

Genesis
The Book
Of
Beginnings
(Why we do What we do)

Growing Godly Families
Old Testament Series
Manual 1

By

Duane L. Anderson

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Of
Beginnings**
(Why we do What we do)

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Growing Godly Families Series

This series of manuals is the result of a series of weekly e-mail topics that have been prepared and e-mailed over a period of years. They originally started out as a one page topic that gradually grew to the point where most topics are about three pages in length.

This series is especially designed for those who are already Christian leaders to give them Biblical principles for the development of godly physical and spiritual families. Because they give Biblical principles for developing godly families, they are also helpful for new Christians that want to grow and become godly families.

Mark 10:43-45 says, "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." In these verses Christ taught that godly spiritual leaders do not have the attitudes of leaders in the world. Worldly leadership is based on power and authority and is designed to benefit the leader and place him above others. In contrast, godly spiritual leadership is designed to help every Christian reach their full potential in Christ. The following three statements give a summary of three styles of leadership. The purpose of this series is to help every family develop their full potential as godly families.

If we drive people, we will drive them until they can get out of our way.

If we lead people, we will be able to lead them as far as we have gone ourselves.

If we serve people, we will help each person develop their full God given potential and equip each person for the ministry that Christ has prepared for every Christian.

In the world people often measure success by the amount of things that they accumulate in this world before they die. However, they are unable to take any of those things with them when they die. Mark 8:36-37 says, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Success produces rewards until we die but it produces nothing for eternity.

In contrast, God measures effectiveness by our faithfulness and obedience. Matthew 6:19-21 says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Effectiveness produces eternal rewards. Mark 10:29-30 says, "So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time--houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions--and in the age to come, eternal life." I Corinthians 10:31 says, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." The Growing Godly Families Series is designed to help your family life count for eternity by bringing glory to God.

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1.

The Creation of the Heavens and the Earth – Part I

Today we are beginning a new series of topics to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand and explain the Old Testament to others. Genesis is the foundation on which all of the books of the Bible are built because it is the book of beginnings. God has always existed because Psalm 90:2 says, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You *are* God.” In fact we will see in the first three verses that God has always existed as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. In addition, we also see in these verses that time began when God created the earth.

Genesis 1:1-5 says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.” In the first verse we see that the Father willed the creation. In the second verse the Spirit of God (Holy Spirit) moved on the face of the waters. In the third verse we will see that the Son spoke all things into existence.

In John 5:30 Christ said that He always carries out the will of the Father. That verse says, “I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.” Then in John 1:1-3 we read, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” Colossians 1:16 adds, “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.” These verses make it clear that Christ created all things because He was carrying out the will of the Father as He spoke all things into existence.

Before Christ spoke the earth was formless (unfinished or empty space) and void (emptiness). Isaiah 45:18 says, “For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: ‘I *am* the LORD, and *there is* no other.’” The word translated “void” means emptiness. Jeremiah 4:23 says, “I beheld the earth, and indeed *it was* without form, and void; and the heavens, they *had* no light.” Jeremiah learned that the Lord was going to make the earth formless and empty again. These verses together show us that God began with nothing and created the heavens and the earth where there had previously been nothing. Every theory of man assumes the existence of something and assumes the existence of some kind of life instead of beginning with nothing. Then those theories fail to explain the source of the creation or the source of life. In contrast, Hebrews 11:3 says, “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”

God asked Job a series of questions which no man can answer to show that these things could not evolve but that there was a Creator who created them. Job 38:4-7 says, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” However mankind turned from worshiping the Creator to worshiping the creation. Romans 1:22-23 says, “Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.” Most of mankind continues to worship the creation instead of the Creator of heaven and earth. That is really a summary of false religion.

The first three days of creation we see that Christ divided various things. Then days four through six we will see that Christ filled the things that He had divided. We see that the first thing that Christ spoke into existence was light. God saw that the light was good. The word translated “good” means good, excellent or beneficial. One of the things to notice is that there was day and night before there was a sun, moon or stars. We see that Christ divided the light from the darkness. It is God who called the time when mankind has light on the earth Day and night when we have darkness. We also see that God sees things in a different order than most people because God called the evening and the morning the first day. We see that the evening came before the morning. That order becomes very important when we read Romans 13:10-12 which says, “Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law. And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.” As Christians we can now look forward to the eternal day while those who reject Christ will face eternal darkness.

Genesis 1:6-8 says, “Then God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.” The second thing that Christ divided was the waters above from the waters below. The word translated “firmament” means expanse or firmament and speaks about that which holds the waters that are above the earth. This means that when Christ spoke that the waters above were divided from the waters below. We see that God called this firmament heaven and so it includes the atmosphere above us and also the second heaven where Christ would place the sun, moon and stars when He spoke them into existence. Again the evening and the morning were the second day.

Genesis 1:9-13 says, “Then God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry *land* appear’; and it was so. And God called the dry *land* Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that *it was* good. Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed, *and* the fruit tree *that* yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, on the earth’; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed according to its kind, and the tree *that* yields fruit, whose seed *is* in itself according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good. So the evening and

the morning were the third day.” In these verses we see that God separated the water that was on the earth and caused the dry land to appear. God was the One who called the dry land earth and the waters that were gathered together seas.

This is explained in more detail in Psalm 104:5-9 where we read, “*You who* laid the foundations of the earth, so *that* it should not be moved forever, You covered it with the deep as *with* a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At Your rebuke they fled; at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. They went up over the mountains; they went down into the valleys, to the place which You founded for them. You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, that they may not return to cover the earth.” These verses show that God raised the mountains above the lower places on the earth. He then caused the water to settle in these lower places. Then God set a boundary between the dry land and the seas. The only time that this boundary was removed was when God sent the flood which covered the entire earth during the time of Noah. As a result, things like shells that have been found in the mountains were placed there at the time of the flood in the time of Noah. Men try to deny that flood by talking about things like the ice age.

On the third day Christ spoke and caused the earth to bring forth grass, the herbs that yield seed and the various kinds of fruit trees. This again shows that God is the Creator of all things because each kind of seed produces according to its kind. Grass does not suddenly turn into a fruit tree or a fruit tree turn into an herb. These various forms of plant life were created on the third day while the sun was not created until the fourth day. This is another evidence of the fact that there was the light of day and night before there was the sun, moon and stars to give that light. That condition will be true again in the future when the new heavens and the new earth are created. Revelation 21:23 says, “The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light.” Then Revelation 22:5 adds, “There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.” God is both the Creator and the true source of all light.

These verses also show us that to the earth brought forth grass, herbs and fruit trees on that third day that they had their seed within themselves. This means that God created all things that He created so that they reproduced themselves. We will see in later verses in this chapter that this same thing was true for the sea creatures, birds, animals and man. God saw that everything that He created was good. When we see how complex God created each kind of fruit tree, sea life, bird, animal and especially man we see the greatness of the Creator. That is why Psalm 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.” We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how every part of the creation reveals the glory of the Creator. Many people in the world want to boast in themselves but this first chapter of Genesis show that we have a wonderful Creator who had a perfect plan for the development of everything within His creation. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

2.

The Creation of the Heavens and the Earth – Part II

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children become equipped to explain that we have a wonderful Creator who had a perfect plan for the development of everything within His creation. In this topic we will see that God filled the things that He had created.

Genesis 1:14-19 says, “Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.” On the first day God divided the light from the darkness and called the light Day and the darkness He called Night. There had been light from the first day. However, on the fourth day God created the things which give us light during the day and the night.

The first heaven is the atmosphere above us. The second heaven is the firmament or expanse of space where God placed the sun, moon and stars. The two lights called the great lights are the sun and the moon. The sun is actually a burning star but it is much closer to us than any of the other stars. Because it is burning, it gives us direct light. In contrast, the moon does not burn and so it gives us reflected light as it reflects the sun. This gives us an opportunity to teach our children that Christ is the spiritual Light and wants us to become His reflected lights. John 8:12 says, “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” Then Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

We see that God gave those lights to do three things. First, those lights were given to divide the day from the night. Christ had already spoken light into existence on the first day but here we see that He gave the sun and moon to divide the day and the night. He knew that mankind would need times for work and times for rest. Once sin entered the world man needed daily rest. Genesis 3:17 says, “Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.” Then Genesis 5:29 says, “And he called his name Noah, saying, ‘This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord has cursed.’” This hard work and toil meant that daily rest was needed.

Second, those lights were for signs and seasons. God gave the sun and moon for signs and seasons. Psalm 8:1 says, “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens!” Here we see that the sun, moon and stars are all signs to declare the glory of God. They also are signs about coming weather. Matthew 16:2-3 says,

“He answered and said to them, When it is evening you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red’; and in the morning, ‘It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.” God will also use the lights as a sign of judgment. Joel 2:30-31 says, “And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.”

Third, those lights were for days and years. A year is defined by the fact that it takes one year for the earth to make a complete rotation around the sun. The moon divides time into thirty day months. We also see that the rotation of the earth as it moves around the sun divides the year into the seasons of summer and winter as well as seedtime and harvest. Genesis 8:22 says, “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.” When Christ spoke the words creating the sun, moon and stars we see that they came into existence. They immediately began to give light to the earth. They also divided the light of day from the darkness of the night beginning at the time they were spoken into existence. We read that God saw that it was good and so the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

Genesis 1:20-23 says, “Then God said, ‘Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.’ So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’ So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.” On the second day Christ spoke into existence the sea and the dry land. Now on the fifth day we see that He spoke into existence the birds and the sea creatures.

We see that Christ said to let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures. This would include fish of every kind from tiny fish to very large whales. These verses here in Genesis also tell us that God created great sea creatures. This also included other great sea creatures. The word that is translated “great” means very large. The word translated “sea creatures” means serpents, sharks, whales or other sea monsters, including dinosaurs. Job 41:1 says, “Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, or snare his tongue with a line which you lower?” Then Psalm 104:24-26 adds, “O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions—this great and wide sea, in which are innumerable teeming things, living things both small and great. There the ships sail about; there is that Leviathan which You have made to play there.” Here we see that Leviathan is a sea creature that lives in the sea where the ships sail. Either this sea creature or the behemoth mentioned in Job 40:15-24 could be various species of dinosaurs. Job 40:19 says of behemoth, “He is the first of the ways of God; only He who made him can bring near His sword.” This verse says that this creature is the first of the ways of God.

Both the words for sea monsters and Leviathan are mentioned in Psalm 74:13-14 where we read, “You divided the sea by Your strength; You broke the heads of the sea serpents in the waters. You broke the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gave him as food to the people

inhabiting the wilderness.” The word translated “sea serpents” in this verse would include sharks, whales, dinosaurs and other large sea creatures. These verses in Job and Psalms would indicate that these creatures were still in the seas in the time of Job but had possibly been destroyed by the time of David. This would mean that they are historic creatures living as recently as the time of Job. Job probably lived sometime between the tower of Babel and the time of Abraham so these creatures were still alive only a few thousand years ago. The fact that these great sea creatures are mentioned various places in the Bible makes it clear that these creatures only became extinct in recent years.

