of the wind. Jesus spoke of Him as "wind" (Matthew 23:3; John 3:8; also at Pentecost Acts 2:2). Where the Spirit of God moves there is hope.

"Hovering over the face of the waters" - *"The earth"* did not resemble that which was afterwards called "earth" on the third day (Genesis 1:10). Here is the first mention of "water" as we know it. *"The deep"* (Hebrew "tehom") refers to the depths of the ocean - literally, "the abyss." *"Waters"* (Hebrew "mayim") refers to water in general and may speak of the earth as either, gaseous, liquid, or solid (ice).

Note on creation:

God is seen uttering the thought of His will in the Word of His mouth; and accomplishing His will through the activity of His Spirit. This produces an order which is described as proceeding in states, culminating in man. In the first four stages (light, day and night, the heavens [atmospheric heavens], the earth and the seas) we find nothing other than the brining of order out of disorder; nothing new is originated. There is simply the manipulation by the Spirit of God of things originally created, in the preparation for a new order of being. Through these states the word used describing the activity of God suggests only the manipulation of materials already in existence. "Asah" (Note above in verse 1) always pre-supposes the existence of things which are to be manipulated into new forms.

Verse 3: “*And God said*” - Each of the days begins with this phrase. God is uttering the thought of His will in the Word of His mouth (Psalm 33:6,9; Hebrews 11:3).

“*Light*” - Moses was kept from saying that God created light. Light is not a substance but a manifestation of what had previously been in existence - force. It is one of the most astonishing productions of the creative skill and power of God. It is the grand medium by which all His other works are discovered, examined, and understood so far as they can be known. It is the fastest traveler known, traveling 186,000 miles per second. It reaches us from the sun in 8½ minutes, a distance of between 93 and 95 million miles.

There was light on the earth before the sun began to function. Here we have light independent of the sun as the light diffusing body. Light involves motion, therefore cannot dwell in a place. Job in chapter 38, verse 19 says, “*Where is the way to the dwelling of light?*” Why did he not say “place”? Light was before the sun which is not the source of light but a light-attracting and defusing body.

“*There was light*” - Proof of the authority and power of God, stated in the simplest terms possible.

Verse 4: “*God separated the light from the darkness*” - This does not imply that light and darkness are two distinct substances since darkness is only the absence of light; but these words refers us to the rotation of the earth which is the cause of the distinction between day and night, by bringing the different parts of the earth successively into and from under the solar rays. It was probably at this moment that God gave this rotation to the earth, to provide day and night, a merciful provision for the creatures who were placed on the earth later.

Verse 5: “*The first day*” - The word “day” is undefined as to length of period (a literal 24 hour day or a period of time). In 2:4 it is declared that God made earth and heaven in a day which cannot mean one day of equal length with those already referred to, even though the Hebrew word is the same.

Verses 6-8: “*Let there be an expanse*” - A separation of the waters above from the waters beneath. God now moves to suspend enormous quantities of water in the atmosphere above. Notice the seemingly level line forming the base of the clouds. What a tremendous weight must be borne up by the atmosphere! The atmosphere tempered the brightness of the light to the blue of the sky which is so restful to the eye of man for whom God prepared the earth. The moisture in the air also served to blanket the earth from unbearable heat and provided suitable conditions for the vegetation of the next day.

“*Raqia*” (translated “expanse” or “firmament”) is used in the Old Testament only 17 times in the original Hebrew and nine of these are in Genesis one (verses: 6,7,8,14,15,17,20). In verse 14 it refers to the expanse of the heavens which includes the stars. Lights were placed in it. But it also refers to the earth’s atmosphere (verse 20) in which birds fly. What is not included is the place of God’s habitation. The word means “limitless expanse.” In a sense, “*Let there be something nebulous and unlimited spread out between the waters to separate the water from the water.*” Vast amounts of water are separated into two separate bodies (the upper and lower) so that life could exist on the planet. The upper body of water is as real as the lower which we see, swim in, fish, sail on, etc. The upper body contains waves and billows caused by winds, has tides, planes as on seas, birds

swim in it, a parachutist floats on it. The lower firmament supports the upper firmament. The firmament provides air for men, animals, birds, insects, etc. The firmament provides us with atmospheric pressure necessary for our well-being. The firmament is a source of rain which is part of the cycle necessary to support life.

Verses 9,10: *“Waters under the heavens be gathered together...and let the dry land appear”* - The earth buried beneath the waters was raised up and above the flood waters. Note that the waters were gathered together (not created) in one place. The waters of the sea are one body. Next the dry land appears, not in one place but in sections. The seas are connected; the continents are not. The waters are confined within bounds (Psalm 104:5-9). This was accomplished by the lowering of the earth’s crust in some places and the elevating of it in other places. Three quarters of the earth’s surface is water. Scientists tell us we have exactly the right quantity of water and land surface. If the water surface was larger, we would have too much rain. If it were less, we would not have enough. Isaiah 40:12 tells us that God measured the waters and weighted the land. There is also a relation between the mountains and hills to the level land that affects our well-being. Ecclesiastes 1:7 tells us that all the rivers run into the sea, but the sea is never full, for the waters return to their source. Vapors rise from the ocean’s surface; in the cold upper air this vapor condenses with the arid inside, forming clouds. Psalm 135:7 tells us the clouds are carried by the winds over the land; there is an electric flash, the chock masses the globules and the rain comes down. It took men many centuries to figure this out. There is an all-wise Designer and Director behind these arrangements of nature. They were planned for the productiveness of the land and the good of the human and animal kingdom placed upon the land.

“And God saw that it was good” - This is the judgment that God pronounced on His own works. They were beautiful and perfect in their kind. They were in weight and measure perfect and entire, lacking nothing. Why is this expression of approval given once on the first, fourth, fifth, and sixth days; twice on the third and not at all on the second? In verse 31 this approval is given to all of God’s creation, so we know that the work of the second day was included... Perhaps the two expressions in the third day should have been given at the end of the second day. There is one version which arranges it this way. All other version give it as we have it here. We know that the entire creation was good; why it is not stated at the end of verse eight, we do not know (Deuteronomy 32:4).

Verses 11-13: *“Vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit”* - At the command of God earth began to bring forth vegetables and shade and fruit trees. These are general expressions in which all kinds of vegetable productions are included. *“Fruit trees”* is not to be understood here as we use it today; it signifies all trees; not only those which bear fruit, which may be applied to the use of men and cattle; but also those which had the power to propagate themselves by seeds, etc. All the skill, wisdom and power of men and angels could not produce a single grain of wheat.

“Which is their seed, each according to its kind” - Which has the power of multiplying itself by seeds, slips, roots, etc. This power with which God has endowed the vegetable kingdom is astonishing. Take the elm tree for example: At first one seed is deposited in the earth. In the course of its vegetative life this tree may produce 1,584,000,000 seeds; and each of these seeds has the power of producing the same number. Through the second, third, and fourth generations the total sums are too immense for the human mind to conceive. Plants multiply themselves by slips too. An eternal boundary has been set -

the invariability of the species. These cannot be permanently crossed, even by artificial means. The idea of transmutation of species stands contradicted by all known facts.

Verse 14: *“Let there be lights”* - The Hebrew word for “light” in these verses is not the same found in verse 3. The word for “light” used in the first day is “or”; but the word used of the fourth day is “maor”. The latter has a locative prefix and signifies a place where light is stored, or from which it is reflected....There was already light. On the fourth day these luminaries were prepared to regulate the distribution of light, a function which they may have had in the beginning but which is interrupted by the judgment which befell the earth between verses 1 and 2. It is not said that sun, moon, and stars were created on the fourth day (Isaiah 40:26). God restored to them their regulating functions over the earth. Light was centered in the sun, its rays hastened through space to be reflected by the moon during the night hours (Psalm 102:25).

First purpose: To divide day from night. The Creator has seen to it that we wake and sleep at healthful intervals. All nature is forced to take a rest. The great masses of humanity live in the temperate zones where nature adjusts the length of day and night.

“Let them be for signs” - This is the second function. They are continual tokens of God’s concern for man and signs that God has established the seasons, etc.

“For seasons, and for days and years” - Purpose number three signifies the months which are regulated by the moon. Vegetation needs light and seasons for growth. Also it may point to the determination of the times when the sacred feasts were to be held. Further, stars: 1) Guide mariners and aviators; 2) Are integral to future events (Matthew 2:2; Luke 21:25); 3) Determine weather (Matthew 16:2,3); and 4) Are related to faith (Psalm 8, 19).

Verse 15: *“To give light upon the earth”* - Function number four of these heavenly bodies is to give light upon the earth.

Verse 16: *“God made two great lights”* - The heavenly bodies serve definite purposes. They are “Great” according to the proportion of light they shed upon the earth.

“The greater light” - God has designed the sun to produce and send forth light and heat in a manner which is entirely of His planning and continual maintaining. The sun is tempered to the needs of plant and animal life.

“The lesser light” - The light of the moon is reflected.

“And the stars” - The stars in general are stars similar to our own with the possibility of bodies moving around them. Since the stars are innumerable, there are potentially innumerable worlds dependent on the power, protection, and providence of God.

Verses 20-23: *“Let the waters swarm with swarms”* - or *“Let the waters bring forth abundantly.”* These words may indicate that these creatures were not brought into existence singly or in pairs. This also refers to the innumerable millions of microscopic animals found in the waters. Naturalists have discovered not less than 30,000 in a single drop of sea water! How small and yet each is a perfect animal. What a merciful provision this is for man - that the waters bring forth abundantly. Thousands of the earth’s inhabitants live most of the year on fish only. Fish afford a wholesome and nutritive diet.

Thus while God shows His power in creation, He also proves His permanent provision for the sustenance of man.

“So God created the great sea creatures” - All the great sea animals. God delights to show Himself in little as well as in the great things.

“According to their kinds... ‘Be fruitful and multiply’” - Everything was given the power of reproduction after its kind. In this sense God’s creation is continuous. The power of transmitting life depends every moment upon God. God is the creator of all future generations in giving the first the power to reproduce themselves.

“And every winged bird” - God’s wisdom and skill are again in the forming of birds, whether intended to live chiefly on land or in water. Again He made both the large and the small.

Verses 24,25: *“Livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth”* - Three classes of land animals are now brought into being; animals suited for association with man, creeping things (reptiles and worms) and wild animals. All these were grass and herb eating (Genesis 1:29,30). Man also was at first a vegetarian. In the present state of things in the world, animal food is allowed. The world is now filled with carnivorous birds and animals as well as fishes, which testifies to the unnatural condition under the curse. Those who would forbid all meat to man, should notice that the animals require meat, which they did not in the beginning.

Verse 26: *“Then God said, ‘Let us’”* - It is evident that when we come to man, a very different order of being is referred to. In all previous acts, God spoke and it was done. When it comes to man, the Creator pauses to take thought, to hold council and form a resolution. All this suggests the superior intelligence of the creature God was about to form as well as the seriousness of the results.

Here again is the intimation of the Trinity (John 1:2; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

Man is the masterpiece of God’s creation; thus all the person in the Godhead are represented as uniting in counsel and effort to produce this astonishing creature... All other creatures are represented as the effect of God’s word. But man is represented as the work of God according to plan and consideration.

“In our image, after our likeness” - the complete picture can only be seen when we bring together all that entered into the creation of man. Man is a special creation, having body, soul, and spirit, thus different from all other animate life. In this respect he was made after the likeness of God. God was now producing a spirit. God is the fountain from whence this spirit issued, hence the stream must resemble the spring which produced it.

1. He has body, soul, and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23); 1) Body: an organized system formed by the creative energy of God out of the dust of the earth; composed of bones, muscles, and nerves; of arteries, veins and a variety of other vessels in which the blood and other fluids circulate; 2) Soul: the seat of the different affections and passions, such as love, hatred, anger; with sensations, appetites, etc.; and 3) Spirit: the immortal principle, the source of life to the body and soul, without which the animal

functions cannot be performed how perfect soever the bodily organs may be; and which alone possesses the faculty of intelligence, understanding, thinking and reasoning; and produces the faculty of speech wherever it resides.