Everything in the water was created after their kind. The word translated “kind” is sometimes translated species. There were many different kinds of sea creatures and they each had their own species. The same thing was true for the birds. They were all created after their species. This same word is used several times to speak of the animals that Noah took into the ark. Genesis 7:13-14 says, “On the very same day Noah and Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort.” God created the various species so that each species would be different from the moment that they were created.

As God looked at the sea creatures and birds after they were created, we see that God saw that all that He had created that day was good. Then God blessed the sea creatures and the birds. This blessing is explained by what God told the sea creatures and birds to do. God blessed them and told them to be fruitful and multiply. The word “fruitful” means to bear fruit or reproduce. Here we see that God clearly lays out His plan for the ongoing population of the earth by every living thing. Each living thing is to reproduce after their species. Here we see that God created every species so that it was able to reproduce. God also said that the sea creatures and the birds were to multiply. God blessed the sea creatures and told them to multiply and fill the waters of the seas. He blessed the birds and told them to multiply on the earth.

God revealed through these verses that He had a very clear plan for the creation of everything that He was going to create on the earth. In fact Ephesians 1:4-5 says, “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.” These verses show us that even before Christ spoke the creation into existence that God had a clear plan from eternity past. We will see how that plan is carried out in future topics as we see how God created the animals and then as He created mankind. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand and explain to others how God carried out this plan as He created the heavens and the earth. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

3.

The Creation of the Heavens and the Earth – Part III

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what God created on the fourth and fifth days of creation. In this topic we will see what God created on the sixth day of creation.

In Genesis 1:24-25 we read, “Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind”; and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.” Here we see that that Christ spoke all of the animals on the earth into existence on the sixth day. Just like the sea creatures and the birds, we see that the animals and creeping things on the earth were created with various species. People who reject the fact that God is the Creator of all things come up with many theories about the way that the world was created but they have no way to show how all of the different species of sea creatures, birds, animals and creeping things came into existence. That shows us right from the beginning that man must either believe that there is a Creator or choose to believe in the opinions of mankind who do not believe in a Creator.

First, we read that when Christ spoke that the cattle all came into existence at the same time. The word translated “cattle” is used to refer to cattle, beasts and animals both wild animals and the tame animals that provide part of our food today. This word is translated beast in Genesis 6:7 where we read, “So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” Then Genesis 7:2 adds, “You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female.” A clean beast usually means that it eats grass and plants while an unclean animal often eats other animals.

Second, we read that Christ spoke the creeping things into existence. The word translated “creeping things” usually refers to the things that crawl on the ground, things like bugs that jump or creep and other similar creatures. Third, we read that Christ spoke the beasts of the earth into existence. These would include the animals larger than the cattle such as the dinosaurs and other larger beasts. Job 40:15-19 says, ““Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; he eats grass like an ox. See now, his strength is in his hips, and his power is in his stomach muscles. He moves his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are tightly knit. His bones are like beams of bronze, his ribs like bars of iron. He is the first of the ways of God; only He who made him can bring near His sword.” We see that this animal is called the first of the ways of God. None of the larger animals that we have alive today would fit this complete description. However, the species that includes the dinosaurs would fit every part of the description. God looked at all of the animals that He had created and saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:26-28 says, “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” Suddenly we see a change in the words used for creation. Notice the three underlined words, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” We see that the underlined words are plural. This points to the fact that God in One God in three persons. We said in the topic on the first verses of this chapter that the entire Trinity was involved in creation. The Father willed the creation (1:1), the Spirit moved on the face of the waters (1:2) and then verse (1:3) along with John 1:1-14 show that Christ spoke everything into existence.

That also means that mankind is different than any of the other creatures that God made because we are made in the image of God. We have a body, soul and spirit. Romans 8:15-16 says, “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” The various animals, birds and sea creatures have a body and soul (the soul is the mind, emotions and will). They can be taught to do certain things for a reward and at least part of these creatures show that they have emotions and a will. However, they do not have a spirit so that the Holy Spirit of God can come into their spirit. As a result, mankind is the only creature in the entire creation that can communicate with God and become the children of God. God also gave mankind dominion (rule) over all of the other creatures that He had created.

We read that God created man in His own image. To be made in the image of God means to be made in the likeness of God. Genesis 5:3 says, “And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot *a son* in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.” In this verse we see that Adam passed on the image of God to his descendants. As a result, mankind today still reflects the image of God. Then Genesis 9:6 adds, “Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.” In this verse we see that the basis for the death penalty for murder is based on the fact that man is made in the image of God. As a result, many of the people that are in rebellion against God today have worked to eliminate the death penalty for murder. In addition to creating man in His own image, God created the male and the female at separate times as we will see in the following topics.

When God created the man and the woman, God blessed them and gave them three instructions. First, God told them to be fruitful and multiply. This meant that mankind was to spread out and populate the earth and fill the earth with people. Second, God told mankind to subdue the earth. The word “subdue” means to bring into subjection. This meant that mankind is to tend and keep the earth. God told Adam in Genesis 2:15, “Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.” Mankind is to make the earth productive so that it can provide food for the people and carry out the purposes of God for the earth. Third, man was to have dominion over the birds and every living thing that lives on the earth. Here we see that God gave mankind the responsibility to rule over all of the creatures on the earth.

Genesis 1:29-31 says, “And God said, “See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for food”; and it was so. Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” These verses tell us why mankind was to subdue the earth. God said that the plants of the earth would provide food for mankind as well as for the birds and the animals.

This meant that until man sinned that all people, animals and birds on the earth ate the plants of the earth and not other animals or creatures. God said that both the herbs and the fruit trees would provide seed so that they could yield food for mankind and all of the other creatures. Here we see that every kind of plant was able to reproduce seed that would cause that plant to keep reproducing food for the people and other creatures on the earth. God said this same thing would continue after the flood. Genesis 8:21-22 says, “And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart *is* evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.’” Even through the flood the Lord protected the various forms of seed so that they could begin reproducing again after the flood.

The sixth day marked the completion of the creation of the earth. As a result, we see that God saw everything that He had made and saw that it was all very good. In the previous verses we read several times that God saw what He had made and that it was good. Now we see that God gives a summary about all of the things He had created and saw that everything that He had made was very good. The word translated “very” is translated several times exceedingly. This is the way that the word is translated in Genesis 7:19 where we read, “And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. God also used this word when He told Abraham in Genesis 17:1-2, “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.’” God wanted to make it very clear that He was very joyful when He saw everything that He had created.

Then we are reminded one more time that the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Throughout the Old and New Testaments we will see that this is the way that the Jews referred to their days. Each day began at sundown and ended the next day at sundown. As a result, that is an important thing to know when you are reading the Bible because it will help you to understand certain statements that are made at various places in the Bible. We also want to help our physical and spiritual children understand what God created on each day and see that when God was finished with His work of creation that He was very joyful with the results. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain how God created the heavens and the earth.

4.

The Creation of Man

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand what those verses said about the creation of the animals and mankind. In this topic we will see that we learn some additional details about the creation of man. That will be the focus of the last part of this topic.

Genesis 2:1-3 says, “Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” In these verses we see that God finished the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything that went with the creation was complete.

We see that God as the Creator said that His work was completed in six days. Today we have many people who try to deny their sin by denying that the Creator made the heavens and the earth. Romans 1:20-23 says, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.” Here we see that such denials will not change the truth of the Creator and His creation. That is why Romans 1:24-25 adds, “Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” God said that such people actually worship themselves and their works.

Once God had finished His creation we see that He rested from all of the work that He had done. However, God did not rest because He was tired. Instead He rested to give mankind an example for our own lives. Mark 2:27 says, “And He said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.’” Here we see that the Sabbath was made for man because man needs rest from his work. Exodus 20:11 says, “For *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” Then in Deuteronomy 5:14b-15 says, “That your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.” God used the slavery of Israel in Egypt to teach Israel that they were to let their servants rest as well as using the day to rest themselves.

God also blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day. The Old Testament sabbath

was just a shadow of the eternal rest that we will experience. That is why Colossians 2:16-17 says, “So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Here we see that the Sabbaths and all of the other special days in the Old Testament were just a shadow pointing to the future. The writer of Hebrews explained that God made the seventh day to show the need to enter into a spiritual rest. Hebrews 4:9-11 says, “There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.”

That spiritual rest makes it possible for us to come boldly into the presence of God through Christ. Hebrews 4:15-16 says, “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Here we see that we are able to enjoy fellowship with God while we are on the earth because we can enter into His presence at any time with boldness. We celebrate this rest with a new day rather than the original Sabbath. We celebrate on the first day of the week to remember the day that Christ rose from the dead since His death and resurrection is what makes possible this spiritual rest. This rest becomes eternal at the moment that we enter into the presence of the Lord in heaven.

Genesis 2:4-6 goes on to explain, “This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.” The word translated “history” means the course of history of the creation of the heavens and the earth. The first two days of creation put the heavens and the earth in place. Then on the third day God separated the waters from the dry land. Since the evening and the morning were the third day this meant that this separation happened at the start of the evening so that God had already provided a daily source of moisture for the plants before any plants were brought into existence on the morning of the third day.

We see that before the flood that there was not any rain. The change from day to evening each day caused cooler temperatures which caused a change each day. During the evening a mist formed which watered the whole face of the ground. This mist began happening before any of the herbs of the field or the plants had grown and also three days before man was created. God revealed supernaturally that this is how He prepared for the time when plant life began on the third day on earth prior to the creation of mankind. This mist is still one way that part of the moisture for the plants is provided in many parts of the world. Psalm 19:1 reminds us, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.” God provided the moisture needed even before there was rain from the heavens.

We go on to read more details about the way that Adam was formed. Genesis 2:7 says, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Most of the creation including all of the animals was formed by Christ speaking the word. However, here we see that the Lord worked in a very

unique way to create Adam. We see that Adam was formed from the dust of the ground. In fact the word translated “Adam” means red dirt or human being. Here we see that God took special care in the creation of the first man just as God has taken special care in the creation of every person since. Psalm 139:13-15 says, “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and *that* my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, *and* skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.” These verses show that God still works in the development of every person to make them His own special creation.

We also see that God gave Adam life in a very unique way as we read that the Lord God, “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” Elihu spoke for every person that receives life when He said in Job 33:4, “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.” This verse points out the fact that the breath of life in every person is from the Almighty. God formed the body from the dirt but the breath of life came from the very nostrils of God. He is the One who gives the breath of life so He is the only One who has the authority to take away the breath of life from a person. That is why God later told Noah in Genesis 9:6, “Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.” Here we see that God did delegate the responsibility to mankind to take the life of one who was guilty of murder.

We see that when God breathed the breath of life into Adam that he became a living being. For Adam this meant that He received both physical life and spiritual life. The fact that Adam was given both physical and spiritual life becomes very important when Genesis 2:16-17 says, “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” Here we see that God told Adam that He would surely die the day he disobeyed. The word “die” means to experience separation. There are three kinds of death (separation) mentioned in the Bible. Spiritual death is the separation of man from God. Physical death is the separation of the body from the soul and spirit. The second death is described in Revelation 20:14-15 where we read, “Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” This is eternal separation from God.

We will see that Adam and Eve immediately experienced spiritual death when they sinned in Genesis 3. That is why Romans 5:12 says, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” Here we see that there are eternal consequences facing all who do not come to God in repentance. This is why we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that Christ came to give life. In John 10:10b Christ said, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.” This is the good news that every person on earth needs the opportunity to hear. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to share this good news.

5.

The Planting of the Garden of Eden

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand the various kinds of death so that they can learn to explain to others how to have spiritual life. That is the good news that Christ came to offer. In our topic today we will learn about the planting of the Garden of Eden.

In Genesis 2:8-9 we read, “The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Here we see that God also took special care to plant a garden as the place for man to live. This garden was in an area called Eden. The word “Eden” means pleasure. This is the place that God created for mankind to live and also so that He could come there and enjoy fellowship with Adam and Eve. Since it was untouched by sin, it was more beautiful than any garden or park developed since the time that Adam and Eve sinned.

Then we see that God caused every tree to grow in this garden. In various parts of the world today we have many different kinds of trees. However, the Garden on Eden had all of the different kinds of trees in the same garden. We see that God describes those trees in two ways. God said that the trees were pleasant to the sight. Here we see that the original trees were trees of great beauty. In addition, the trees in the garden also were good for food as they provided many different kinds of fruit. In nearly every place where anyone lives on the earth they still have the opportunity to enjoy some of the trees and their fruit. This is one of the blessings that God has continued to supply throughout the earth even though the trees may not be as beautiful as they were in the garden.

We also see that the garden contained two special trees. The first of these was the tree of life which was placed in the middle of the garden. The tree of life is described in Revelation 22:2 where we read, “In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.” Here we see that the tree of life in the future will yield twelve different kinds of fruit, a new kind of fruit every month. This same thing was probably true with the original tree of life that God placed in the center of the Garden of Eden. Once Adam sinned God had to prevent mankind from eating of this tree because that would have caused man to live with the consequences of sin forever. Genesis 3:22 says, “Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”

The second tree that was unique to the garden was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In Genesis 2:17 God said, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Here we see that God placed one tree in the garden that gave Adam and Eve a choice. They could choose to avoid eating of this tree

and they would have lived forever. In contrast, they could choose to disobey God and He said that they would experience immediate death that day. We will see that Adam and Eve did experience spiritual death (separation from God) as soon as they ate the fruit of that tree. Genesis 3:7-8 says, “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.” Here we see the first example of the fact that wrong choices can have eternal consequences.

Genesis 2:10-14 goes on to say, “Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. The name of the first *is* Pishon; it *is* the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. And the gold of that land *is* good. Bdellium and the onyx stone *are* there. The name of the second river *is* Gihon; it *is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river *is* Hiddekel; it *is* the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates.” The word translated “went out of” means to go or to come from a place and go to another place. This meant that the river started in the garden and then went from there to various areas. This was probably a giant spring where a large amount of water was coming up continually from the earth.

This giant spring caused so much water to come out of the earth that four rivers got their start from that water. These rivers flowed in various directions. The name of the first river was called Pishon (increase). This river went around the whole edge of the land of Havilah. We see that land was known for three things. That land had a lot of gold and we are told that the gold of that land was good. This meant that it was high quality gold. That land also had a lot of two other items. Bdellium is a wonderful smelling gum that comes from a tree. It is used to make perfumes that have a good smell. We also see that this area had a lot of onyx stones. Onyx stones are very beautiful and are often used to make jewelry. Larger pieces can often be cut and used like marble to show their beauty.

The name of the second river was the Gihon (bursting forth). It went around the whole land of Cush (Ethiopia). The name of the third river was Hiddekel (rapid – this river is better known as Tigris). It went toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates (fruitfulness). The garden and all of these rivers were dramatically changed at the time of the flood. Genesis 7:11 says, “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.” Before the flood the waters of the rivers came from inside the earth. When these fountains of the deep were broken up it created many changes throughout the entire earth so that it is probable that the way that the earth looked before the flood is not the same as it is today.

We go on to see that God gave Adam instructions about the care of the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:15-17 says, “Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” God put Adam in this beautiful garden and told

him to tend and keep it. The word translated “tend” means to work. The word translated “keep” means to take care of it. Here we see that God gave Adam responsibility for the garden.

Work and responsibility were enjoyable before sin came into the world. Genesis 3:17b-19 tells how the consequences of sin changed work so that it became difficult. Those verses say, “Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat *of* it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you *are*, and to dust you shall return.” This curse on the ground made work something that required toil. The word translated “toil” means pain, labor and hardship. These things were not a part of work before sin.

God also gave Adam instructions about the freedom that he had and the one thing that he was not to do. God told Adam that he could freely eat of every tree in the garden except one tree. This meant that Adam was free to eat the fruit on hundreds of trees. In fact there was only one tree that he was told to avoid the fruit. That was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was nearly total liberty as there was only one thing that mankind could not do. When we become Christians we have this liberty and freedom restored. Galatians 5:1 says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” Then Galatians 5:13 adds, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” By giving Adam these instructions, there was only one thing that Adam could do to disobey God.

This chapter shows us that God created an ideal place for Adam to live. He was free to do almost anything that he chose to do. He was free to obey or to disobey. The choice to obey had only blessing to offer. The choice to disobey had a very serious consequence. That consequence was immediate spiritual death and would also cause physical death at a later time. That is why God told Adam not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God told Adam that the day that he ate of the fruit of that tree that he would surely die. This meant that Adam had been given a clear explanation of the consequences of eating of the fruit of that tree. I Timothy 2:14 says, “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.” Here we see that Adam was not deceived when he ate that fruit. He had been told the exact consequences and chose to eat the fruit anyway.

God gave Adam the freedom of choice. However, that freedom led to the decision to sin. James 1:14-15 says, “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” God warned Adam about the consequences of that choice before he made the choice to sin. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why it is important to explain to others the consequences of the choices that they make. In that way they learn to follow the example of the Lord by helping others understand that choices lead to consequences. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain the consequences of sinful choices.

6.

God Formed the First Woman

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that sinful choices will always lead to negative consequences. In contrast, godly choices lead to blessing from the Lord. Today we will see how God formed the first woman and what God taught Adam and Eve about marriage.

In Genesis 2:18-20 we read, “And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’ Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.” Here we see the first time that God said that something was not good. Here we see that God said that it is not good that man should be alone.

However, before God made a helper that was comparable to him we see that God first brought all of the animals and birds to him so that he could name them. In this way Adam was able to see that none of the animals or birds were like him. We also see that God gave Adam great knowledge because he was able to give a name to every animal and bird as God brought them to him. This is a reminder that Adam had great knowledge from the very moment that he was created because he was able to name all of these animals on the very first day that he was created before Eve was even created later in the day. This also showed that God had given Adam great creativity since he was able to decide on these names as quickly as the Lord brought the animals and birds to him.

These verses tell us that God formed the animals and birds out of the ground. Then he brought them to Adam. In Genesis 1:24 we read, “Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind’; and it was so.” Here we see that God formed the living creatures from the earth by just speaking the words. Then over the next few minutes or hours God brought the cattle, the birds and every beast of the field to Adam. We see that he was able to give all of them names. These were all brought forth and named before Eve was created later in the day. However, during this process Adam was able to see that none of the creatures that God brought to him to name were like him. As a result, Adam realized that there was not a helper comparable to him.

Once Adam realized that none of the other creatures were like him, then God was ready to meet that need. Genesis 2:21-23 says, “And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’” Here we see that God performed the first surgery because of the way that He chose to create Eve. For that surgery we see that God caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam. It was while Adam was asleep that God performed this surgery.

During the surgery God took out one of the ribs of Adam and some of the flesh near that rib. Then God closed up the flesh. God had formed man from the dust of the ground and taken special care in the creation of man. Here we see that God took that same special care in the creation of the woman. We read that the Lord God took the rib and made it into a woman. The word translated “made” is used 376 times in the Old Testament and is nearly always translated to build or to build up. Psalm 127:1 says, “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.” The very first thing that God built was not a building. Instead it was the wife of Adam from his rib so that there would be a person that was comparable to him.

We see that God took a rib of Adam to make the woman. A rib is close to the heart. God wanted the woman to have a very special place in the heart of man. Ephesians 5:25-28 says, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.” Here we see that the relationship of a husband is to picture the relationship of Christ to the church. For this reason a husband is to love his wife and give himself for her. He is to help her grow spiritually by sharing the Word of God with her. He is to present his wife holy and without blemish. He is to love his wife in the same way that he loves his own body.

When Adam awoke from the surgery that God had performed on him, He saw that God had now made a helper comparable to him. He was no longer alone but he had someone like himself with whom he would be able to share his life and together they would be able to reproduce others like themselves. Later God said when Noah came out of the ark in Genesis 9:1, “So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’” Here we see that the plan of God for mankind included filling the earth with people.

After God had made the woman, He brought her to the man. We see that Adam understood what God had just done by what he said. He realized that she came from one of his bones and that she had some of his flesh. God had made her so that she was a part of the man. I Corinthians 11:8 says, “For man is not from woman, but woman from man.” This is a key thing for every couple to understand that God made the wife from the husband and that he is to respond to her by loving her as he loves himself. Adam also showed that he understood this relationship when he said that she should be called woman. He knew he was to treat her with the same love that he treated his own body. Here we see that a godly marriage will bring honor to God because the husband desires to treat the wife with that same love that he has for his own body.

As we come to Genesis 2:24-25 we see that God gave a foundational principle for marriage. Genesis 2:24-25 says, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” Adam and Eve had no father and mother to leave. Therefore they could not apply this principle by leaving their parents. However, they could cleave to one another and

become one flesh. In addition, they did have a principle that they could apply by allowing their children to change their relationship with them as parents when their children married.

The word translated “leave” means to depart, to abandon or to loose. Boaz used this word when he said to Ruth in Ruth 2:11, “And Boaz answered and said to her, “It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before.” In this case Ruth had left her parents and went with her mother-in-law so that she could worship the true and living God instead of the idols of her family. Married children are to have a concern for their parents if their parents need care in their older ages and that responsibility is not stopped. However, when a couple marries they are to move the decision making and their first commitment from their parents to their partner. This is true even if there are three or more generations living in the same household.

The word translated “be joined” is also used in the book of Ruth. Ruth 1:14-17 says, “Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. And she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” But Ruth said: “Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me.” In verse 14 the word is translated clung and the following verses explain what that means. These verses show that it means to go, to live with, to become a part of another family or people, to follow God together, and even to be buried in the same place. It means to be joined together so that nothing except death will separate. This is the plan that God has for marriage.