2. Only the human has the faculty of distinguishing between good and evil, something which man must have received from God. Man is being capable of moral and spiritual progress; but this faculty of self-determination carries with it the possibility of self-destruction. Even our spiritual faculties are constructive or destructive.
3. Man is provided with powers for indefinite expansion. He has an intellect and boundless aspirations that argue the necessity of a heaven in order to carry them out.
4. He was given the power of choice.
5. He was made to have dominion over all the earth.
6. He was created male and female
7. He has an inventive faculty. the ability to make something different from what as made before. This ability is purely human. A beaver can make a dam, a bird a nest, a bee a hive, but the dam, the nest, and the hive made yesterday are exactly like those made since creation. The other species only reproduce; man alone originates.
8. He could speak the name of God and sing His praise. The world up to this point had no intelligent occupant. Not a creature could speak the name of God or sing His praises.
9. He is made to have fellowship with God.
10. He is destined to know, love, and dwell with His Maker through eternity.
11. Man was made to have dominion over the lower creatures.

Image and likeness are not synonymous terms. "Image" has to do with the inner construction of being that is somehow patterned after the Triune Godhead. Man is a special creation, made to have fellowship with God. Man is a special creation, made to have fellowship with God. In this respect he was made in the image of God. God was producing a spirit. Since God is the fountain from whence this spirit issued, hence the stream must resemble the spring which produced it.

"Likeness" suggests outward form. God has no outward form for He is Spirit (John 8:24). Just as Christ is God visualized (John 1:18) so God made human man in His likeness; that is, visualized Himself. Jesus is the express image of God's person (Hebrews 1:3). In becoming man He did not empty Himself of His divine nature. He emptied Himself only of the outward and visible manifestation of the God head. So, God visualized Himself in the man He created. But we must remember that through the fall, man has lost much of his outward likeness to his Creator. Just what he was in the Garden of Eden, we cannot now know.

If God does not reveal Himself to man in human terms, it is impossible for man to have

any conception of God. If He were revealed in angelic language, it would be unknown to us. He stooped to express Himself in terms humanity can comprehend. In the humanity of Jesus is the ultimate expression of God seeking to identify Himself with man.

What is to be understood by the divine image? We are certainly not to think of the human body as if it was a copy of the divine form, for Elohim, the creative God, is without form. We might rather say, that the human figure was to be so formed that it might serve to represent God Himself when He revealed Himself (Psalm 94:8-10; Ezekiel 1:26). The forms of animals never appear in the Old Testament as a vehicle of God's self-manifestation, but were representative of Jehovah only in idolatrous worship.

The nobility which appears in the bodily figure of man is certainly not to be excluded from the idea of the divine image, but it is an error to limit the latter to what is bodily. It is equally an error to limit the divine likeness to the domination over the animal world. This, no doubt, is also contained in the idea, but only as a consequence, therefore as a secondary element. The divine likeness is rather to be referred to the whole dignity of man in virtue of which human nature is sharply distinguished from that of the beasts. Man, as a free being, is set over nature, and designed to hold communion with God, and to be His representative on earth... Man finds no corresponding companionship among all the animals. Later man is not given permission to kill another man because of his divine likeness. Although he has permission to kill every animal (Genesis 9:2-6).

To the ethical idea of God corresponds the ethical idea of man. Man is to stand at the head of the creatures, invested with dominion over time, with whom God holds intercourse as with His equal, and who is appointed, like God to be a free agent.

Verse 27: *"In the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."* - The image and likeness of God are seen in the man and woman together and not in either alone. In God are Fatherhood and Motherhood, parenthood and childhood. In these two beings, in their unity as the crowning glory of creation, God Himself is revealed.

Verse 28: *"And God blessed them"* - He marked them as being under His special protection and care. Also He gave them power to propagate and multiply their own kind on the earth.

"And let them have dominion" - Man was made in the image of God that he might have dominion over the lower creatures. He bends all nature to his service. He has powers that render his weaker body stronger than the force of much stronger animals. Man has this power from the Godhead, although it is now greatly limited by sin.

Verses 29.30: *"I have given you... them for food"* - It seems from this that man was originally intended to live upon vegetables only. Probably no animal whatever was originally designed to prey on others. Nothing is said here to be given to any beast besides green herbs. Before sin entered there could be at least no violent deaths (Isaiah 65:25b).

Verse 31: *"Very good"* - Meaning, superlatively or only good. The plan of creation was wise. The work of creation was well executed. The different parts of creation were properly arranged and related. Their nature, limits, mode of existence, manner or propagation, habits, mode of sustenance, etc. were established. Everything was formed

to utmost perfection of its nature, so that nothing could be added or diminished without rendering them inefficient to the end proposed. God had so done all these marvelous works as to be glorified in all, by all, and through all.

“There was evening and there was morning” - It was remarkable that through the whole of this chapter, whenever the division of days is made, the evening always precedes the morning. This may be because darkness was pre-existent to light (1:2). Time is reckoned from the first act of God (in the creation of the world) which took place before light was called forth into existence.

Chapter 2

Verses 1-3: God’s creative goal was reached with the creation of man. God beheld His own image in man. He rested in fellowship with him.

God had created the world in six days and rested on the seventh in which His work was complete. Into this rest of God, man entered and it continued until the tempter came and sin entered. The rest of God and man resulted from the perfect realization of divine purpose by divine power. It is thus a prophecy of the secret rest to all God’s children of all ages.

“God blessed the seventh day” - Same word as in 1:22 and 28. Man, like God, is to work and rest. Work with God’s blessing terminates in rest.

God hallowed the seventh day but did not command man to observe it. When living in full communion and fellowship with the Creator, he shared in that rest. Later he was commanded to observe the Sabbath (Exodus 16:5,22-30). It is by the authority of God that the Sabbath is set apart for rest and religious purposes as the six days are appointed for labor. He who labors with his mind on the Sabbath is as much a transgressor as he who labors with his hands. He who idles away his time in the six days is equally guilty as he who works on the seventh day.

Body, mind, and spirit - the Creator designed the mind to improve by exercise, the body to increase in vigor and health in honest labor, and the spirit to rest in fellowship with the One from whom it came. Only thus can man attain to God’s high goal for him as Creator.

The divine rest of the seventh day has no evening (Proverbs 4:18).

Verses 4-7: This section is introduced by a summary of all that preceded the coming of man. The heaven and earth were created (1:1) and they were made (1:3-19).

“Jehovah God” (LORD God - ESV) - This is the first time this name is used. The meaning is explained in Exodus 34:5-7. In these words God showed Moses fully what was implied in the name Jehovah.

“A mist was going up” - this is the process which we call “rain” although it may have fallen always gently and evenly.

In verse 7 the creation of man is described in such a way that the fullest truth concerning his nature may be known. Three distinct movements are noted: 1) God used material

already existing for the physical basis of man; 2) God communicated to that which He had formed out of the dust His own life, so that man became; 3) by the final act, a living soul in the likeness and image of God. Man became complete with the inbreathing (Job 27:3; 33:4; Isaiah 42:5 - cf. 1 Kings 17:21). Thus he is essentially spirit... Here, in the most distinct manner, God shows us that man is a compound being, having a body and soul distinctly and separately created: the body out of the dust of the earth, the soul immediately breathed from God Himself (John 6:63). The body derives its origin from the earth, therefore it is perishable. God's inspiration gave both spirit and understanding.

Soul and spirit are divisible (Hebrews 4:12). The soul is the seat of affections, desires, and emotions. The spirit is that part which knows (1 Corinthians 2:11).

Verses 8-17: *"In Eden"* - Eden signifies pleasure or delight. It was probably located in the Mesopotamia area near the sources of the great rivers Euphrates, Tigris, Phasis, and Araxes.

"The tree that was pleasant to the sight" - Every beautiful tree or plant which for shape, color, or fragrance delights the senses.

"And good for food" - All fruit-bearing trees including the pulpy fruits as well as the nuts; also all vegetables.

"The tree of life" - Every medicinal tree, herb, and plant whose healing virtues are effective as a means for preserving the body of man in a state of continual vigor and as an antidote against death. Man was probably naturally mortal with a capacity for immortality. How he would have been carried into immortality had he not sinned, we cannot know (see Revelation 2:7; 22:2,14).

"The tree of the knowledge of good and evil" - It is very difficult to know just what is intended here. The fruit of this tree was forbidden to indicate that it is only in the presence of what is prohibited that man can be morally tested. The prohibition is that which makes him recognize a distinction between good and evil. He is put in a position in which good is not the only thing which he can do. An alternative is present to his mind and the choice of good in preference to evil is made possible to him... This tree was a constant teacher and reminder of the fact that there were some things which could be done and others which could not. The eating of the fruit would not have increased this moral faculty, but the prohibition was intended to exercise the faculty he already had. Note that not other creation is tested but man.

"Out of Eden" - This was the first abode of the divine glory, indicated especially by the mention of the cherubim in 3:24. They were bearers of the divine presence.

"To work it and keep it" - From the beginning man was intended for work. Gardening is the first kind of employment on record and is that in which man was engaged while in a state of perfection. Man is to serve in subjugation to the will of his Creator. He was to reign over all beneath him. He exercised dominion over the earth by dressing and keeping (same word as 3:24) the garden.

"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden" - He had permission to live on the fruit of his own toil.

"You shall not eat" - This is the first prohibition God gave to man. This indicated the limits of his liberty. There were things man could do. There were bounds beyond which he might not go. This prohibition was given as a test of his obedience and as a proof of his being in a dependent state. He was lord of the lower world, but God was his sovereign and he must act always under his authority. He could not do this, unless he had a rule of conduct. God gave the rule. It is no matter of what kind it is, as long as obedience to it is not beyond the powers of the creature who is to obey. Man's highest function could only be fulfilled when his will is submitted to the will of God. Is God opposed to man, whom He created, gaining knowledge? Man should not attempt to guide himself by his own judgments, but to look to God, his Creator, for guidance in all matters.

"You shall surely die" - Moral death leads to physical death. Spiritual death by losing the life of fellowship with God. Physical death by becoming mortal and continuing in a dying state until death. It is not that they should die immediately but every moment of man's life may be considered as an act of dying until soul and body are separated. With the announcement of death man may no longer enjoy the tree of life.

Verses 18-25: *"It is not good that the man should be alone"* - Man was made a social being. To alone was not good. God's creation was good (incomplete). Now He works to complete the good life for the man created. The ultimate purpose of creation was not that of self-sufficient being, but that of working together and living together in harmony and cooperation.

"Make him a helper fit for him" - A counterpart of himself, one formed from him and a perfect resemblance of his person. Literally - one like standing opposite to or before him.

"The man gave names to all livestock" - God had a two-fold purpose in this: 1) To show Adam with what comprehensive powers of mind his Creator had endued him; and 2) To show him that no creature yet formed could make him a suitable companion. God wants fellowship with man. Man, made in His image, also wants fellowship.

This shows the perfection of knowledge given to Adam. The names given to different animals in Scripture express some prominent feature and essential characteristic of the creature to which they were applied. This is strong proof of the original perfection of man. Adam was made in the image of a wise and perfect Being, and he must resemble the One who produced him.

"There was not found a helper fit for him" - When the creatures were brought to Adam that he might assign them their name, it is probable that they passed in pairs before him. He was convinced that none of these creatures could be a suitable companion for him. Note that Adam, as these creatures, is created from the earth. But, Adam is unable to call any of them his equal. Formed from the ground and yet created in the image of God, Adam belongs to two worlds.

"A deep sleep" - This was literally a "deep sleep."

"Took one of his ribs" - "rib" or part of his "side." Probably both bone and flesh were taken. God could have formed the woman out of the dust of the earth. But God formed her out of a part of man himself.

“Woman” - (In Hebrew “*isha*”; man in Hebrew “*ish*”) This is the same word as that used for man except that the feminine ending is used. This literally means “she-man.”

“Brought her to the man” - She now passes or appears before him just as the other creatures had done. When the woman came, formed out of himself, he recognized in her one suitable in person and mind to be his companion. He had been in a deep sleep but he knew what she was, who she was, and for what God had formed her - hence the insert of verse 23.