The phrase “shall become one” is the number one and was used in verse 21 to speak of one of the ribs of Adam. The word translated “flesh” means the body itself. Adam used this word twice in verse 23 when he said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh...” Adam recognized that Eve came from his flesh and pointed forward to the fact that they were to become one in body. Since they had not yet sinned, they were naked but were not ashamed. They were able to enjoy the creation together with thoughts and attitudes that were pure because there was no sin. We will see in the following topics that sin immediately brought shame. That is one of the consequences of sin. However, we see that until they sinned they were able to enjoy life together with no shame. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand and explain the principle that God established for marriage. As they learn to apply this principle and share it with others they will experience the joy that God planned for all marriages that apply this Biblical principle rather than follow the pattern of the world. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to understand, apply and teach this principle.

Mankind Committed the First Sin

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand, apply and teach the principle that God gave to establish healthy marriages when He performed the first marriage. In this topic we are going to see how Satan deceived Eve and how that led to Adam and Eve disobeying God.

Satan was the first to rebel against God and Isaiah tells us that his sin was due to pride. In Isaiah 14:13-14 we see that God said to Satan, “For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’” Satan also led one third of the angels to join him in his rebellion and they became fallen angels (demons). Here we see that Satan now tried to get mankind to sin as well. We see that Satan came to Eve in the form of a snake and said in Genesis 3:1, “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?’”

We see that the serpent (snake) was more cunning than any of the other beast of the field. The word translated “cunning” means to be shrewd, sly or crafty. Revelation 12:9 says, “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Here we see that it was Satan that came in the form of a snake to deceive Eve. Then in II Corinthians 11:14-15 we read, “And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” Satan also questioned what God had said to Adam when he said, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?” Here we see that one of Satan’s tricks to try and deceive anyone is to question the Word of God. He still does the same thing.

We see that Eve answered in Genesis 3:2-3, “And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’” In this answer we see that Eve had a general understanding of what God had said but she did not quote exactly what God had said. Eve said that they could eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. Then she went on to quote what God had said about the tree that was in the middle of the garden. In Genesis 2:16-17 God had said, “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” These were the exact words that God had said. God did not say anything about not touching the tree but Eve added that statement to what God had said. Satan immediately recognized that he could deceive Eve because she did not quote accurately what God had said.

Instead God had said that the day that they ate of the fruit of that tree that they would surely die. Here we see that God had given them a choice. They could avoid eating of that tree and they would live. They could choose to eat of the fruit of that tree and that very day they would experience spiritual death. Spiritual death is separation of man from God. Physical death is the separation of the body from the soul and spirit. We will see in the next topic that they immediately experienced spiritual death when they ate of the fruit of that tree even though Adam did not experience physical death until 930 years later. The fact that Eve had added the statement that they would die if they touched the fruit of the tree helped Satan to know how to deceive Eve because she had added her own words to the Word of God.

Immediately Satan called God a liar. Genesis 3:4-5 says, "Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Here we see that Satan said just the opposite of what God had said. God had said, "In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." In contrast, Satan had said, "You will not surely die." Eve had to make the choice of whether to believe God or to believe Satan. John 8:44 says, "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." This verse makes it clear that Satan is the father of lies.

Then Satan promised Eve that three things would happen if she ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. First, Satan said, "God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened." That statement was true. Genesis 3:7 says, "Then the eyes of both of them were opened." Second, Satan said, "You will be like God." That statement was a total lie. Third, Satan said, "Knowing good and evil." That statement was also true. Genesis 3:7 says, "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings." Here we see that they knew that they were naked and they tried to cover themselves. In verse eight they hid from the presence of the Lord. When God asked Adam and Eve where they were Adam said in Genesis 3:10, "So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." They suddenly knew evil and it caused Adam and Eve to be filled with fear, guilt and shame. They also immediately experienced separation from God.

As the father of lies Satan took two statements that were true and put a lie in the middle. That made the whole statement a lie and Satan deceived Eve with that lie. Here we see one way that Satan deceives many people. By combining some truth with a lie, even weak Christians can be easily deceived by Satan. Ephesians 4:14 says, "That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting." Here we see that Satan uses people to tell lies that will trick weak and struggling Christians.

Genesis 3:6 says, "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate." Satan only has three ways to tempt people to sin and he used all three of those ways to tempt Eve. I John 2:16 says, "For all that is in the world—the lust of

the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” First, we see that Satan tempted Eve with the lust of the flesh - the woman saw that the tree was good for food. Second, Satan tempted Eve with the lust of the eyes - she saw that it was pleasant to the eyes. Third, Satan tempted Eve with the pride of life - Satan told Eve that she would be like God. We see that Eve was totally deceived. II Corinthians 11:3 says, “But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” This verse says that he deceived Eve by his craftiness.

Once Eve was deceived she took of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and ate the fruit. The fruit was good but the pleasure was only temporary. Hebrews 11:24-25 says, “By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin.” In these verses we see that the pleasures from sin are only temporary and do not last. Because of the temporary pleasure that Eve received she also gave some of the fruit to her husband since he was standing right there with her and he ate. One of the things that we see is that Adam was with her and did not protect his wife from the deception of Satan. He had stood there silently while Satan tempted Eve.

In contrast to the deception of Eve, God had clearly told Adam what the consequences would be for sin. Genesis 2:17 says, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Eve had not yet been created when God told Adam the consequences. That is why I Timothy 2:13-14 says, “For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.” In these verses we see that Adam was not deceived but knew exactly what he was doing and what the consequences would be. Romans 5:12 says, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” The choice of Adam means that every person receives a sin nature at the moment of conception. Psalm 51:5 says, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.” This verse shows that we receive that sin nature at the time of conception.

In our next two topics we will explain more fully the consequences of that choice made by Adam and Eve. Here we see that Adam knew the consequences of sin and chose to commit sin in open rebellion against the only commandment that God had given to him. From that time on each person except Christ had a sin nature from conception. Luke 1:35 tells us why Christ was not conceived with a sin nature. That verse says, “And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.’” In this verse Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit so that He was born with the nature of God instead of a sin nature. That is why it was possible for Christ to pay the penalty for our sin so that we can receive forgiveness of sins. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why Christ could pay our penalty and reverse the consequences of sin in our lives. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain why Christ can set us free from sin.

8.

Mankind Experienced the Consequences of Sin – Part I

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that mankind committed the first sin and brought the consequences of sin upon all people. In this topic and the next we will see what those consequences were and how they have affected every person since the time of Adam.

Adam and Eve began to experience the consequences of sin as soon as they finished eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 3:7-10 says, “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.’” As soon as Adam and Eve sinned their eyes were opened and they suddenly knew that they were naked. This nakedness was really before God because they suddenly felt exposed. As a result, they sewed fig leaves together to make coverings for themselves.

However, they could not cover their sin and hide it from God. God usually came in the cool of the evening to enjoy fellowship with them. He knew what they had done but He wanted to give them the opportunity to confess their sin. As a result, that day God made a lot of noise as He walked through the garden to meet them. Instead of going to meet God and confessing their sin, Adam and his wife hid themselves from God among the trees of the garden. That day Adam and Eve fully experienced spiritual death. They suddenly realized that their sin had separated them from God and they did not want to be in His presence. Galatians 6:7-8 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” Here we see that they were beginning to reap the consequences of their sin.

However, separation from God was just the beginning of the consequences of sin. God called to Adam to give him the opportunity to confess his disobedience. Instead he answered by revealing how sin had changed his inner person. He said, “I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” Here we see three changes that happened in the inner person and in every person since that time. First, Adam said “I was afraid.” Here we see that his inner man had become controlled by fear. Second, Adam said “I was naked.” Here we see that his inner man had become controlled by shame. Third, Adam said, “I hid myself.” Here we see that his inner man was controlled by guilt.

In Genesis 3:11-13 we read, “And He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?’ Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’ And the Lord God

said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’” God began to talk to Adam by asking him two questions. God asked these two questions so that Adam was given the opportunity to confess his sin. The first question was, “Who told you that you were naked?” Before sin came into the world Adam and Eve did not even give a thought to the fact that they were naked. There was no shame because that was the way that God had created them and they enjoyed daily fellowship with God. Once Adam disobeyed, no one needed to tell him that he was naked because his life immediately became controlled by shame.

Second, God asked Adam, “Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” This question gave Adam the opportunity to confess his sin to God. Instead of confessing, Adam blamed God by saying, “The woman whom you gave to be with me...” Here we see that Adam blamed God by saying that God had given him this woman who had caused him to sin. In addition, Adam also blamed Eve by the second part of his answer when he said, “She gave me of the tree, and I ate.” Suddenly the life of Adam had become totally changed and he experienced five changes in his life. He had a changed relationship with God. He experienced separation from God. He had a changed relationship within himself. He now experienced fear, guilt and shame. He had a changed relationship with others. He now blamed others for his sin. These five things; separation, fear, guilt, shame and blame have been the five things that have motivated and controlled every person except Christ since Adam.

Only Christ can reverse these effects of original sin in the life of any person. That begins to happen when a person comes to God through Christ in repentance and faith. Christ died to pay the penalty for sin so that a person can receive forgiveness of sin by repentance. I Thessalonians 1:9 says, “For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.” Repentance is turning from the sin of unbelief and coming to God by faith. Faith in Christ happens when we believe that Christ died for our sins and that the Father raised Christ from the dead to show that He was satisfied with the payment that Christ made for our sins. True repentance will give us a desire to serve the living and true God instead of continuing to live to satisfy ourselves.

God next asked Eve a question, “What is this you have done?” Here we see that Eve blamed the snake but her answer was the truth because I Timothy 2:14 says, “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.” Adam chose to sin but Eve was deceived by Satan who spoke through the snake. Even though she was deceived we see that it still caused her to fall into transgression. The word translated “transgression” means the breaking of a law. God had only given Adam one law and one consequence of that law. Genesis 2:17 says, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” The only sin that Adam and Eve could commit was to disobey that law which is exactly what Eve chose to do because she was deceived and Adam chose to disobey what God had said.

Genesis 3:14-15 says, “So the Lord God said to the serpent: ‘Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the

woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.’” Here we see that God began by pronouncing judgment on the snake and then on Satan who spoke through the snake. We see that the snake was cursed by God more than all of the rest of the animals because of the sin of Adam and Eve.

This curse certainly changed life for the snake. God said that the snake would go on his belly for his entire existence. In addition, he would also eat dust throughout his existence. Romans 8:20-22 tells us how the sin of Adam and Eve affected the other animals as well as the rest of the creation. Those verses say, “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.” As a result, everyone and everything within the entire creation suffered as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve.

Then God spoke to Satan who had spoken through the snake and told Satan that he would one day be defeated by One who came from the woman. First God told Satan that He would put enmity between Satan and the woman. The word translated “enmity” hostility or hatred. Numbers 35:21-23 makes a distinction between those who kill with enmity and those who kill without enmity when those verses say, “Or in enmity he strikes him with his hand so that he dies, the one who struck him shall surely be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him. ‘However, if he pushes him suddenly without enmity, or throws anything at him without lying in wait, or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing it at him without seeing him, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm.’” Here we see that God said that one who strikes another with enmity is a murderer while one who does it accidentally is not a murderer.