God made Adam by a miracle. God divided by a miracle. God untied them by a miracle.

“Shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife” - This is a more intimate connection than between parents and children.

Regarding marriage:

1. It is a divine institution.
2. God sees that it is good.
3. Its original form is monogamy.
4. It is the first and basic form of human society from which all other forms of society arise.
5. The marriage bond is stronger than the moral relation between parents and children which is placed so high in the Old Testament.
6. It is not simply a bodily union but also a spiritual union. Thus in man and women, and not in either alone, the image and likeness of God are seen. In their unity, God Himself is revealed.
7. God made the woman out of man so that they man should ever treat and consider the woman as part of himself. As no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and supports it, so should a man deal with his wife.
8. God made the woman for man and derived her being, under God, from him. So should she see that she reverence her husband.

“Were not ashamed” - As sin had not yet entered into the world and no part of the body had been put to improper use, therefore there was no shame. Shame can only arise from a consciousness of sinful or irregular conduct. They had no doubts about each other. There is harmony of the man with himself, with the man and the woman, and with both of them towards God. They knew each other and they knew God. After sin man becomes the only creature who needs artificial covering.

II. FALL Chapters 3,4

Chapter 3

Verse 1: This verse connects the human race with events which occurred before man was placed on this earth. Sin existed in the universe before it entered Eden... At the end of chapter two there is an account of the perfection and happiness of the first two human beings. How long man had remained in the realization of his life according to the Divine purpose, we do not know. Certainly not more than a century.

Thought the serpent is not here identified as Satan, later Scriptures recognize the identification (2 Corinthians 11:3,14; Revelation 12:9; 20:2). Satan, that bright and shining angel, through pride, wished to be like God Himself (Isaiah 14:12-17). His beauty and wisdom led to his downfall (Ezekiel 28:12-17; Revelation 12:4,9). When he fell, one third of the angels fell with him because they chose to believe Satan rather than God. Satan is a creature and can be in but one place at a time, but here are so many angels and men that obey him that he is very powerful. Jesus called him the "prince of this world" (John 14:30).

Satan associated himself with the creature we call the serpent ("nachash") in order to seduce and ruin mankind. The spirit of evil took material form in order to reach the spirit of man through his material being.

"More crafty than any other beast of the field" - At the time of his appearance to Eve he was not a reptile for it is compared with the "beasts of the field" and not with "creeping things." Satan fashioned himself as an angel of light and thus beguiled Eve. This creature was the most suitable to his purpose as being the most subtle, the most intelligent and cunning of all the beasts of the earth. Satan could best conceal himself in this creature. His method is never that of presenting himself in the naked horror of his evil nature, or of choosing methods of approach which suggest that fact. He approached Eve naturally and not with great strength.

"Did God actually say" - He took material form in order to reach the spirit of man through his material being and he made his attack upon the central principle of relationship between man and God, namely of faith. This is an attempt to reflect upon the character of God. The conversation was aimed at undermining Eve's confidence in God.

Verses 2,3: It was Eve's weakness to speak with the serpent but she gave him a plain account of what God said. Did she add the words, "Neither shall you touch it"? Some think this indicated that she thought the command was too strict. Interesting how Satan adds to the words of God in order to lead us from Him. In temptation the attack centers about God's Word. To be tempted is to be confronted with the opportunity to do wrong. If there is no temptation there is no opportunity to do wrong.

Verse 4: *"You will not surely die"* - Here the father of lies appears (John 8:44). He flatly contradicts the assertion of God. He insinuates the impossibility of her dying. By adding the one word "not" he changed God's word into the "lie" which Eve believed. The best lies are closest to the truth.

Verse 5: *"For God knows"* - In other words, God is unkind to you. Humanity is impatient

of restrictions. Sin often begins with the notions that God's restrictions are unkind. Yet behind God's restrictions are His wisdom, justice, and love.

"Your eyes will be opened...you will be like God" - Enlargement of opportunity shall be yours. Satan's business is to persuade men to excel alone - to be independent of God. The original word for "god" is the same as that used to point out the Supreme Being in 1:1 (Elohim). The object of the tempter being to persuade our first parents that they should, by eating the fruit, become wise and powerful as God (note the plural form of Elohim - i.e. "as gods"), and be able to exist forever independently of Him. They already are in God's image and dependent on Him. To go after things independent of God is disaster. That is why Jesus resisted the temptation (Matthew 4:1-17).

Verse 6: Eve gazed and reflected when she should have fled. The tree was good for food - appeared wholesome and nutritive; it was pleasant to the eye - the beauty of the fruit tended to increase the appetite. It was desired as that which would make one wise. From these three sources all moral and natural evil sprang (1 John 2:16).

God created our first parents not only wise and intelligent but also with a great capacity and desire to increase in knowledge. Satan knew it was natural for them to desire to be increasingly wise. God had implanted this desire in their minds but He showed them that this desire should be gratified in a certain way.

"She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband" - Adam's helpmeet became his tempter. Satan ever attempts to make one soul an ally in the seduction of another. Our closest relations are still fraught with awful possibilities for good or evil. Eve became a tempter as soon as she became a sinner.

Verse 7: *"Then the eyes of both were opened"* - As Satan had said, their eyes were opened. They saw the reproach of heaven and earth as well as their own consciences. They saw themselves stripped of the honors and joys of their paradise state. They knew that they had been stripped of all that made them walk unashamed before God and man. As soon as they believed Satan and his lie, they knew they had done wrong. They did not need to be told.

"They sewed fig leaves together" - Their judgment was confused, for they did not see that it was more shameful to break God's command than to be naked... They were more concerned to save their credit before men than to obtain their pardon from God. Rather than confessing their sin they became very desirous to conceal it. Man became the only creature that needed artificial covering. Shame hid is more shameful (Job 31:33). Adam had been wise. But now was confused.

Verse 8: *"They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day"* - The original means that they heard the sound of the Majestic Presence approaching nearer and nearer to them. Instead of welcoming the Presence, His voice became a terror to them. Their fig leaves failed them. God was come as an enemy and, as yet, they knew not of a mediator. So nothing remained but a looking for judgment.

"Hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God" - Loss of faith, shame and fear led them to try to hide. There had been no change in God to warrant the hiding of man from Him. The change had taken place in man. Adam had been so wise that he could name

all the creatures brought before him according to their respective natures and qualities. Now he does not know the first principle concerning the Divine nature - that it knows all things and that it is omnipresent. Man attempted to hide among the trees from the eye of the all-seeing God! Man may try to hide. But, he cannot escape from God.

The falsehood of the tempter:

- He said they should not die, and yet they are forced to die for their lives.
- He promised that they should be advanced, but they see themselves abased.
- He promised that they should be knowing, but they knew not where to hide themselves.
- He promised that they should be as gods - great and bold and daring, but they are as criminals, trembling and anxious to escape.
- They would not be subjects, so they are prisoners.

Verse 9: "*Where are you?*" - From this point to the end of the Bible it is a story of God seeking and saving the lost. In human religions we see men groping after God. In the Bible, it is God reaching out after men.

God is not ignorant of where they were. God knew where they were, but He wanted them to tell Him (cf. Genesis 4:9). God asked the question to teach Adam something he needed to know. God wanted Adam to realize: 1) where he was... in hiding from God; and 2) why he was where he was... because of disobedience.

Where was Adam? He was under condemnation - under sin's dominion. He was not isolated. All generations were in his loins, even as a seed may hold a forest.

Verse 10: "*I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.*" - Adam did not admit his own guilt, but he confessed it by admitting his shame and fear. Shame and fear were the firstfruits of sin and have been produced by transgression ever since. It is the common fault of those who have done ill to acknowledge no more than what was so manifest that they cannot deny it. Adam was afraid because he was naked.

Verse 11: "*Who told you... Have you eaten?*" - God knew what had brought about this change in their attitude.

Verse 12: "*The woman whom you gave to be with me*" - Here are further proofs of the fallen state of man. Adam acknowledged his transgression but did it in such a way as to shift the blame from himself to God and the woman. God gave him the woman and she gave him the fruit. We are prone to say that we are tempted of God (James 1:12-15).

Verse 13: God's justice is manifest in that He allowed both the man and the woman to state their cases. Thus the evil was traced to its source.

"*The serpent deceived me, and I ate.*" - Eve lays all the blame upon the serpent. He is the tempter, but we are the sinners. Though we are drawn into sin through the tempter's subtlety, yet it will not justify us in sin. The eyes of their body were opened to see their degraded state, but the eyes of their understanding were closed so that they could not see the sinfulness of their sin. At the same time their hearts were hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (Romans 7:11; Hebrews 3:13). Till a man take his sin to himself, till he acknowledge that he himself is guilty, he cannot be humbled or saved.

Verse 14: *“The Lord God said to the serpent”* - Adam and Eve being found guilty, God immediately proceeded to pass sentence. He begins where the sin began - with the serpent. God did not examine the Satan because he was already convicted and because he was to be forever excluded from all hope of pardon (Jude 6).

“cursed are you” - This is the first part of a twofold sentence. It is on the agent Satan employed. The devil's instruments must share the devil's punishments. The wicked who give their bodies as instruments for unrighteousness shall find that their bodies, with their souls, shall partake of everlasting torments (Romans 6:12,13,16). The serpent had been more subtle than any beast of the field (3:1) and here is cursed above every beast of the field. Perhaps he had been at the head of all the inferior animals. Now he is to be considered the most contemptible of all animals. He was changed from one form of life to a lower. To humanity the serpent is an abiding symbol of degradation which follows the slandering of God.

“dust you shall eat” - Dust is figurative of utter defeat (Psalm 72:9) and suggests humiliation (Psalm 44:25).

Verse 15: *“enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring...”* - Here is the second part of the twofold sentence. It is pronounced upon Satan. War is proclaimed between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Revelation 12:3,4,13). It is evident that Satan is intended in this part of the prophetic declaration. God has put enmity between men and him. Enmity cannot be applied to dumb beasts.

“he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel” - This is the dawn of the gospel. Here it is first written that Christ shall do the will of God (Hebrews 10:7).

There are three prophecies concerning Christ:

1. That He should be the seed of the woman. God magnifies His grace by using woman as the vessel through which the Savior is to come (Galatians 4:4).
2. That He should suffer physically - bruising His heel. Christ's heel was bruised in His own suffering and death and is continued in the sufferings of His saints for His name. The seed of the Lord is often bruised as His children suffer persecutions and temptation but while the heel is bruised on earth, the Head is safe in heaven (Ephesians 1:20-23). The heel bruise is not fatal.
3. That He should be the Victor over Satan (Hebrews 2:14,15; 1 John 3:8). Satan's head is bruised - his power and lordship over mankind are broken and destroyed (Colossians 2:15). A fatal and incurable blow has been dealt to the devil's kingdom (Revelation 20:10) and his final doom. Evil has a head. Evil will last until its head is crushed.

Verse 16: *“To the woman He said”* - She was second in the transgression and is brought up second to receive her condemnation and punishment.

“I will surely multiply your pain” - Only one phase of this sated of pain is mentioned - that of child bearing. But, it includes more than that. Pain is multiplied as sin is multiplied.

The pain of child-bearing is multiplied if children prove wicked and foolish. When one grief is over, another succeeds it.

“he shall rule over you” - At creation they were both formed with equal rights, but now she is subject to the will of her husband. She is forbidden to usurp authority (1 Timothy 2:11,12; 1 Peter 3:1). If man had not sinned, he would always rule with wisdom and love; and had not woman sinned, she would always have obeyed with humility and meekness. Then dominion and subjection were not grievous. But sin has often made the relationship full of sorrow and grief.

Verse 17: *“And to Adam He said”* - The man being the last in the transgression is brought up last to receive his sentence.

“cursed is the ground because of you” - Neither man nor woman were cursed. The ground was cursed for man’s sake, and Satan was cursed. Man and woman were punished as accessories.