Satan has great enmity against the Seed of the woman. Notice that this verse does not say the seeds of the woman as that would be all of the descendants of Adam and Eve. Instead this refers to one particular Seed, Christ. Those who have followed Satan have always shown a great hatred for Christ and for anyone who faithfully follows Christ. John 10:10 shows the contrast between Christ and Satan when that verse says, “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” The goal of Satan has always been to steal, to kill and to destroy. That was why he tempted and deceived Eve. Many times Satan tried to destroy the family line from which Christ would come. In contrast, we see that Christ came to give us abundant life. When Christ died on the cross Satan thought that He had defeated Christ but that was like a bruise to the heel because Christ arose on the third day. However, we see that God promised that Christ would crush the head of Satan and judge him for all of his murderous and other sinful acts. Revelation 20:10 says, “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” This is the completion of the crushing of the head of Satan. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain this first promise of Christ coming to defeat Satan. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this verse.

9.

Mankind Experienced the Consequences of Sin – Part II

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the immediate consequences that Adam and Eve experienced when they disobeyed God and ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. We also saw that we want to help them learn to explain the first promise about Christ. In this topic we will also see that God told Adam and Eve that there would be other consequences of their disobedience but that God would protect them from living in sin forever.

Genesis 3:16 tells us the earthly consequences that Eve received because of her disobedience. That verse says, “To the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.’” Here we see that the first consequence for woman is labor and pain in childbirth. John 16:21 says, “A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.” Here we see that the pain and sorrow of childbirth comes to an end once the child is born. However, during the time of labor there is great pain and suffering.

Second, God said that the desire of woman shall be for your husband. The word translated “desire” means longing or craving. This same phrase is used in Genesis 4:7 where we read, “If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.” Here we see that the last phrase of this verse uses the same words to describe the desire of sin to rule the life of Cain. It means longing or craving. In this case Cain did not listen to God but killed his brother instead. In contrast, the only other time that this word is used in the Old Testament we see that it has a very positive meaning. Song of Solomon 7:10 says, “I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.” Here we see the beauty of godly love in marriage as the husband has this same longing for his wife that God said the wife was to have for the husband.

Third, God said that Adam would rule over Eve. The word “rule” means to reign, to rule over, to be governor or to manage. Genesis 24:10 says, “So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, ‘Please, put your hand under my thigh.’” In this verse we see that the oldest servant managed everything that Abraham had. In Genesis 45:26 the sons of Jacob told him, “And they told him, saying, ‘Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.’” And Jacob’s heart stood still, because he did not believe them.” In this verse the word is translated governor. We see that one of the consequences for Eve and for all future wives was that the husband was to be the leader in the home who exercised management under the authority of God. Ephesians 5:25 tells how man is to exercise that management when that verse says, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.” This means that godly husbands should apply this much differently than the world.

Genesis 3:17-19 tells the consequences that Adam received for his disobedience. Those verses

say, “Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: ‘Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.’” The word translated “heeded” means to hear, to hearken or to obey. The word is used 1159 times in the Old Testament. In Genesis 16:2 we read, “So Sarai said to Abram, “See now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.” In this case Abram listened to Sarai and their descendants are still experiencing the consequences of that choice.

God told Adam that the ground was cursed for his sake. First, this meant that he would have to toil in order to get food from the earth. The word translated “toil” means pain, hardship, toil or sorrow. Ever since Adam sinned men have had to work hard in order to provide food for their families. God said that this hard work would not stop but would last all of the days of Adam’s life. Second, God said that the ground would bring forth thorns and thistles. This is part of what causes the pain in the hard work. In Genesis 1:29 God had promised, “And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.” Now God said that the ground would also bring forth thorns and thistles.

Third, God told Adam that he would get his food by the sweat of his face. This meant that man would have to work hard out in the hot sun to get enough food to provide for his family. Fourth, God told Adam that in addition to spiritual death which is separation from God that he would work until he experienced physical death. God told Adam that the day would come when he would return to the ground. Genesis 5:3-5 says, “And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.” Here we see that Adam and Eve had sons and daughters before they died. We see that Adam lived 930 years before his death. God told Adam that he had come from the dust and that he would return to the dust.

We will also see another consequence of sin in the final verses of this chapter. Genesis 3:20-24 says, “And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.” Before that consequence we see two other things that happened

We see that Adam called his wife’s name Eve. The name “Eve” means life or living. We are also given the reason why Adam gave this name to Eve. She became the first mother of all of

the people who would live on the earth both during their lives and for as long as people continue to be born on the earth. As a result, she was the mother of all of the living who would live on the earth. When Adam and Eve sinned, they tried to cover themselves with fig leaves (which dried up very quickly once sin came into the world). Here we see that God provided Adam and Eve with a covering of animal skins. This required killing animals in order to provide this covering. This was the first animal sacrifice as a covering for sin. Throughout the rest of the Old Testament we will see that animal sacrifices were offered as a covering for sin until Christ came to take away sin.

God said that man had become like one of Us. In Genesis 1:26a we see that God said, “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.’” God knew good and evil because he knows all things. Man now also knew good and evil but Adam and Eve knew good and evil because of their own sin. As a result, God had to protect Adam and Eve from themselves. If they would have eaten the fruit from the tree of life at this point, they would have lived in sin with all of sin’s consequences forever. That would have been a terrible existence. As a result, God had to remove them from the garden so that they would no longer be able to eat the fruit of the tree of life. God sent them out of the garden of Eden so that they could not even come close to the tree of life. In this way Satan could not tempt them to eat the fruit of the tree of life.

Once they were out of the garden God said that Adam was to till the ground from which he had been taken. The word translated “drove out” means to expel or to cast out. This word is translated “cast out in Genesis 21:10 where Sarah said, “Therefore she said to Abraham, ‘Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac.’” Here we see that Sarah told Abraham to send away Hagar and Ishmael so that he would not share the inheritance with Isaac. In the same way, Adam and Eve would no longer be able to eat the fruit of the tree of life.

To protect the tree of life from anyone at a later day from eating of that tree, God placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden. Cherubim are angelic beings. Later God had Moses make two gold cherubim who spread their wings over the mercy seat on the Ark of the Covenant. God told Moses in Exodus 25:22, “And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.” The cherubim in the garden were to guard the way to the tree of life with a flaming sword so that no one could eat the fruit of this tree and live in sin forever. Those cherubim would have guarded the tree of life until the time of the flood when the garden was destroyed by the flood. Here we see the mercy of God as He protected people from themselves. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why it was necessary to remove Adam and Eve from the garden and then put cherubim to guard the tree of life so that neither they nor their descendants could eat from that tree and live in sin in their physical bodies forever. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain why God had to protect the tree of life.

10.

The World Experienced the First Murder

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why it was necessary for God to remove Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden so that after they sinned they would not eat of the tree of life and live in their physical bodies in sin forever. In this topic we will see what happened to the first two sons that were born to Adam and Eve after they were removed from the garden.

Genesis 4:1-5 says, “Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, ‘I have acquired a man from the Lord.’” Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.” Here we are introduced to the first two sons that were born to Adam and Eve.

We see that God began to populate the earth through Adam and Eve. God told Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28, “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” In this verse we see that the plan of God was to fill the earth with people and to give those people the rule over the earth and over every living thing. As a result, we see that Adam and Eve began to carry out the plan that God has for the earth with the birth of these two sons. Once the boys became adults we see that they had different interests. Abel became a shepherd who had a flock of sheep. Cain became a gardener who tilled the ground and grew crops.

The time also came when both Cain and Abel brought an offering to the Lord. God had shown by killing animals to provide a covering for Adam and Eve the need to offer a blood sacrifice as a covering for sin. We see that God had explained the need to show faith by offering blood as a covering for sin by what is written in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews 11:4 says, “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.” Cain chose to offer his own works from the crops that he had grown as an offering to God. This showed that he was depending on his own works to try and please God. In contrast, we see from Hebrews that Abel chose to show faith in the promises of God and not depend on his own works. God respected the offering of Abel because God looks at the heart and saw that Abel presented his sacrifice by faith. God could not respect the offering of Cain because God knew that his own works revealed the condition of his heart. Cain then showed the condition of his heart by becoming angry when God did not accept his offering from his works. Even his face showed the anger that he had in his heart.

Genesis 4:6-9 says, “So the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your

countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.' Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Where is Abel your brother?' He said, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?'" Here we see that God came to Cain with a question. God gave Cain the opportunity to explain why he was angry and why his face showed that anger. God provides forgiveness of sins to all who come to Him in repentance and faith. However, Cain chose to reject the forgiveness that God offers. Jude 11 says, "Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah." Here we see that Cain became an example of all who reject the forgiveness that God offers and choose to depend on their own works.

God continued to offer forgiveness to Cain. God said that if Cain would do what was right and show faith by offering a blood sacrifice that God would accept his sacrifice. In our last topic we saw that the word translated "desire" means longing or craving. Cain was told that sin desired to rule his life but God told him that he could rule over that sin by offering the sacrifice that God required. Instead of listening to God, Cain chose to show his anger toward God by murdering the brother whose sacrifice God had accepted. I John 3:11-12 says, "For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous." These verses make it very clear that Cain murdered Abel because the works of Cain were evil and he had no desire to repent of his evil.

We see that Cain waited until the opportunity came for him to kill his brother. Later they were talking together out in the field which meant that they were not where Adam and Eve would see what happened. Then Cain rose up against Abel and killed his brother. Judas followed the example of Cain as Matthew 26:14-16 says, "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?'" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him." Here we see that Judas looked for the opportunity to betray Christ when no one was around. Cain and Judas both tried to hide their sin from other people.

However, no one can hide their sin from God. I Samuel 16:7 says, "But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'" Man can never hide his sin from God because God knows the thoughts of the heart before they ever become actions. As a result, God came to Cain and gave him the opportunity to repent of his sin. God just asked Cain the question, "Where is Abel your brother?" Cain then chose to try and cover his sin with a lie. He said that he did not know where Abel was. In addition to lying, Cain also asked God the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" By this question Cain revealed who he was following. I John 3:10 says, "In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother." Cain showed that he was a child of the devil by not practicing righteousness and by not loving his brother.

Genesis 4:10-15 says, "And He said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood

cries out to Me from the ground. So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.' And Cain said to the Lord, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear! Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.' And the Lord said to him, 'Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.' And the Lord set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him." God had not yet given the penalty for murder. That was not given until after the flood. Genesis 9:6 says, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man."

God told Cain that the blood of Abel was crying to Him from the ground. As a result, God gave a curse to Cain that would come from the earth since the earth had received the blood of his brother. God said that this curse from the earth meant that the ground would no longer yield its strength to Cain. It would no longer produce crops like the offering that Cain had brought to God from his own efforts. Genesis 4:4 b says, "Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord." God said that he would never again get healthy crops from the ground. God said this would cause him to be a fugitive and vagabond on the earth. The word translated "fugitive" means to shake or wander. The word translated "vagabond" means to wander or flee. Here we see that Cain would wander from place to place in fear because of his fear of what others might do to him.

Cain said his punishment was too great. He said that the ground would not produce crops for him because he would be hidden from the face of God. As a result, he said he would be a fugitive and a vagabond wherever he went on the earth. As we said, the word translated "fugitive" means one who staggers, shakes or is tossed about as they wander from place to place and the word translated "vagabond" means to wander or to flee. Cain realized that the rest of his life he would be shaking with fear as he wandered from place to place. This would be the result of the fact that he would be constantly afraid that someone would kill him. God then showed mercy to Cain by telling Cain that anyone killing him would have vengeance taken on them sevenfold. God also put a mark on him to protect him from such vengeance. This mark showed the mercy of God because God chose to protect his physical life as long as he lived on the earth. At the same time this mark also caused him to have shame because it was a constant reminder of his sin. Such shame for sin is still one of the ongoing consequences of sin until a person receives, understands and accepts the forgiveness of God.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand and explain the ongoing consequences of sin. At the same time we also want to help them learn to explain the mercy and grace that God provides to all who will come to Him in repentance and faith. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things to those who are not yet Christians.

11.

The First Civilizations Developed on the Earth

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the consequences that Cain realized that he would experience throughout his life as the result of the murder of his brother Abel. In this topic we will see what happened to Cain and also see that God provided another son who would carry on the family from which Christ would come.

In Genesis 4:16-18 we read, “Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son— Enoch. To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.” Here we see that Cain left the presence of the Lord. He went to another area that was also east of the garden of Eden. This meant that he was on the side of the garden where the cherubim protected the garden from anyone entering the garden. Genesis 3:24 says, “So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”

Then we read that Cain knew his wife and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch. One of the questions often asked is, “Where did Cain get his wife?” The answer to that question is found in Genesis 5:4-5 where we read, “After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.” Only three sons of Adam and Eve, Cain, Abel and Seth, are mentioned. However, these verses tell us that Adam and Eve had other sons and daughters. Since Adam lived more than 900 years they could have had many other children.

Cain and all of the older children of Adam and Eve married brothers, sisters or other close relatives. This was not forbidden in the book of Genesis as we see in Genesis 20:12 that even Abraham married his half sister. That verse says, “But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.” It was while Israel was in the wilderness that God began to forbid sexual relationships or marriage with a close relative. Leviticus 18:6 says, “None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the Lord.” The forbidding of sexual relationships with a close relative meant that a person could not marry any of the close relatives mentioned in Leviticus 18:6-18.

We see that Cain also built the first city mentioned in the Bible. In the Old Testament the main distinction between a city and village was the fact that a city had a wall for protection. Cain may have built a wall around the houses because of his fear that someone might try to kill him. Genesis 4:14 says, “Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.” Even though God placed a mark on Cain to protect him, Cain may have still had a fear that someone would kill him. We also are given the genealogy Cain and his firstborn descendants down to the time of Lamech.

We go on to read more about Lamech as Genesis 4:19-23 says, “Then Lamech took for himself two wives: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. His brother’s name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute. And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah. Then Lamech said to his wives: “Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, even a young man for hurting me. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.”

In these verses we see that Lamech was the first to practice polygamy by taking multiple wives. This was a violation of the very first principle that God gave in Genesis 2:24 where we read, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” This was a clear violation of the one flesh principle. We see that the sin and rebellion of Cain meant that he did not turn to God in repentance and so did not teach his descendants the basic principle that God gave for all future marriages.

We also see that the family of Lamech began to develop various kinds of business and culture. His son Jabal is the first mentioned who lived in tents and raised livestock. The word translated “livestock” means any domestic animal that can be raised and sold such as cows, sheep or goats. In contrast, his brother, Jubal became a musician and the father of all those who began to play the harp or the flute. Tubal-Cain became a teacher of craftsmen who wanted to learn to work with iron and bronze. This is an indication that both business and culture developed at a very early time just a few generations from the creation of Adam and probably while Adam was still alive.

We also see that Lamech made a boast to his wives. We see in his boast that he said that he had killed a man for wounding him even a young man for hurting him. By this boasting Lamech said that he could take care of himself he did not need God to give him a mark to protect him from others trying to kill him. These verses show us that Lamech felt that he had no need for the protection of God. He could take care of himself and avenge anyone who tried to hurt him. This attitude of Lamech became the attitude of many others. By Genesis 6:13 we read, “So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, ‘The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.’” By the time of Noah the earth had become filled with violence because many followed the example of Lamech and took revenge on anyone that hurt them.

As a result, it became necessary for God to begin a new line from Adam that would be a godly line through which One could come who would defeat Satan. Genesis 3:15 says, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” When God judged Satan who spoke through the snake to Eve, we see that God promised that One would come from the woman who would bruise or crush the head of Satan. In the New Testament that Seed is defined in Galatians 4:16 where we read, “Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ.” We see that the Seed who would defeat Satan is Christ.

That is why Genesis 4:25-26 goes on to say, “And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, “For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.” And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.” We saw in an earlier topic in Genesis 5:4 that Adam and Eve had other children. That verse says, “After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters.” However, only one of the other children is named because that is the child that carried on the line through which Christ came many years later. These verses introduce the family line from which Christ would come. In fact it introduces the family line of Noah so everyone born after the flood came from this family line.

Adam recognized that God had appointed Seth as the replacement for Abel from which God would fulfill His promise about the Seed that would defeat Satan. The name Seth means “the appointed one”. Seth then had a son called Enosh. The genealogy of Christ through Mary is given in Luke 3:23-38. Verses 23 and 38 say, “Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli...the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.” In these verses in Luke we see that the genealogy of Christ was through Seth and Enosh. We will see that throughout the Old Testament that God continued to reveal the godly line through which Christ would come.

After telling about the births of Seth and Enosh, we read that men began to call on the name of the Lord. The word translated “call” means to call to, to cry out for help or to proclaim. This word speaks about a call that expects a response. We see that Jeremiah expected a response in Jeremiah 20:8-9 when he cried out to God. Those verses say, “For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, ‘Violence and plunder!’ Because the word of the Lord was made to me a reproach and a derision daily. Then I said, ‘I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.’ But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not.” We see that God also expects a response when He calls His people. Isaiah 41:4 says, “Who has performed and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? ‘I, the Lord, am the first; and with the last I am He.’” As a result, we see that with Seth God could rejoice because he became the first of many people to call out to God and seek His fellowship after the death of Abel. God also seeks our fellowship today and He wants us to call out to Him. We want to help our physical and spiritual children develop this same fellowship with God. We also want to help our children learn how to explain clearly to others how others can also call to the Lord. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to help others begin to call on the name of the Lord.

12.

The Genealogy from Adam to Noah

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others what it means to call on the name of the Lord. In this topic we will see that the consequences that God had promised to Adam if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil continued. We will see that physical death as well as spiritual death came on all men except one of those mentioned in Genesis 5.

We begin this chapter by being given a summary of the life of Adam. Genesis 5:1-5 says, “This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.” We begin with the reminder that God is the One who created man.

These verses also remind us of several things about Adam and Eve. First, we see that God made Adam in His likeness. Genesis 1:26 says, “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” In this verse we are reminded of the fact that mankind is made in the image of God. By that statement God shows that mankind is different than any other living creature on the earth. God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” The use of “Us” and “Our” is a reminder of the fact that we are made in the image of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God created us with a body, soul and spirit. This made it possible for mankind to have spiritual life as well as physical life. None of the animals that God created can have spiritual life.

Second, we are reminded that God created mankind male and female. Genesis 1:27 says, “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” Third, we see that God blessed Adam and Eve. Fourth, we see that God called them Mankind in the day that they were created. Then we see that Adam had lived for 130 years before Seth was born. The word translated “likeness” in verses 1 and 3 is the same word that is used in Genesis 1:27. The word translated “image” is also used in Genesis 1:26-27. The fact that both words are mentioned in Genesis 1:26-27 and Genesis 5:1-3 point to the fact that mankind has the same sense of right and wrong that God has. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says, “He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.” Mankind is the only creation of God that is able to understand the eternal purpose of God and this understanding was not lost when mankind sinned. This is shown by the fact that Adam was able to pass on to Seth his likeness and image. We also see that Adam had other sons and daughters and died physically at 930 years of age.

Genesis 5:6-20 give part of the genealogy of Seth. Those verses say, “Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died. Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan. After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died. Cainan lived seventy years, and begot Mahalalel. After he begot Mahalalel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died. Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and begot Jared. After he begot Jared, Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died. Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot Enoch. After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

We see that all of these descendants had some things in common. They all had sons and daughters and they all died. God had told Adam in Genesis 2:16-17, “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” We saw in Genesis 3:7-8 that Adam experienced immediate spiritual death the day that he sinned as we saw that spiritual death is separation of man from God. In the previous verses we also saw that Adam experienced physical death. In these verses we see that the descendants of Adam continued to experience physical death. This is a reminder that the sin of Adam caused both spiritual and physical death.

However, we go on to read about one who did not experience physical death. Genesis 5:21-27 says, “Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him. Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech. After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.” In these verses we see that Enoch did not experience physical death. We are also given the reason.

We read that Enoch walked with God. Hebrews 11:5 gives us a more complete explanation about the reason that Enoch did not die. That verse says, “By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, ‘and was not found, because God had taken him’; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” The word translated “taken” means to change or transfer from one place to another. God chose to transfer him from the earth to heaven just as He did with Elijah at a later time. The word translated “pleased” means to be well pleased with a person or thing. Hebrews 11:6 goes on to explain what pleases God. That verse says, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” This would indicate that Enoch was a man of great faith and God chose to reward him for his faith.

The New Testament also teaches us one other thing about Enoch. Jude 14-15 says, “Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.’” In these verses we see that Enoch looked forward to the coming of the Lord. However, he also knew that the Lord would come to bring judgment on all those who did not believe. This means that before any books of the Bible were written that there was already an understanding by those who were godly that there would be a future with the Lord for the saints and a judgment for all those who rejected the Lord.

We are also introduced to the line of Christ that followed Enoch. The son of Enoch was Methuselah. He is the individual who lived the longest number of years of any whose age is recorded in the Bible even though he died before his father since his father did not die but was taken to heaven by God. Methuselah had a son named Lamech. Genesis 5:28-32 tells us about the son of Lamech. Those verses say, “Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. And he called his name Noah, saying, ‘This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord has cursed.’ After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died. And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.” The name of Noah means rest. We will see that rest was desperately needed in the world because of all of the evil that developed.

Lamech explained that Noah would bring comfort. Hebrews 11:7 says, “By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” In this verse we see why Noah was able to bring comfort. He was a godly man who listened when God told him about the judgment that would come on all those who were living in rebellion and sin. He listened to God and acted with godly fear. That godly fear caused him to build the ark which preserved his family and saved his family from the world that had been condemned by God.

This comfort was needed because of the fact that the ground had been cursed twice. In Genesis 3:17b God had told Adam, “Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.” Then God had told Cain in Genesis 4:12a, “When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you.” Most of the descendants of Adam followed the ungodly line of Cain instead of the godly line of Seth. As a result, the two curses together meant that the people experienced much pain and hard work in order to even have food for their families. The earth needed to be relieved from the second curse that had been placed on Cain. Lamech said that Noah would bring this comfort to the earth. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why Lamech said that Noah would bring comfort to the earth so that the people after Noah would have an opportunity for a better life and a new beginning. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this important lesson to others.