“in pain you shall eat of it” - The sentence upon Adam included pain too. As in the case of the woman, the same word is used. The meaning in both cases is “travail.” In woman’s case the highest exercise of her nature was to be associated with sorrow and pain. In man’s case the highest activity of life, that of toil, was to be associated with weariness. Man was to be in continual perplexity concerning seed time and harvest, the cold and heat, the wet and the dry. How often are all the fruits of man’s labor destroyed by mildew, insects, floods, etc. Man’s travail is due to the hardships resulting from the conditions and responsibilities of headship. Labor was no longer easy and remunerative.

Verse 18: *“thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you”* - Man’s habitation is changed by the curse. He no longer was to dwell in paradise but be removed to common ground, and that, cursed. The ground or earth is here put for the whole visible creation which, by the sin of man, is not so serviceable to man’s comfort and happiness, as they were designed to be when made. God gave the earth to man as a comfortable dwelling but, because of sin, its spontaneous productions are now weeds and briars; what good food it produces must be gotten by the ingenuity and industry of man. Fruitfulness was its blessing (1:11,29) but barrenness and was its curse. Instead of producing nourishing grain and useful vegetables, weeds were to be specially prolific, injure the ground, choke the good seed, etc. The amazing fertility of some of the most common thistles and thorns fulfills this sentence against man. One thistle (Carolina Sylvestris) bears ordinarily from 20 to 40 heads, each containing 100—150 seeds. Aside from swarms of winged seeds the common hedge thistle spreads its roots around for many years and throws up suckers everywhere. These in turn produce seeds and extend their roots just like a parent plant; thus they stifle and choke all vegetation but their own. Thorns: Some thorns are set so thickly with prickles that it is impossible to touch them without being wounded. The more prolific thorns overspread whole tracts of ground and are almost impossible to clear out after they have gotten a good footing.

“you shall eat the plants of the field” - Man’s food was henceforth comparatively unpleasant to him. The herb of the field did not include the delicacies of Eden. The manner of eating is changed also (3:17: *“in pain you shall eat of it”*). Remembering the forbidden fruit, his guilt and his shame, Adam could not but eat in sorrow.

The privileges of the garden were gone; man was to feed on the common herbs of the field until by labor and industry he had raised others more to his liking.

Verse 19: *“By the sweat of your face”* - Even before other parts of the body are covered with sweat because of hard labor, the face shows this sign of effort and work. Thus, at the very beginning of every man’s labor he is reminded of his sinful condition and its consequences. Dislike of work is one of the marks of the fall.

“you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” - It is evident from this that man would have been immortal had he never transgressed, and that his state of continual life and health depended upon his obedience to his Maker. The tree of life was intended to be the means of continual preservation. No being but God can exist independently of any supportive agency; under God, this supporting agency appears to have been the tree of life.

Man is a mortal, dying creature, hastening to the grave. A great variety of unfriendly agencies in his environment - heat, cold, drought, damp, disease, accident - hasten his return to the dust. When the spirit finds its earthly house no longer tenable, it shall return to its Maker... Man is dust. Dust may be raised for a time into a little cloud, and may seem considerable while it is held up by the wind that raised it. But when the force of that is spent it falls again to the earth out of which it was raised. Such a thing is man. A great man is but a great mass of dust and must return to his earth (Psalms 103:14; 104:29).

Verse 20: *“The man called his wife’s name Eve”* - In 2:23 Adam had called his helpmeet “woman” - “isha” - as a wife. Now she is called “Eve” - a as mother. “Evah” means “life.” “Adam” signifies “red earth” - Adam bears the name of the dying body, Eve of the living soul. It is probable that this name was given for two reasons:

1. Because they were to be spared to beget human beings to continue the race even though they deserved immediate death.
2. Because the *“seed of the woman”* should crush their enemy - promise of a Redeemer (Ephesians 2:1).

Verse 21: *“the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them”* - Here is further instance of God’s care. Thus the father provided for the returning prodigal (Luke 15:22,23). Adam and Eve had made for themselves aprons of fig leaves, a covering too narrow to wrap themselves in (Isaiah 28:20). God made them coats fit for them. It is very likely that the skins were taken off animals whose blood had been poured out as a sin-offering to God at His direction. No doubt God instructed Adam as to the significance of this covering provided through the shedding of the blood of an innocent victim. Thus the first blood that was shed in the world was that of an innocent animal that had done nothing worthy of death. We may imagine the impression such a scene must have had upon Adam and Eve. This was a type of the promised Seed of the woman who in due time would deal with sin. From this time the idea of blood sacrifice was lodged in the human mind. Abel came with his lamb offering. The Passover called for the slain lamb and without the application of blood, death entered. The whole account of the Bible is that of the *“Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”* (1 Peter 1:19,20; Revelation 13:8).

Verse 22: In 1:26,27 we saw man in the perfection of his nature, in the dignity of his place

in God's creation, and in the midst of happy surroundings. Here we find the same creature stripped of his happiness and glory. Hence the word "man" no longer conveyed the idea it did. The original has a word that signifies "was" instead of "is" in this verse. An acceptable paraphrase: *"And the Lord God said, 'The man who is like one of us, has added to the knowledge of the good and the knowledge of evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever, I will remove him.'"* Immortal life was not for him in this life.

Verses 23,24: *"So He drove out the man"* - three things are noted here:

1. God's displeasure against sinful man, evidenced by dispelling him from his place of blessing.
2. Man's unfitness for the place of which he had rendered himself unworthy.
3. Man's reluctance to leave this place of happiness; he was unwilling to depart, so God drove him out.

"Cherubims" - The subject of the cherubim is obscure but it seems clear from Scripture references that they are the symbols of God's presence, representations of His eternal power and glory (Ezekiel 1:5,22; 10:4; Isaiah 6:2,3,6; Revelation 4:6).

"A flaming sword that turned every way" - suggestive of wrath - "fire turning back upon itself" - cherubim and fire shooting forth and turning back upon itself. Perhaps the flames of fire remained there until the flood waters covered the earth and wiped out the trees of the Garden.

Thus terminated this awful tragedy. The serpent is degraded; the woman punished with pains, miseries and a subjection to the will of her husband; the man doomed to incessant labor and toil; and the earth cursed with comparative barrenness. The man who had been made in the image of God was shamefully expelled from the place where only pure spirits alone could dwell.

Chapter 4

The human race now starts on the course under the curse of sin but also with a promise of hope. Man had failed and now we come to the account of the failure of family life. The raves of sin continue and bring murder into the first family.

Verse 1: *"I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord"* - The name "Cain" means "acquisition" ["gotten"] - same word as used in Deuteronomy 32:6 translated "created" (Proverbs 8:22). The giving of this name may signify two things:

1. An acknowledgment that it was through God's blessing that she was able to conceive and bring forth a son; a well grounded hope that the race of man should be continued on the earth.
2. A possible idea that Cain was to be the fulfillment of the promise of that seed of the woman who should bruise the head of the serpent.

He turned out to be the murderer of his own brother. When children are born, who can foresee what they will prove to be?

Verse 2: *"She bore his brother Abel"* - In all probability there were manifestations of waywardness and rebellion in Cain from the beginning. His parents saw the workings of sin in their first son and were brought to understanding of the pain of God over their own sin. When the second son was born, she called him "Abel," meaning "vanity," and thereby revealed the disappointment which had come to her through Cain. Can and Abel may have been twins.

"Keeper of sheep....worker of the ground" - It is the will of God that everyone should have something to do in this world. Adam was a gardener, Abel a shepherd and Cain a farmer. These were the three primitive employments.

Verse 3: *"Brought to the Lord and offering of the fruit of the ground."* - *"In the course of time,"* they brought their offerings. It is probable that these offerings were brought on the day when Adam and his family offered oblations to God. The instructions for such an observance must have formed a part of the gracious revelation made to Adam after his fall. As head of the family and therefore priest of the family, these offerings must have been brought to Adam. These sacrifices were to be made in the faith that the promised Deliverer was to come and with a confession of transgression. Adam must have instructed his children as to what he had learned about the way a sinner could approach God - that is, through the shed blood of innocent animals. Adam accepted them both but God saw what was in the heart of each offerer. Can did the very thing Adam did at first - Adam got his first covering from the field instead of the flock. God's way had to be followed.

Verse 4: *"Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering."* - Abel's offering was made in faith (Hebrews 11:6,4). Abel is the first of the heroes of faith: He believed what God had said and acted on that belief. He had a sense of sin and a consciousness of the need of a sacrifice. His offering was a foreshadowing of the Lamb of God; furthermore it was offered in obedience to divine revelation. God had given him at least one promise upon which to believe (Genesis 3:15).

Verse 5: *"But for Cain and his offering he had no regard."* - Cain recognized God as Creator but not as Redeemer. He was unconscious of his sinfulness. The men were not accepted and rejected because of the difference in their offerings. It is rather true that the offerings were accepted and rejected because of the differences of the men (Genesis 4:4).

"Cain was very angry, and his face fell." - His anger is a sign of an unhumiliated heart. The real man is now revealed. His anger turned in envy upon his brother.

Verse 6: *"The Lord said to Cain."* - God's willingness to speak with Cain shows His patience in dealing with the sinner and His desire to lead him to see the error of his ways.

Verse 7: *"If you do well, will you not be accepted?"* - Cain had been at fault in not bringing a sin-offering; but God now graciously informs him that his case was not hopeless. It was in His power to find forgiveness. God is no respecter of person (Acts 10:34).

"Its desire is for you..." - To thus humble himself would not destroy Cain's rights at the firstborn. Verse 7 is the first mention of sin in the Bible.

Verse 8: *"Cain spoke to Abel his brother."* - There seems to have been a show of friendship and kindness. He talked with Abel freely and familiarly, lest he should suspect danger and keep out of his reach. According to one manuscript, he said to his brother, *"Let us go out into the field."*

"Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him." - He, who according to his mother's hope was to be the slayer of the serpent, became the slayer of his own brother. The seed of the woman had become the seed of the serpent. This is the first triumph of Satan: this murder was the first-fruits of sin; death itself was the penalty of sin, but it was the first executed by the hand of a sinner (Romans 6:23). Adam disobeyed God. Cain acted in disregard and defiance of God.

Death reigned ever since Adam sinned, but none was taken captive by him till now. The first to die was a righteous man. Believers are saved from the sting of death yet are still exposed to its stroke. The first that went to the grave went to heaven; God thus secured to Himself the first fruits (1 Corinthians 15:55,56).

Verse 9: *"Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Where is Abel your brother?'"* - On the trial of the first murderer, God Himself sits as judge. Civil courts were not yet set up. Vengeance belongs to Him (Romans 12:19). God knew Cain to be guilty but questioned him to draw from him a confession of sin.

"I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" - He endeavored to cover a deliberate murder with a deliberate lie. In Cain, the devil was both a murderer and a liar from the beginning (John 8:44). He was the wicked one (1 John 3:12).

Verse 10: *"The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground."* - It is probable that Cain, having killed his brother, dug a hole and buried him in the earth hoping thereby to prevent the murder from being known.

Verse 11: *"Now you are cursed from the ground"* - Originally the curse was not upon man, but upon Satan and the ground (i.e. this is not a sentence of damnation). When the cursed ground (Genesis 3:17; Romans 8:19-23) cried out for the blood of Abel, the murderer received a curse. He was cursed from the ground he delighted to till. There was no further gratification for him from his chosen profession. If the earth which is so near us be the executioner of divine wrath, punishment is indeed unavoidable; it lies at the very door. Cain found his punishment there where he chose his portion and set his heart.

Verse 12: *"The ground....shall no longer yield to you its strength....you shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."* - We expect two things especially from the earth - both are denied Cain:

1. Sustenance: The enjoyment of the strength of the earth. The earth was no longer to yield her strength to Cain who had been a tiller of the soil (Genesis 4:2).
2. Cain had no fixed secure residence of any place. He was a fugitive from his own conscience, pursued by his own guilt.

However the sentence was tempered with mercy in that the immediate physical death which he feared was postponed.

Verse 13: *“My punishment is greater than I can bear.”* - He complains not of the greatness of his sin, but of the greatness of his punishment. The unhumiliated heart is more concerned for its sufferings than for its sins.

A marginal reading gives - *“My iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.”*

Verse 14: *“You have driven me today away from the ground and from your face”* - The earth was not to yield adequate recompense for his most careful tillage. He was expelled from the place where God manifested His presence, hence he concluded that he was hidden from the face of God (Numbers 6:25).