13.

The Lord Saw How Evil had Corrupted the Earth

In our last topic we saw that the people lived long lives as they populated the earth. We also saw that God started a new godly line since Abel had been killed by his brother. In this topic we will see that more and more of the people followed the ungodly line of Cain and the number of those in the godly line became very small.

In Genesis 6:1-2 we read, “Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.” Here we see that the population of the earth began to multiply. God had said in Genesis 1:28, “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” In this verse we see that God instructed mankind to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. This was why God had given the early people long life so that they could have large families and begin to fill the earth. We saw in chapter five that the first son is given and then that other sons and daughters were born to the men mentioned in that chapter.

As the population multiplied, we see that the sons of God began to marry based on the beauty of women rather than because the women were godly. The phrase “the sons of God” is used eleven times in the Bible. Two of those times are here in Genesis 6:2 and 6:4. Three times the phrase is used in Job where it is probably speaking of angels. However, in all six uses in the New Testament in John 1:12, Romans 8:14 and 8:19, Philippians 2:15, and I John 3:1-2 it refers to humans who are followers of God. Because of the quotes in Job some people have said that the use of this word in Genesis refers to angels. However, based on the Bible as a whole, it is much more likely that it is referring to some from the godly line of Seth beginning to marry those who were ungodly because of their beauty.

The word translated “of all whom they chose” means to decide for or to choose. In many places it means to make a choice that has eternal consequences. In Genesis 13:11 we read, “Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.” That choice had eternal consequences for most of his family. In Joshua 24:15 Joshua said, “And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Israel made a choice but did not keep their word as Joshua 24:22 says, “So Joshua said to the people, ‘You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord for yourselves, to serve Him.’ And they said, ‘We are witnesses!’” Again the failure to keep their promise resulted in eternal consequences for many of the people. The same was true in their choice here in Genesis and this choice led nearly all of the godly line to turn away from God.

Genesis 6:3-4 says, “And the Lord said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is

indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.’ There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.” The word translated “strive” means to plead, to contend or to judge. As a result, God said that He would give the people 120 more years to repent and turn from their sin but if there was no repentance then there would be judgment. I Peter 3:18-20 says, “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.” Here we see that God waited 120 years to bring judgment on the people. We also see that there were giants in the land.

We read that when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men that they had children. These children are described by two characteristics. First, we see that they were mighty men. The word translated “mighty” means strong or mighty. Second, we see that they were men of renown. The word translated “renown” means men who gained fame or developed a reputation. This means that many people heard about these men and talked about them. However, they were not known for being godly men because Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Here we see why the people were talking about these mighty men. When the thoughts of people are evil we see that often the people who become famous are the ones who do the most evil.

This verse teaches some important lessons about the condition of the heart of mankind. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” In both of these verses the heart is used to speak of the inner man. These verses show that the heart is deceitful. It is desperately wicked in a person lacking spiritual life. However, Genesis 6:5 also adds the fact that in that time that the inner thoughts of men were evil continually. The word translated “continually” can mean the twenty-four hour period, the time when it is light in contrast to the night or to a general period of time. In this context we see that it uses the first of these two thoughts of being evil throughout the day and night.

This wickedness coming from a heart that was evil continually resulted in much sin and evil. In fact Genesis 6:11-12 says, “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.” The fact that the thoughts of the heart of mankind were continually evil resulted in the earth being filled with violence. The word translated “corrupt and corrupted” means to be marred, spoiled or needing to be destroyed. Here we see that mankind had so corrupted in their hearts that the entire population of the earth except the family of Noah needed to be destroyed.

Genesis 6:6-8 says, “And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.’ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” The word translated “was sorry”

means to be sorry, to regret, to be filled with grief or to comfort. God experienced great sorrow as He saw how sinful the hearts of the people that He had created had become. When used of God it is conditional and will result in judgment if there is no repentance. Jonah 3:10 says, "Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it." In this verse the word is translated "relent". God saw the repentance of the city of Nineveh and He did not destroy the city at that time. However, we will see that the people did not repent in the time of Noah.

The word translated "grieved" means to hurt, to cause pain or to feel grieved. Here we see that the heart of God was filled with grief as He saw that the thoughts in the heart of mankind had become evil continually. God is a holy God and cannot look on sin with favor. This was especially painful to God because of the fact that He knows the hearts of every person and He knew that there would be no repentance by any of the people outside of the family of Noah. God realized that the only thing that He could do was destroy the people of the earth. The word translated "to destroy" means to wipe out, to blot out or to destroy. Genesis 7:23 says, "So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive." This verse shows that to completely destroy was exactly what God had to do.

However Genesis 6:8 and Genesis 7:23 show that there was an exception to this complete destruction. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and everyone along with every animal, bird, or creeping thing that was on the ark with Noah were spared because Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. The word translated "grace" in Genesis 6:8 is a key word. The word means favor, grace or acceptance. This particular word does not focus on the giver. Instead the focus of this word is on the person who receives grace or favor. In this case Noah, his family and the creatures that were on the ark with them were those who received that grace. This was not based on any works of Noah because Hebrews 11:7 says, "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." This verse makes it clear that Noah acted based on the faith that God had given him.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." In these verses we see that even the faith that a person has is totally a gift from God. No person can earn either grace or faith. They are both a gift which a person receives from God. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the fact that we receive both grace and the faith to receive that grace as a gift from God because there is nothing that anyone could do to earn grace or faith. God chose to show that grace to Noah and his family when God destroyed the rest of the people on the earth so that He could repopulate the earth through the family of Noah. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

14.

The Lord told Noah to Build an Ark

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the fact that Noah chose to show grace to Noah and his family so that they could repopulate the earth. The Lord shows us three things about the character of Noah as we begin these verses.

Genesis 6:9-13 says, “This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” In these verses the Lord tells us three things about the character of Noah. First, we see that Noah was a just man. The word translated “just” means righteous or one who is right with God. Abraham used this word seven times as he talked with the Lord in Genesis 18:23-28. Genesis 18:23-24 says, “And Abraham came near and said, “Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?” The word is translated righteous each of the seven times in these and the following verses.

Second, we see that Noah was perfect in his time. The word translated “perfect” means complete or sound and was most often translated “without blemish”. Exodus 12:5 says, “Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.” In this verse we see that God told Moses that the Passover lambs were to be without blemish. As a result, Noah was very different than the rest of the people of his day since we saw that the thoughts of the hearts of most of the people were evil continually.

Third, we see that Noah walked with God. This phrase is only used three times in the Bible. The other two are in Genesis 5:22-24 where we read, “After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.” In these verses we see that God took Enoch to heaven without dying because he walked with God. God chose to leave Noah on the earth to repopulate the earth after the flood. God blessed both men in different ways because they both walked with God.

In contrast, we see that the earth was corrupt before God and that it was filled with violence because the thoughts of most of the people were evil continually. The word translated “corrupt” is most often translated destroy. Here in Genesis 6:11-13 the word is used four times and is translated three times by corrupt in verses 11-12 and once by destroy as God told Noah in verse 13, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” God said that the earth had become filled with violence through the people that were on the earth and so that was why it was now necessary for Him to destroy them along with the rest of the earth.

God went on to tell Noah how he and his family would be preserved when God destroyed the earth and all of the people on it. Genesis 6:14-17 says, “Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks. And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die.” Here we see that God told Noah that He would completely destroy the earth with a flood. However, Noah and his family would be preserved through the flood in the ark that Noah was to build.

We see that God told Noah the size of the ark that he was to build to preserve his family and two of every kind of creature on the earth (seven for the animals and birds that were considered clean animals). The word translated “ark” is used 28 times in the Old Testament and 26 are in Genesis chapters 6 through 9. The other 2 uses are in Exodus 2:3 and 5 where the mother of Moses made an ark of bulrushes and placed Moses in it when Pharaoh had ordered all of the male babies of Israel to be killed. This ark was probably shaped more like a box than an ocean going ship because its purpose was to preserve Noah, his family and the animals through the flood and did not need to move with any speed to get from one place to another in contrast to most boats.

The ark was to be made of gopher wood. Since this is the only place in the Old Testament where this word is used, we cannot look at other passages to learn more about the kind of tree that is mentioned here. It is probable that it was either the cypress tree, the cedar tree or some other similar tree. God told Noah to make rooms in the ark so that the various animals and their food could be separated and kept in various rooms. God said that the ark was to be covered on both the inside and the outside with pitch. This was to make the ark waterproof so that it did not leak. We are also given the size of the ark. It was to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. A cubit is the length from the elbow of a man to the top of the middle finger so it is normally about 18 inches. That meant that the ark was about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. It was to have three decks so that there was about 15 feet between each deck which would allow room for the taller animals and also plenty of room for air to circulate in the ark.

God then told Noah that He was going to bring floodwaters on the earth. Before the flood there was no rain. Instead Genesis 2:6 says, “But a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.” As a result, God probably had to explain to Noah that floodwaters meant that the entire earth would be covered by water for a period of about a year. The word translated “flood” is used 12 times in chapters 6 through 11 in Genesis and one time in Psalm 29:10. That verse says, “The Lord sat enthroned at the Flood, and the Lord sits as King forever.” In that verse David was referring back to the flood in the time of Noah. God said that this flood would cover the entire earth so that everything that had the breath of life on the earth would die.

However, God told Noah in Genesis 6:18-22, “But I will establish My covenant with you; and

you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them.” Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.”

Here we see that God promised he would establish His covenant with Noah. God told Noah that when the ark was finished that he would take his family on the ark and also two of every kind of creature on the earth in order to preserve them alive. That covenant is given in Genesis 9:9-17 where we read, “‘And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that *is* with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ And God said: ‘This *is* the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which *is* between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* on the earth.’ And God said to Noah, ‘This *is* the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that *is* on the earth.’” We will look at this covenant in greater detail in a later topic.

We see that Noah was to take two of every creature with him on the ark so that all of the creatures would be left alive. These two of each kind were to be a male and a female. This included every kind of birds, animals and creeping things. Then Genesis 7:2 adds, “You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female; also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth.” This meant that there would be seven of each of the animals that were clean animals. In addition, Noah was told to take enough food for all of his family plus enough food for all of the birds, animals and creeping things. Since they were going to be on the ark a little over a year, this meant gathering a lot of food as well. Noah then did all that God commanded. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the instructions that the Lord gave to Noah after he told him to build an ark to preserve his family. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

15.

The Lord told Noah to Enter the Ark

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the instructions that God gave to Noah at the time God told Noah to build an ark to preserve his family and two of every creature living on the earth. In this topic we will see that the promised flood came on the earth.

It took Noah one hundred years to build the ark and gather the food that would be needed by all of the animals that would be in the ark. However, we see in II Peter 2:5 we see that he was doing one other thing as well during the one hundred years. That verse says, “And did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.” In this verse we see that Noah also preached the need to repent and turn from their unbelief and turn to God to all who came to see what he was doing. However, we see that during all of those years that no responded and came to God in repentance and faith. As a result, we see that it was only the family of Noah that entered the ark when it was completed.