“Whoever finds me will kill me” - All the inhabitants of the earth were at that time of the same family; so he feared them all. Furthermore his guilty conscience made him fearful. He saw himself exposed to the hatred of mankind. He was to wander even at the peril of his life. His violent crime caused him to fear violence from others. The murderer sees himself surrounded on all sides by would-be murderers.

Verse 15: *“Vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.”* - Sevenfold vengeance was due to whoever would take the sword of justice from the hands of Him who has said, *“Vengeance is mine”* (Romans 12:19).

“The Lord put a mark on Cain” - The Hebrew word translated “mark” signifies a sign or token. The bow was to be for sign or token (cf. Genesis 1:14; 9:12,13). Therefore this could read, *“And the Lord appointed to Cain a token or sign, to convince him that no person should be permitted to slay him.”*

Verse 16: *“Cain went away from the presence of the Lord”* - This does not mean that he escaped from the actual presence of God, for this is not possible to man. It rather indicates that he cut himself off from the recognition of the divine government. He forsook the family altar, the fear of God and His ordinances. We do not know that Cain ever returned to the comfort of God’s presence. He willingly renounced God.

“Settled in the land of Nod” - He chose a land east of Eden, distant from Adam and his family, distinguishing himself and his family from the worshippers of Jehovah. Did he live at the east of Eden where were the cherubim with the flaming sword to defy the terrors of the Lord. Nod has never been identified.

Verse 17: *“Cain knew his wife”* - Probably Cain had been married and had children long before this. Marriages at first had to take place between brothers and sisters, so his wife must have been a sister. The text assumes that she followed him into exile.

Note on Eve’s children: Eve was the mother of all the living (Genesis 3:20). Adam had unnamed sons and daughters (Genesis 5:4). Tradition says there were 33 sons and 27 daughters.

“He built a city” - He was to have no fixed habitation because of his sin (Genesis 4:14). Yet, he built a city and named it after his son. It was probably made of huts with a wall for

defense which served as a headquarters for his offspring. Lost men seek satisfaction in cities of earth; the righteous look for a city whose designer and builder is God (Hebrews 11:10).

Verse 18: *“To Enoch was born....fathered Lamech.”* - The line of Cain is traced only to Lamech. Chapter five begins the line of Seth. Two streams of civilization are indicated here - ungodly and Godly. Cain is not mentioned in all the Old Testament after this chapter. He is mentioned three times in the New Testament: 1) for his lack of faith (Hebrews 11:4); 2) for his lack of love (1 John 3:12,14); 3) for his lack of truth (Jude 11). Abel is also mentioned in the New Testament: 1) as innocent (Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51); 2) as an example of faith (Hebrews 11:4; 12:24); 3) as righteous in deeds (1 John 3:12).

Verse 19: *“And Lamech took two wives.”* - God had ordained at the start that one man and one woman live together in marriage (Genesis 2:24). Lamech was the seventh from Adam of the Cainites. He was the first who dared to reverse the order of God by introducing polygamy; from him it has been retained, practiced and defended to the present day. The fact that it dates back to the race of the cursed one and is placed at the eve of the deluge when all flesh had corrupted itself upon the earth, is condemnation enough for this practice. Adam to Noah = ten generations.

Verse 20: Though Lamech sinned, yet he was blessed with children by both wives. They became famous in their generation for ingenuity. They were serviceable to the world, eminent for inventions and improvements in the useful arts. Divine judgment is according to moral state not material state.

Jabal - “father” - the inventor or teacher, for so this word is understood in 1 Samuel 10:12. He devised movable tents for nomadic care of flocks. He would carry his house along with him and instructed in breeding and managing cattle. He may have first introduced the use of animal flesh as food to escape the labor of the cursed ground.

Verse 21: Jubal - While Adam was yet living his descendants learned the use of copper and iron and invented musical instruments. The words “lyre” and “pipe” are likely generic; the former including all stringed instruments and the latter all wind instruments.

Verse 22: Tubal-cain: He was the first smith on record who taught how to make warlike instruments and domestic utensils out of brass and iron. Even the wicked may be endowed with many excellent accomplishments. Common gifts are given to bad men while God chooses to Himself the foolish things of the world.

Naamah - Nothing more is said of her in Scripture, but a Jewish writer makes her inventress of funeral songs and lamentations.

Verses 23,24: *“Lamech said”* - It is supposed that Lamech had slain a man in his own defense, and that his wives being alarmed lest the kindred of the deceased should seek his life in return, to quiet their fears he makes a speech in which he endeavors to prove that there was no room for fear on this account; for if the slayer of the willful murderer, Cain, should suffer a sevenfold punishment, surely he, who should kill Lamech for having slain a man in self-defense, might expect seventy-seven fold punishment. He presumes on God's protection, as if the special care of God to prolong and secure Cain's life were

designed for a protection of all murderers. He argues thus because he had not killed a brother and because he had killed in self-defense.

In Lamech we see the repeating of the sin of Cain; but instead of the cringing fear of Cain, we find man daring to show his independence in poetic language. The song is the supreme expression of the confidence of a man in his own ability to act without God.

We hear no more of the race of the cursed Cain, until they are all cut off by the flood.

Verse 25: Seth - A third son was born to Adam and Eve and was called Seth, the appointed one, for his mother found in him compensation for the loss of Abel. From this son a new line commenced. Eve must have received some divine communication, else how could she have known that this son was appointed in the place of Abel to continue the holy line by which the Messiah was to come? It is worthy to note that Seth's posterity alone continued after the flood, when all the other families of the earth were destroyed, Noah being the tenth descendent from Adam through Seth....God watched over the holy line through which the Messiah was to come so that, when Jesus came, it could be clearly seen that He came by the promise through grace and not by nature.

Verse 26: *"At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord."* - The marginal reading is, *"Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord."* This signifies that in the time of Enos the true followers of God began to distinguish themselves and to be distinguished by others by the name "sons of God"; those of the other branch of Adam's family among whom the divine worship was not observed, being distinguished by the name "children of men." ("call" - same as Genesis 2:19; 16:11)

III. TEN PATRIARCHS Chapter 5

Chapter 5

Verse 1: *"This is the book of the generations of Adam"* - This chapter is the only authentic history extant of the first age of the world from the creation to the flood. It is an account or register of the generations of Adam to the five hundredth year of the life of Noah. This chronicle is full of value, first because it contains a condensed history of fifteen centuries of human history (about 1,656 years). The ruin of the race had come through man's belief in the lie of Satan, "You will not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). Quietly and persistently through the centuries the divine sentence was carried out; and as this section is carefully read, the continued repetition of the phrase, "and he died" (8 times), indicates the vindication of God against the lie of evil. God is always vindicated in the coming and going of the centuries.

This chapter with its account of the ages of these men is of value as it reveals how early history was preserved. Adam was yet alive when Methuselah was born, and Methuselah was yet alive when Noah was born. Thus only one person forms the link of connection between Adam and Noah. The account of creation and the fall may have been told by Adam to Methuselah, and by Methuselah to Noah. Add to this the fact that Noah lived to be contemporary with Terah, and probably with Abraham, and it is seen how few links there are needed to complete the chain of connection between Adam and the writing of the history.

This record does not include the names of all Adam's descendants but only the holy line from which the Messiah was to come (Romans 9:5).

"He made him the likeness of God." - This is introduced to keep man in remembrance of the heights of glory whence he had fallen, and to prove to him that the miseries and death consequent on his present state were produced by his transgression and did not flow from his original state.

Verse 2: *"He....named them Man"* (*"...called their name Adam"* (KJV) - "Adam" is the same as "man" (Genesis 1:26,27). Adam named the rest of the creatures, but did not choose his own name. God gave this name to both the man and woman because both were of the earth and were also part of each other (Isaiah 51:1).

Verse 3: *"In his own likeness, after his image"* - the body of Adam was created provisionally immortal; that is, while he continued obedient he would not die; but his obedience was voluntary and his state a probationary one.

The soul of Adam was create in the moral image of God, in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. He had now sinned and consequently lost his moral resemblance to his Maker; he had also become mortal through his breach of the law. His image and likeness were therefore widely different at this time from what they were before; and his begetting children in his image and likeness plainly implies that they were imperfect like himself, mortal like himself, sinful and corrupt like himself. A bitter fountain could not sent forth sweet waters (James 3:11,12). Grace does not run in the blood, but corruption does. A sinner begets a sinner, but not a saint, a saint.

Seth - By almost universal tradition, the oriental writers attribute to Seth the invention of letters.

Verse 4: Adam had unnamed sons and daughters. Tradition says there were 33 sons and 27 daughters.

Verse 5: *"930 years"* - Some natural causes may be assigned for their long life in those first ages of the world. Very probably the earth was more fruitful, its productions more strengthening, the air more healthful, and the influences of the heavenly bodies more benign, before the flood than after; and some think their great knowledge of the creatures and of their usefulness both for food and medicine, together with their temperature contributed much to it. Additionally it has been suggested that man's perfect condition in Eden was not immediately exhausted. He weakened as sin increased.

God prolonged their lives to more speedily replenish the earth and to more effectually preserve the knowledge of God and religion when tradition was the channel of its conveyance. All the patriarchs here, except Noah, were born before Adam died. Longevity supplied the want of a written revelation.

"And he died" - Imagine sensation when it was known that the father of the race had died. Over and over again we now read, *"and he died."* This gives the lie to Satan who said, *"You will not surely die."*

Verses 6-20: Here the account runs on for several generations without anything

remarkable being recorded.

Verses 21-24: Enoch the seventh from Adam. Little is recorded of him, but that little is enough to make his name great, greater than that of the Enoch who had a city called by his name (Genesis 4:17).

“Enoch walked with God...300 years” - He set himself to walk fixedly purposed and determined to live for God. Enoch was the seventh from Adam; Lamech (Genesis 4:19) was the seventh from Adam through Cain. Compare the testimony given about these two men.

This denotes the closest of fellowship. It suggests that he had almost regained the communion of Eden. Walking with God was the business of Enoch's life, his constant care and work; while others lived to themselves and the world, he lived to God (Philippians 1:21).

1. This was a continued walk - 300 years.
2. His marriage was no hindrance to his piety
3. He attained this state of religious experience when there was no written revelation.
4. He “pleased God” (Hebrews 11:5). If it was then possible to live as not to offend God, it is surely possible now.

The meaning of walking with God (Genesis 6:9; Amos 3:3; Micah 6:8).

“He was not for God took him.” - Born 622 years after the creation of Adam, he was contemporary with Adam. 69 years before the birth of Noah, God took him that he should not see death. Instead of “and he died” God took him. As he did not live like the rest, so he did not die like the rest. His translation was a testimony to the then-known world that the immortality from which the race had been banished was a certainty - a testimony that what was lost could be regained: 1) a walk with God; and 2) immortality (Genesis 3:8). It was an encouragement to the faith and hope of those who were living for God. The one other Old Testament character to share the honor of being translated was Elijah (2 Kings 2). Both are a picture of those who will be living when the Lord returns (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Enoch was a prophet (Jude 14,15)

Verse 27: *“All the days of Methuselah”* - His was the longest of any recorded life, and yet he died. Though he lived to be nearly one thousand, still he was not immortal. The longest life is but a moment when it is past. He died the year of the flood, but whether before it or not, is not certain.

Verse 29: *“Noah”* - This is the first mention of this name. His name means “rest, quiet” - same as in 2 Chronicles 6:41; Esther 9:16. Very probably there were some prophecies that went before Noah.

Verse 32: Noah's children - From Genesis 10:21; 1 Chronicles 1:5; etc., we learn that

Japheth was the oldest son of Noah; but Shem is mentioned first because it was from him, in a direct line, that the Messiah came. In Genesis 9:26, God is called "*the Lord, the God of Shem.*" It is probable the birthright was given to him. In the same way Jacob is named before Esau and Ephraim before Manasseh.

IV. THE DELUGE Chapters 6-9

Chapter 6

Verse 1: "*When man began to multiply*" - This was the effect of the blessing (Genesis 1:28) and yet man's corruption so abused and perverted this blessing that it turned into a curse.

Verse 2: "*Sons of God...daughters of man*" - The "*sons of God*" were those descendants of Seth who dwelt alone, in separation from the descendants of Cain, maintaining the worship and service of the one God. While the "*daughters of man*" were the descendants of Cain who had followed in the wake of their father who went out from the presence of the Lord and were living without any recognitions of the government of God. Thus the seed of Seth and the seed of Cain came into contact. On the part of the sons of God there was a lowering of the standard of loyalty to Him, as they intermarried with the daughters of the race that had turned its back upon Him.

"*They took as their wives any they chose*" - Satan had killed Abel the man of faith. Still a godly line was preserved through Seth. Satan then sought to corrupt the chosen line by causing it to unite with the daughters of godless men. What was amiss in these marriages? They chose only by the eye. They followed the choice of their own corrupt affections.

Verse 3: "*My Spirit shall not abide in man forever*" - ("*My Spirit shall not always strive with man*" KJV) - God's Spirit had been striving with the Sethites who, though God's chosen people, were fast falling into evil ways. But a definite period of respite was determined— one hundred twenty years. The time of God's forbearance toward provoking sinners is sometimes long, but always limited. Reprieves are not pardon. Though God bear a long while, He will not always bear. (Some think this man mean a reduced span of human life.)

Verse 4: "*The Nephilim were on the earth in those days*" - The result from this intermarriage of the two seeds was twofold: 1) In the first place there was a definite strengthening of that which was purely physical and of the earth. A race of Nephilim, or giants, resulted. The only other occasion when they are referred to is in Numbers 13:33. As the Nephilim referred to in our section were all swept away by the flood, those described in Numbers must have been a separate race, springing from a similar cause. In both cases this kind of intermarriage resulted in the production of a strong physical race, great stature, strength, and enormous wickedness.

"*Mighty men...men of renown.*" - Heroes, men of worldly reputation: Persons of great knowledge, courage, wickedness. This race slighted virtue and religion, but made for themselves a great name in exercise of power by oppression and cruelty.

Verse 5: "*The wickedness of man was great*" - This is the second result of the

intermarriage of the two seeds. The outward manifestation is given first - "great" "was multiplied" in the earth. It was continually increasing and multiplying increase by increase so that the whole earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence. Wickedness is great when great men are wicked.

"Intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil" - The outward evil was accounted for by the fact of the inward corruption. The imagination, purpose, desire was absolutely evil. Evil was done deliberately, designedly. The first figment of thought - the materials from which ideas formed were evil.

"Every" - There was no admixture of good.

"Only" - There was neither relenting nor repenting.

"Continually" - There was no interval of good, no moment of serious reflection.

The stream of sin was full and strong and constant. The fountain which produced thought, purpose, wish, desire and motive was incurably poisoned.

Verse 6: *"The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth"* - This does not speak of a change of God's mind for with Him there is no turning. But there was a change of His way. When God had made man upright, He rested and was refreshed (Exodus 31:17), and His way toward him showed that He was pleased with the work of His hands. Now that man had departed from Him, He could not but show Himself displeased. They departed from His original purpose for them, so His purpose toward them was changed.

"It grieved Him to His heart" - He is pressed by the sins of His creatures (Amos 2:13); wearied (Isaiah 43:24); broken (Ezekiel 6:9); grieved (Psalm 95:10); and here grieved to the heart. Thus the sin of man is seen causing sorrow to the heart of God. IN this the love and grace of His heart shine forth.

Verse 7: *"I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land"* - Ultimate salvation necessitated and immediate judgment. The original is very significant - "I will wipe off man from the earth", as dirt or filth is wiped off from a place which is cleaned (Deuteronomy 29:20; 2 Kings 21:13; Psalm 51:1,9). It was divinely determined that the Spirit of God should not always strive with man, but that a respite of 120 years should be granted him.

"Man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens" - Even the brute creatures were to be involved in this destruction. These were made for man therefore must be destroyed with man; for the end of their creation also was frustrated. They were made that man might serve and honor God with them. They were to be destroyed because man had served his lusts with them and had made them subject to vanity. God thus resolved only after His Spirit had been long striving with man in vain. Those who will not be reformed by the grace of God must be destroyed by the justice of God.

Verse 8: *"In the eyes of the Lord"* - God had strictly examined the character of every person in the world before He pronounced it universally corrupt. This vindicates God's justice in His displeasure with the world.

“Noah found favor” - There was one good man; God found and smiled on him. Probably Noah did not find favor in the eyes of men; they hated him because by his life and preaching he condemned them. God made more account of Noah than of all the world beside. This is the first occurrence of the word “grace” (favor) in the Bible. We have traced man from his creation until his wickedness became so great that justice demanded punishment. Now we meet this word of hope - “grace” - showing that God’s purpose was not extermination but regeneration.

Verses 9,10: *“A righteous man, blameless in his generation...walked with God”* - 1) *“Righteous”* - he gave to all their due; 2) *“Blameless in his generation”* - a consistent character, never departing from the truth in principle or practice; and 3) *“Walked with God”* - not only righteous in his conduct but continues in his communion with God.

Noah was the first person who was called “righteous,” and he was that in the midst of a corrupt and degenerate age. It was an evidence of strong faith and resolution to honor God when no one else did.

Verses 11,12: *“Filled with violence...corrupt”* - Both inwardly and outwardly.

“And God saw” - There was divine knowledge of all that takes place on the earth; even the very heart of man is known to God.

“All flesh had corrupted their way on the earth” - Here the relation between the condition of man and the condition of all creation beneath him is recognized. A fallen man means a ruined earth.

Verse 13: *“And God said to Noah”* - God held communion with Noah, the man walking in communion with Him, telling him of the impending judgment and of its reasons. Moreover He brought this man into co-operation with Himself for the preserving of a seed and the bearing of a testimony to the godless world (Abraham - Genesis 18:17).

Verses 14-16: Minute instructions were given to Noah for building an ark in which he and his family were to find refuge. The word used for “ark” means only a “vessel”; it is used once again to refer to the vessel in which Moses was preserved (Exodus 2:3-5). It signified a hollow place capable of containing persons, goods, etc., without any particular reference to the shape or form.

“Gopher wood” - This word occurs no where else in the Scriptures - it is of doubtful significance. It probably means cedar (cypress); or pine or fir.

The ark was like the hulk of a ship, fitted not to sail but to float on the waters. Authorities differ as the length of a cubit, so measurements of the ark cannot be given definitely. A cubit is said to have been either 18 or 21 inches. It is therefore either 450’ long, 75’ broad, and 45’ high, or 525’ long, 87’ broad, and 52’ high.

The proportions of the ark have been tested by navigators and found well adapted for heavy freighting. The great ocean-going ships of the present time have much the same proportions; although there are modern ships much larger. It had three decks divided into compartments, with a window course around the top.

God gave him particular instructions concerning this building. Those that work for God must take their measures from Him. God could have saved Noah in some other way, but He chose to employ him in preparing the means of his preservation both for the trial of his faith and obedience and for a testimony to an unbelieving generation. Through the one hundred twenty years of respite, during which the ark was being built, Noah was a preacher of righteousness.

Verse 17: *"I will..."* - The punishment is from God; thus He will be exalted and magnified in a world that refuses to give Him first place.

"I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth." - The word "flood" is used only to designate this general deluge, being never used to signify any other kind of inundation; and we have God's promise that there shall never be another...God definitely announced to Noah the method of judgment He would use to destroy everything wherein there was breath.

Verse 18: *"I will establish my covenant with you"* - This is the first place in which the word "covenant" occurs (cf. Genesis 8:21,22; 9:12-17). This covenant signifies on God's part that He should save Noah and his family from death by the ark; and on Noah's part that in faith and obedience he should make and enter into the ark, so committing himself to God's preservation (Hebrews 11:7).

Verses 19,20: *"To keep them alive"* - God might have destroyed all the animal creation and created others to take their place, but He chose rather to preserve those already created. He was the Creator and Preserver. Such respect has God for the work of His hands, that nothing but what is essential to the credit of His justice and holiness shall ever induce Him to destroy anything that He has made.

Verse 21: *"Every sort of food that is eaten"* - The food proper for every species of animal.

Verse 22: *"Noah did this"* - This is a remarkable revelation of faith. Through all the period of the building of the ark he lived and worked by faith, knowing that in spite of all contrary appearances God's instructions must be carried out. Noah and his three sons could not do this work alone. He may have been a city-king. He probably used thousands of people to help in the work even though they ridiculed his preaching. For material gain they co-operated with Noah in the building of the ark which they must have held in supreme disdain. His building may have been called "Noah's folly" but by every blow they struck and every foot of work completed, space was given for them to repent, for by the construction of the ark Noah was a preacher of righteousness. None of them, however, profited and Noah's carpenters were finally destroyed outside the ark which they had helped to construct.

God said, *"Do this..."*, and without murmuring Noah did it. He was careful and did all according to instructions. He was preserving and finishing the long task.

Chapter 7

Verse 1: *"Go into the ark, you and all your household"* - The call to Noah was like that of a tender father to his children to come indoors when he sees night or a storm approaching (cf. 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5).

Verses 2,3: *“Seven pairs of all clean animals”* - Here we find that the distinction between clean and unclean animals existed long before the Mosaic law. This distinction was originally designated, it appears, to make the animals which were proper for sacrifice and food (Leviticus 11). Seven pairs were taken because of the importance of the rapid multiplication of these animals after the flood both for food and for the services of man.

Verse 4: *“For in seven days”* - God spoke these words probably on the seventh or Sabbath day, the ensuing week being employed in entering the ark.

“forty days and forty nights” - Afterwards, this period became sacred and was considered a proper space for humiliation - a period of trial terminating in the triumph of good and the overthrow of evil (Exodus 24:18). Moses fasted forty days (Deuteronomy 9:9-11). So did Elijah (1 Kings 19:8). So did our Lord (Matthew 4:2). Forty days respite were given to the Ninevites that they might repent (Jonah 3:4). Forty days of Lent in commemoration of our Lord's fasting have a reference to the same thing.

Verse 7: *“his wife and his sons' wives”* - This strengthens the argument against polygamy. As at the first, God made one woman for one man, so He kept alive one woman for one man.

Verse 11: *“all the fountains of the great deep burst forth”* - God had in creation set up bars and doors to the waters of the seas, that they might not return to cover the earth (Psalm 104:9; Job 38:9-11). Now He only removed them and the waters returned to cover the earth as at first (1:9). The waters that were above the firmament were again united to the waters which were below the firmament, from which on the second day of creation they had been separated (1:7). What God had reserved against the day of trouble (Job 38:22,23) God now poured out on the earth.

Verse 15: *“They went into the ark with Noah”* - He who first miraculously brought them to Adam that he might give them their names, now brought them to Noah that he might preserve their lives. Their natural enmity was probably removed or suspended that the lion might dwell with the lamb. This was no difficulty to the power of God.

Verse 16: *“the Lord shut him in.”* - Literally *“covered him round about”* - The ark became the special object of divine care. As Noah was shut in, so the others were shut out. God had waited one hundred twenty years upon that generation. They did not repent. They filled up the measure of their iniquities and then wrath came upon them (6:13).

Verse 17: *“The waters increased and bore up the ark”* - The waters which broke down everything else, bore up the ark. The more the waters increased, the higher the ark was lifted.

Verse 18: *“The waters prevailed”* - The waters increased until they “prevailed.” The passage could read, “The waters became strong and increased increasingly, increasingly.”

Verse 19: *“all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.”* - The waters overflowed the highest hiding places of those who sought to escape the waters (Isaiah 28:17; Jeremiah 3:23).

Verse 20: *“fifteen cubits deep.”* - to the utmost reach of the beholder's gaze. There were

no mountains left in sight as the waters rose above them probably twenty-two and a half feet.

Verse 22: *“Everything on the dry land”* - We conclude from this that only such animals as could not live in the water were preserved in the ark.

Verse 23: *“They were blotted out from the earth.”* - The question of the universality of the flood: All that is suggested is that the destruction was co-extensive with the region occupied by man. The Hebrew word used uniformly for the earth through this section (erets), is sometimes used of the whole earth, sometimes of a part of it, in the same way in which we may make use of the word “land.” All that this account demands is that we should understand that a corrupt race was swept away and a godly remnant spared.

This destruction had passed upon the world because of sin. God’s uniform principle in regard to judgment is that it should include everything connected with man. Furthermore, the race was now reduced to one family so the beasts had to be proportionately reduced, otherwise by their numbers they would acquire the ascendancy and overmaster the few who were to repeople the earth.

Verse 24: *“the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.”* - The forty days are not to be included in the one hundred fifty. At the end of the one hundred fifty days, there were six months and ten days of the flood past.

“The question of the righteousness of this swift judgment can only be raised by such as fail to notice carefully the corruption of the race in its nature and extent. The only way in which it was possible to ensure the eventual purity of the race was by the destruction of that which was utterly and irrevocably impure. Love, illumined by light, acts not merely in the interests of the present moment, but of all the coming centuries. There was a severity which is of the very essence of the tenderness; and the story of the Flood is an instance of the activity of the love of God.” G. Campbell Morgan

Noah not only preached to, but prayed for, that wicked world (Ezekiel 14:4). But, his prayers returned only into his own bosom, answered only in his own escape.

Ponder the awfulness of God’s punishments: Job 22:15,16; Psalm 76:7; Proverbs 11:21; Jeremiah 2:19; Nahum 1:6; Hebrews 10:31; 2 Peter 2:4-7,9.

The rightness in the day of judgment: Psalms 32:6; 91:7,8.

Chapter 8

Verses 1-3: *“But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock”* - Noah seemed to be forgotten, and perhaps began to think himself so. For we do not find that God told him how long he should be confined in the ark. God’s grace and mercy were shown again as He manifested His concern for His creatures. They had never been forgotten (Isaiah 49:15,16). With Noah, God remembered every living thing (Luke 12:6) for though his delight is especially in man, yet He rejoices in all His works. He takes special care not only of man, but of all that belongs to Him. He even considered the cattle of Nineveh (Jonah 4:11).

“God made a wind blow over the earth” - In the creation it was but one day’s work to make the earth dry land (1:9,10) but this work of God was effected by the use of second causes. The agency of the wind was employed. It was a hot wind which, by rapid evaporation, again absorbed a large portion of the water into the atmosphere. The effects of these winds in the east are astonishing.

“A friend of mine who had been bathing in the Tigris when one of these hot winds passed rapidly across the river just as he got out of the water. It dried him so effectually in a moment that not one particle of water was left either on his body or in his bathing dress! With such an electrified wind as this, how soon could God dry the whole of the earth’s surface!” Adam Clarke

Thus God restored to the atmosphere the quantity of water which it had contributed to this vast inundation. The other portions of water, which had proceeded from the breaking up of the fountains of the deep, would of course subside more slowly as openings were made for them to run off from the higher lands and form the seas. Thus the earth was gradually dried and the earth completely drained. As the waters lessened, seas and gulfs were formed. This appears to be what is intended by *“the waters subsided.”*

Verse 4: *“the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.”* - That Ararat was a mountain of Armenia is almost universally agreed. There is a great chain of mountains which is called by this name so it is impossible to determine on which of them the ark rested.

It rested on a mountain whither it was directed by God. Noah had no device for steering it. The tops of the mountains must have been seen like little islands above the waters. According to Lightfoot, they felt ground about forty days before they saw it. He infers that if the waters decreased proportionately the ark drew eleven cubits in water.

“the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month” - One hundred and fifty days from the beginning of the flood - five months; almost three months longer before the tops of the mountains were seen (cf. 7:11).

Verse 5: *“the waters continued to abate until the tenth month”* - The lowering of the waters was apparently very slow. The period of their return was nearly twice as long as that required for their rise.

Verse 6: *“Noah opened the window of the ark”* - Though God told Noah when the flood would come (7:4) He did not reveal when and how it should go away. He could not foresee the flood but by revelation, but he could by ordinary means discover its decrease. Therefore God was pleased to leave him to the use of ordinary means.

Verse 7: *“sent forth a raven. It went to and fro”* - This is the first bird mentioned by name in the Bible. The raven probably flew about, feeding on floating objects in the water but coming back to the ark to rest - not in it, but upon it.

Verses 8-10: *“he sent forth a dove...waited another seven days, and again he sent for the dove out of the ark.”* - Probably the first sending of the dove was seven days after the sending forth of the raven. This intimates that it was done on the Sabbath day which Noah must have religiously observed in the ark.

The dove was sent forth thrice. The first time she speedily returned (8:8,9). The second time she returned with an olive leaf in her bill (8:10,11). The third time she did not return (8:12).

Verse 11: *“a freshly plucked olive leaf.”* - The fresh olive leaf was the first sign of the resurrection of the earth to new life after the flood. From the circumstance, the olive has been the emblem of peace among all civilized nations. Thus also, the Holy Spirit whose emblem is a dove, works out in us the peace of God. It was the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove who found a resting place in this world only on our Lord (Matthew 3:16). He is our peace (Ephesians 2:14).

Verse 13: *“In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month”* - see 7:11.

“Noah removed the covering of the ark” - Since the dove did not return, Noah knew that the earth was sufficiently drained to permit opening the covering of the ark. This probably gave liberty to many of the fowls to fly off which would in turn make it easier to make arrangements for the disembarking of the beasts and reptiles and heavy-bodied fowls which might yet remain.

Verse 14: *“on the twenty-seventh day of the month”* - Noah showed no impetuous haste to get out of the ark. He must have been in the ark a complete solar year (cf. 7:11,13).

Verses 16,18: *“Go out from the ark...’ So Noah went out”* - God’s time had come. Both Noah’s incoming and outgoing were at God’s direction (Psalm 121:8). The voice that had commanded Noah to enter, called him forth. What a great moment it was! He who by faith had renounced everything in obedience to God, now stepped forth the sole possessor of the earth. Men would henceforth live with the testimony of judgment accomplished and deliverance wrought, of the issues of sin and the values of righteousness, of the government of God from which no one can finally escape.

Verse 20: *“Then Noah built an altar to the Lord”* - Noah’s first look was Godward and his first act the erection of an altar and the offering of a sacrifice. This altar was *“to the Lord”* for with grateful heart he acknowledges the deliverance as entirely from God. Adam, Cain, and Abel offered sacrifices and probably built altars, but this is the first on record. Without sacrifice, actually offered or implied, there never was nor can there ever be true religion. Even in the heavens a lamb is represented before the throne of God as slain (Revelation 5:6,12,13).

The Jews have a tradition that the place where Noah built his altar was the same in which the altar stood which was built by Adam, used by Cain and Abel, and the same spot on which Abraham afterwards offered up his son Isaac.

Verse 21: *“when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma”* - Literally *“a savor of rest”* or satisfaction. He was well pleased with this religious act, performed in obedience to His instruction and in faith of the promised Savior. This prefigured Christ (Ephesians 5:2). The words for *“a sweet-smelling savor”* used by Paul are the same as used here. (Sweet savor offerings: Burnt - Leviticus 1:3,9; Meat - Leviticus 2:1,2; Peace - Leviticus 3:1,5)

“evil from his youth” - *“from before birth you were called a rebel”* (Isaiah 48:8).

“Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.” - Whatever ruin God might bring on particular persons, or families or countries, He will never again destroy the whole earth till the day when time shall be no more. Then judgment shall be fire (2 Peter 3:7).

Verse 22: *“While the earth remains”* - This plainly intimates that the earth is not to remain always and we look forward to a new heavens and a new earth when all these things must be dissolved (Isaiah 66:22; Revelation 21:1).

“seedtime and harvest... shall not cease.” - The course of nature should never be discontinued. God’s providence carefully preserves the regular succession of times and seasons and causes each to know its place. This is a very merciful promise to the inhabitants of the earth. There may be a variety in the seasons, but no season essentially necessary to vegetation shall utterly fail. The times which are of the greatest consequence to the preservation of man are distinctly noted. There shall be both seed-time and harvest - a proper time to deposit grain in the earth, and a proper time to reap the produce of the seed.

This is God’s covenant of the day and of the night, the stability of which is mentioned for the confirming of our faith in the covenant of grace which is no less inviolable (Jeremiah 33:20,21). We see God’s promise to the creatures made good and thence we infer that His promises to all believers shall be so.

Chapter 9

Verse 1: *“And God blessed Noah”* - Noah thanked and praised God by his altar and sacrifice. He was accepted of God and here God shows His favor by blessing him and his family.

“Be fruitful and multiply” - also verse 7 - The race of mankind was, as it were, to begin again. God’s command here does not include “subdue” as it did in 1:28. The perfect man will subdue (Ephesians 1:22; Hebrews 2:8,9).

Verse 2: *“The fear of you and the dread of you...”* - (cf. 1:28). Before the fall, man ruled the animals by love and kindness for gentleness and docility were their characteristics. After the fall, the inferior animals became ferocious with an enmity to man. Had not God in His mercy impressed their minds with the fear and terror of man so that some submit to his will while others flee from his residence, the human race would have long since been totally destroyed by the beasts of the field. God restrains them so that though they may hurt man at times yet they do not combine to rise in rebellion against man. God could destroy the world as effectively by these as by a flood. This is one of God’s sore judgments (Ezekiel 14:21). The horse does not know his strength nor the weakness of the one who rides him. God hides these from his mind and impresses him with the fear of his owner. The wild beasts flee from the dwelling of man through terror and dread. Thus by fear and by dread man rules the beast, the fowls, and the fish.

Verse 3: *“shall be food for you.”* - There is no positive evidence that animal food was used before the flood. Noah had the first grant of this kind. There must have been some alteration in the vegetable world making it less nutritive and also some change in the human constitution; a higher nutriment than vegetables was required.

Verse 4: *“you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.”* - Though animal food was granted, yet the blood was solemnly forbidden because it was the life of the beast and this life was to be offered to God as an atonement for sin. The stamp of sacredness was thus placed upon blood, for through blood the world was to be redeemed. While the law of sacrifice continued, blood must not be looked upon as common, but be poured out before the Lord either on His altar or upon His earth (Leviticus 17:11; 2 Samuel 23:16).

Verses 5,6: *“your lifeblood I will require”* - God’s mercy to the murderer, Cain, and his criminal descendants may have encouraged the “violence” that brought the flood (4:23,24). Henceforth murderers were to pay with their lives. Even a beast was to be put to death. This was confirmed by the law of Moses (Exodus 21:28). Thus God showed His hatred of the sin of murder, that men might hate it the more and not only punish but prevent it. This regulation assumes that the crime of murder would be committed even in the renewed race, but wickedness was to be suppressed by a strong hand. Violence was not to be allowed to grow so as to call for constant catastrophe to check it. Man was himself to insist on obedience to these laws.

Verse 13: *“I have set my bow in the cloud”* - A sign of the covenant was chosen and established as such, namely the bow in the sky. We do not imagine that the bow had never appeared before. It is merely stated that God appropriated the rainbow as the sign and seal of the new terms of the covenant. The rainbow is the child of the sun and rain, thus signifying judgment in its relation to love. The rainbow appears to unite heaven and earth, thus bringing a message of mercy from God to man.

The rainbow:

1. Is never seen except in rainy weather.
2. Never appears unless the sun shines
3. Always appears in the part of the heavens opposite to the sun.
4. Exhibits the seven prismatic colors - red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.
5. Depends on the rays of the sun falling on round drops of water which, in passing through them, are refracted and reflected.

Verses 14-17: *“the bow is seen in the clouds... I will see it”* - Articles of agreement among men are sealed to be the more solemn and sure. God confirmed His covenant with a seal (Hebrews 6:17) - the rainbow. It is likely it was seen in the clouds before but was never the seal of a covenant until this time when it was made so by God. Man, looking upon it, was to remember God’s word. God looking upon it, was to remember His word too.

Verse 19: *“From these the people of the whole earth were dispersed.”* - It appears that Noah had no more children after the flood. All the world came from these three.

Verse 21: *“He drank of the wine and became drunk”* - When the harvest was gathered, Noah probably appointed a day for mirth and feasting. He may even have preceded it by a thank offering to God. Noah drank too freely for he was drunken. This may have been

due to experimentation. But, we know that the Bible never conceals the sins of the saints. Had men written the Bible this failure would not have been mentioned. We have reason to think that he was never drunk either before or after this experience.

“uncovered in his tent” - The consequence of Noah’s sin was shame. Adam had sought concealment when he felt the shame of sin but Noah sought no covering - he did not know to do so. Note the evil consequences of the sin of drinking. It discovers men... to be uncovered was considered a deep disgrace by the Hebrews (Isaiah 3:17; Ezekiel 16:37). What a condition for the one righteous man through whom God had preserved the race.

Verse 22: *“And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw... and told”* - In the presence of the degradation of their father, the character of the sons was manifested. Ham saw and told. He must have spoken in a scornful deriding manner, belittling his father. It is the mark of a base mind to publish the sins of another especially when it is within one’s power to hide it by some loving deed (Galatians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 13:7). Ham is here called *“the father of Canaan”* which intimates that he who was a father himself should have had more respect to his father. It is a sin to publish the faults of any, especially parents whom it is our duty to honor.

Verse 23: *“Shem and Japheth ... covered the nakedness of their father.”* - These two, ashamed of the sin of their father while yet reverencing him, attempted to hide him and cover his shame. There is a mantle of love to be thrown over the faults of others (1 Peter 4:8).

Verse 25: *“Cursed by Canaan”* - These words were spoken through a spirit of prophecy and by the incensed father. This gave a clear statement of the tendency of character. The man in the grip of evil moves towards slavery.

“a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.” - Those who by birth were his equals were by conquest to be his lords. This certainly points to the victories obtained by Israel over the Canaanites when they were either all put to the sword or put under tribute (Joshua 9:23; Judges 1:28,30,33,35). This happened about 800 years after. Though divine curses operate slowly yet they will finally come to pass. The Canaanites were under the curse of slavery even while they had dominion. A nation, a family, a person may lie under the curse of God and yet prosper in the world for a long time. When the measure of iniquity is full, the punishment will fall. Many are marked for ruin but are not yet ripe for it.

Verse 26: *“the God of Shem”* - He calls the Lord, the God of Shem. This includes all blessings. He foretells that God’s gracious dealings with Shem and his family would be evidence to all the world that He was the God of Shem. Christ, who was the Lord God incarnate, descended from Shem.

Verse 27: *“May God enlarge Japheth”* - He blessed Japheth and through him the parts of the world which were peopled through his seed. About half the human race are descendants of Japheth - all of Europe, a great part of Asia, and perhaps America.

Verses 28,29: *“All the days of Noah were 950 years”* - God prolonged Noah’s life. Noah lived to see two worlds but, being an heir of the righteousness which is by faith, he went to see an even better world.

V. THE NATIONS Chapters 10,11

Chapter 10

It is extremely difficult to say what particular nations and people sprang from the three grand divisions of the family of Noah, nor is it possible for us to define clearly geographically the districts occupied by these different descendants of Noah. This is the only account extant of the origin of the nations, yet no nation but the Jews can be certain from which of these seventy fountains it derives its streams (14 from Japheth, 30 from Ham, 26 from Shem). The only genealogy preserved is that of the Jews, for the sake of the Messiah.

It is perfectly clear, however, that the goings forth of these ancestors of men were under a direct divine guidance, even though they may not have been conscious of it. Paul, preaching at Athens, declared this truth (Acts 7:26).

Verse 1: *“Shem, Ham, and Japheth”* - Shem, the progenitor of Abraham and of the Messiah, is constantly placed first when the sons of Noah are enumerated. Japheth is put last. However it is supposed that Japheth was the eldest son and Shem the youngest. Accordingly in this chapter, the posterity of Japheth is first mentioned (10:2-5).

Verse 2-5: *“The sons of Japheth”* - The descendants of Japheth occupied the *“coastlands of peoples”* (10:5). This name probably applied to all those countries to which the Hebrews were obliged to go by sea: Spain, Gaul, Italy, Greece, Asia Minor - the coastlands of the Mediterranean Sea in Europe and Asia Minor. From there they spread northwards over the whole continent of Europe and a considerable portion of Asia.

Verses 6-20: *“The sons of Ham”* - Of the three sons of Noah only the name of Ham is known to have been given to a country. Egypt is recognized as the land of Ham (Psalms 78:51; 105:23; 106:22). It is thought by some that Ham settled there himself. Hamite Egypt became the first world-power. Though it was prophesized that the Hamite nations were to be servant nations, which prophecy was afterwards fulfilled, yet they started out as the most aggressive, and at first were ruling nations.

“Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord” - (verses 8-9) Little is known of Nimrod as he is not mentioned except here and in 1 Chronicles 1:10. Some think he served his country by ridding it of the wild beasts which infested it, thus winning the approval of his neighbors and becoming their prince. Others think that, under pretense of hunting, he gathered men under his command to master the country and bring them into subjection. He was a mighty hunter - a violent invader of his neighbor's rights and properties and a persecutor of innocent men, endeavoring to make all his own by force and violence.

“The beginning of his kingdom” - (verse 10) His dominion was first distinguished by the name of a kingdom on the face of the earth. It is likely that Nimrod, having acquired power, used it in tyranny and oppression. “Babel” signifies “confusion” and is a proper name for the beginning of a kingdom that appears to have been founded in apostasy from God and to have been supported by tyranny. It is thought that in order to set up a new government, he set up a new religion, a form of idolatry (Revelation 17:5: *“Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations.”*). *“In the land of Shinar”* (11:2) - since Babylon was built on the Euphrates River and the Tower of Babel was in Shinar, this

must have been the southern part of Mesopotamia.

“He went into Assyria and built Nineveh” - (verse 11) Hence Assyria is called the land of Nimrod (Micah 5:6). Thus did Nimrod extend his dominion.

The father of the Philistines (verse 14).

The father of Canaan, the ancestor of the Canaanites (verse 15).

Verses 21-31: *“To Shem also, the father of all...”* - In the prophecy of Noah, the first blessing fell upon Shem. The portion of the earth occupied by his descendants intersect the portions of Japheth and Ham and stretch from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean.

“the children of Eber” - It is generally supposed that the Hebrews derived their name from Eber. Abraham and his seed descended from him and from him were called “Hebrews” (14:13).

“The wisdom and goodness of God are particularly manifested in repopling the earth by means of three persons, all of the same family, who had witnessed God’s justice in destroying the world by the flood while they themselves were preserved in the ark. By this means the true religion was propagated over the earth (Acts 8:1). For the sons of Noah would certainly teach their children not only the precepts delivered to their father by God Himself, but also how in His justice He had brought the flood on the world of the ungodly and by His merciful providence preserved them from the general ruin. It is on this ground alone that we can account for the uniformity and universality of the above traditions and for the grand outlines of religious truth which are found in every quarter of the world.”
Adam Clarke

Chapter 11

This occurred in the fourth generation after the flood, about the time of the birth of Peleg (10:25) which was about 101 years after the flood and 326 years before the call of Abraham. It was God’s method of dispersing the race to its task of subduing the earth.

Verse 1: *“Now the whole earth had one language”* - If there were any different languages before the flood, yet Noah’s only (which it is likely was the same with Adam’s) was preserved through the flood and continued after it. This was in all likelihood the Hebrew language. It is generally supposed that after the confusion mentioned in this chapter that the Hebrew language remained in the family of Heber. The proper names and their meanings in the Scripture are evidences that the Hebrew language was the original language of the earth. It was used among the Jews until they were carried captive into Babylon. There the mixed Hebrew (or Chaldee) came in its place. This probably gave rise to the necessity of explaining the Hebrew Scriptures in the Chaldee tongue so that the children might understand as well as their fathers.

Verse 2: *“migrated from the east... found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.”* - This first land to be peopled after the flood was Mesopotamia or Babylonia, renowned for fertility. This settlement in the plain of Shinar was in opposition to God’s purpose of replenishing the earth by scattering the people abroad.

Verse 3: *“brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar.”* - It appears that had neither common stone nor limestone, but they were not discouraged. The soil of this area has been tested for the making of pottery. Mud, wet from the waters of the river, molded and exposed to the sun, dried in half an hour and became as hard as stone.

Verse 4: *“let us build ourselves a city and a tower”* - The first builders of cities were not men of the best character and reputation (4:17). The leaders were determined to keep men together, to organize, federate, do big things. The building of the city led to the building of the tower.

Why was it built?

1. Some say it was to secure themselves against another flood. They had God’s covenant with it seal, but they chose to trust to their own methods just as Noah’s generation would not accept the ark as the means of safety. If this was so, why did they not build on a mountain instead of a plain?
2. To reach the heavens. This points to the defiance of God, or at least a use of their own way to approach Him. They would be like the Most High.
3. To make a name for themselves. Fearing that death would leave them no name, they wanted to leave this monument behind them. But their names have been buried in the dust.
4. To prevent their dispersion. It is probable that the hand of the ambitious Nimrod was in this. This was in disobedience to God’s command (9:1). This city and this tower were to be the center of their kingdom and their unity.
5. Ancient Jewish manuscripts assert that the tower was for idolatrous worship, that they intended to place an image on the top of the tower. Whatever their design might have been, it is certain that this temple or tower was afterwards devoted to idolatrous purposes. Nebuchadnezzar repaired and beautified this tower and it was dedicated to Bel, or the sun.

Tradition says this tower was overthrown by a mighty wind, but the original ruins existed in the time of Nebuchadnezzar (about 600 B.C.). The ruins of Nebuchadnezzar’s reconstruction remain, seven stages rising near the plain of Babylon. Two cylinders recently unearthed bear words of Nebuchadnezzar: *“I renewed its substructure and put my name on the cornice of its edifice.”*

Verse 5: *“And the Lord came down to see”* - This declares the fact of the divine knowledge of the doings of men. He observes it all, evaluates it all. Intervenes according to His will (Exodus 3:8).

Verse 6: *“nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.”* - Many things could be brought to pass because these people were of one tongue, one mind, and one purpose. The strength of unity!

Verse 7: *“Come, let us go down and there confuse their language”* - God permitted them to proceed far in their enterprise before He put a stop to it. God did not meddle with their

hands and feet but with their tongues, and not by making them dumb but by multiplying their words. They had so many words they did not know what to do with them. When He made man, God taught him to speak with words fit to express the conceptions of his mind. Now the same God made those builders forget their former language and speak and understand a new one, which was the same to those of the same tribe or family but not to others. This was a direct supernatural intervention (c.f. Pentecost - Acts 2). The power of speech distinguishes man from beast: Language can create divisive barriers or hold people together.

Verse 8: *“So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of the earth”* - This was God’s work. They departed in companies, after their families and after their tongues to the places allotted to them but which they would not go to possess. God’s purpose prevailed. Often that which we seek to evade by indirect and sinful methods finally comes upon us.

“they left off building the city.” - They were no longer able to help one another in the work of building the city.

Verse 9: *“Therefore its name was called Babel”* - They aimed at a great name, but they were left with a bad name. They left a memorial of their reproach to future generations. This was the site of Babylon which, according to Bible history, played a large part in the subsequent account of the conflict between good and evil in the centuries which followed (Revelation 17:5).

From chapter 3 to 11:9 we have an account of degeneration:

1. Of the individual - chapter 3
2. Of the family - chapters 4,5
3. Of Society - 6:1-10
4. Of the nations - 11:1-9

While the outworking of the principle of degeneration will be manifested in the subsequent history, yet the movement will be toward regeneration.

Verse 31: *“Terah took Abram his son and Lot”* - Abraham’s father was born about 200 years after the flood. It seems that he left his country after a divine revelation made to Abraham (Acts 7:2,3). Idolatry was very general at this period for both Terah and his family had served other gods before this call (Joshua 24:2). Terah was very ready to obey the call and active in making the move. This appears to have been a movement of faith because it was in the right direction, although not far enough in the right direction. They stopped in Haran. Haran was well known in history and seems to have been named for Terah’s deceased son, the father of Lot (11:27,28).