In Genesis 7:1-3 we read, “Then the LORD said to Noah, ‘Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen *that you are* righteous before Me in this generation. You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that *are* unclean, a male and his female; also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth.’” In these verses we see that the day came that the ark was complete and the food that would be needed to feed all of the creatures was on the ark. Then The Lord told Noah that it was time for he and his family to enter the ark. God repeated the reason why He had chosen to save Noah and his family and preserve them through the flood.

God said that He saw that Noah was righteous. The word that is translated just in Genesis 6:9 is the same word that is translated righteous here in Genesis 7:1. We saw in chapter six that the word means “righteous” or one who is right with God. God was able to see both the actions of Noah and the heart of Noah because I Samuel 16:7 says, “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’” God had been looking at the hearts of all of the people of that day. Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” The thoughts of the hearts of most of the people were evil continually. In contrast, God saw that the heart of Noah was righteous. In addition, his actions showed that he was obedient to God and had built the ark.

God told Noah to take seven of every clean animal and two of each of the unclean animals. We see that the first thing that Noah did after he came off the ark was offer one of each clean animal as a sacrifice. Genesis 8:20 says, “Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.” That left

three pairs of clean animals to multiply on the earth. For the unclean animals he was to take one male and one female so that every species of animal that was on the earth at that time would be preserved. We also see that Noah was told to take seven of each of the birds of the air so that they would also be preserved. God is the One who brought all of the animals, birds and creeping things to Noah so that they could be loaded onto the ark.

Then God told Noah in Genesis 7:4-6, “‘For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.’ And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.” God told Noah that it was only seven more days until He was going to bring the flood on the earth. God said that He was going to cause it to rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights. We will see in the next topic that the rain was only one of the sources of the water that covered the earth. We will also see that the great fountains of the deep were broken up which may have provided much more water than the rain.

God said that He would destroy from the earth all living things that He had made. Here we see that the sins of mankind also affected everything else that lived on the earth. Romans 8:20-21 says, “‘For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.’” We see that the whole creation had been subjected to futility because of the sins of men. Because mankind returned to his evil thoughts and ways, the creation still continues to suffer because of the sinfulness of man and look forward to the time when it will be set free from the consequences of sin.

We also learn another very important lesson about Noah. These verses state that Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. Here we see that Noah was a man of obedience. Hebrews 11:7 says, “‘By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.’” This verse shows that Noah had a godly fear and reverence for God that caused him to be obedient to God. We see that the obedience of Noah had two very different effects. First, his obedience saved his household. In contrast, his obedience also condemned the world because the world and everyone on the earth were destroyed.

We also see that Noah was six hundred years old at the time of the flood. Genesis 5:32 says, “‘And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.’” Genesis 6:8-10 says, “‘But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.’” Then Genesis 6:13-14 adds, “‘And God said to Noah, ‘The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.’” These verses taken together would indicate that it probably took Noah and his sons about 100 years to build the ark and prepare for the coming flood. It was when the ark was complete that God told them to enter the ark.

Genesis 7:7-10 says, "So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. Of clean animals, of animals that *are* unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth." These verses begin by telling us that Noah, his sons, his wife and the wives of his sons went into the ark. God could have chosen to just take Noah and two of every creature and seven of every clean creature off the earth while He destroyed everything on it. Instead God had Noah and his sons take one hundred years to build the ark so that they could go through the flood. As a result, God gives us an example of the fact that He will take us through the trials that we face as we go through our lives. However, He will go with us through those trials.

God also brought the animals to the ark so that they could board the ark and go through the flood. The clean animals are mentioned first since Noah had been told to take seven of every species of clean animal. Then we see that the unclean animals, birds and everything that creeps on the earth came to the ark two by two. As they came two by two God made certain that one was a male and the other was a female. The Bible does not tell us whether the animals were young or old. However, some of the larger animals may have been young so that they were a smaller size and would require less food. This would be especially true of the animals described in Job chapters 40:15-41:34 as those verses describe some rather large animals. Job 40:15-24 describes what sounds like a dinosaur. Verses 19-22 say, "He is the first of the ways of God; only He who made him can bring near His sword. Surely the mountains yield food for him, and all the beasts of the field play there. He lies under the lotus trees, in a covert of reeds and marsh. The lotus trees cover him with their shade; the willows by the brook surround him." Here we see that this creature needed the mountains for food but spent his time in the marsh. He is described as the first of the ways of God. Since Job was probably written about the time of Abraham, these animals were still alive only a little over 4000 years ago. Many of the fossils of these animals were created by the destructive waters of the flood since Noah only took two of each species into the ark and the rest were destroyed.

God had said in verse 4 that He would bring the flood after seven more days. In verse 10 we see that after seven days the waters of the flood were on the earth. This means that God allowed one week even after the ark was complete and the animals were entering the ark for sinful men to repent. Any who would have been willing to repent even at that last moment would have been allowed into the ark. II Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." Here we see that even after waiting one hundred years while Noah built the ark, God gave the wicked another seven days to repent. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God is a loving God who shows great mercy. However, when there is no repentance He will finally bring judgment on those who reject the mercy that He offers. This is why each person must personally come to God in repentance. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain that God is a God of mercy.

16.

The Lord Opened the Fountains of the Deep

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God is a God of mercy who even gave a final seven days after waiting one hundred years for anyone to repent even up to the last moment. However, we will see that when God shut the door that the time to repent was past. In this topic we will learn about the judgment that came on the whole earth.

In Genesis 7:11-12 we read, “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.” In these verses we see that the exact age of Noah is given down to the day of the time that the flood began. The last previous age of Noah that is mentioned is in Genesis 5:32 where we read, “And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.” As a result, it probably took Noah about one hundred years to build the ark and gather the food that would be needed during the flood.

These verses tell us that large amounts of water flooded the earth from two different sources. First, all of the fountains of the great deep were broken up. Before the flood there had been no rain. The word translated “fountains” means a spring or source of water that comes from within the earth. The rivers throughout the earth came from fountains of water that were in the earth. Genesis 2:4-5 says, “Is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man to till the ground.” Then Genesis 2:10 adds, “Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.” Here we see that rivers came out of the ground because God had not given rain. These rivers and other sources of water all came from the fountains of the deep.

Since there was no rain before the flood the sources of the waters that came out of the earth to form the rivers and streams were the great fountains of the deep. We also see illustrations of such fountains of water after the flood. Moses was told in Exodus 17:6, “Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.’ And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.” In this case God caused enough water from a fountain in the deep to provide water for 2 ½ to 3 million Israelites and their flocks from one such fountain. Many towns and cities today are also supplied by springs and artesian wells where the water comes up out of the ground. Here we see that God caused all of these fountains of the deep to open up at the same time and pour huge amounts of water onto the earth.

Second, as the water was pouring out of these great fountains of the deep, God then began to send rain from the clouds above. In fact we see that it rained continuously on the earth for forty days and forty nights. Beginning at that time, God has continued to provide water to the earth

through the rain. Isaiah 55:10 says, ““For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.” As a result, God changed the primary way that He watered the earth with these great changes.

Genesis 7:13-16 says, “On the very same day Noah and Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life. So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.” Once the ark was ready, God told Noah for his family and all of the animals and creatures that God was bringing to Noah to go into the ark so that they were in the ark before these two sources of water brought the flood.

God is a very patient God. He had given the people a final one hundred years that the ark was being built to repent and turn to Him. However, the family of Noah was the only family that entered the ark because no one else had repented of their sin of unbelief. Now it was time for the judgment of the rest of the people. I Peter 3:18-20 says, “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.” The rest of the people were destroyed but the family of Noah was saved and taken through the water by the ark.

In addition to the family of Noah, God brought two of every kind of beast, cattle, creeping thing and bird of every sort to enter the ark with Noah. We also see in other verses in this section that God brought seven of each of the clean animals to be taken through the flood with Noah and his family. This meant that all flesh that was on the earth at that time, mankind, animals, birds and creeping things were represented by those who were sent into the ark by God. God made sure that every species of life on the earth would be able to continue after the flood.

Once Noah and all of the creatures that God had brought were in the ark, we see that the Lord shut them in. This is a key statement. God had given the wicked many years to repent. However, the day came when the promised judgment had to be carried out. Once God shut the door no person could open it. The same thing is true for every person. Hebrews 9:27 says, “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.” Once a sinful person dies without repentance, there is no second opportunity to repent. At that moment the day of judgment for that person has come and there is no second chance. That is why it is important to warn all who do not believe and repent that a day of judgment is coming and they need to get ready.

Genesis 7:17-24 says, “Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. And the waters prevailed

exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died. So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.” The fountains of the deep and the rain caused the flood to cover everything.

We see that the flood waters lifted the ark high above the earth. The water continued to increase on the earth. The result was the ark was lifted off the ground and began to float. The winds and the movement of the water caused the ark to begin to move from place to place. First, all of the high hills on the earth were covered. Then as the waters continued to increase the day came when all of the mountains were covered. God said that the highest mountain was covered by fifteen cubits of water. A cubit is the distance from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger (about 18 inches). This meant that the water level rose to at least 22 ½ feet higher than the highest mountain.

That meant that every living thing on the earth that was not in the ark died. This included all of the birds, all of the cattle, all of the wild animals and all of the creeping things that creep on the earth. Most important every person on the earth except those in the ark died in the flood. Those in the ark were preserved and taken through the flood. Hebrews 11:7 says, “By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” This verse makes it clear that Noah was saved by faith. In contrast, the rest of the people of the world were destroyed because of their lack of faith.

God said that all those who had breath because they had the spirit of life on what had been the dry land died. Genesis 2:7 says, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. In this verse we see that Adam was given physical life when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Here we see that when the flood waters covered those on the land who had the spirit of life that they died because they could no longer breathe. God destroyed all living things on the earth including both man, cattle, creeping things and birds of the air. Nothing on the land survived.

In contrast, we see that Noah and those with him in the ark remained alive. The mighty acts of God were revealed by the fact that this water covered all of the mountains by the 150th day. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the fact that the flood showed the mighty acts of God by sparing those who trusted in Him while at the same time judging all of those who continued in their rebellion against Him. God is the One who has the power to save those who repent and judge those who do not. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

17.

The Lord had Noah Wait for the Earth to Dry Up

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God showed His mighty power by preserving those who trust in Him and judging those who continued in their rebellion against Him. In this topic we see that God began to dry up the waters of the flood so that man could again live on the earth.

God preserved Noah and his family as they spent a little over a year on the ark. Genesis 8:1-3 says, "Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased." We see that God remembered Noah, his family and all of the creatures that were on the ark. The word translated "remembered" has three main meanings. One of those meanings means to think about something so that it causes a person to act.

In these verses we see that as God thought about Noah and those who were with him that God took action to cause the waters of the flood to begin to dry up. We see that God made a wind pass over the earth. This wind caused the water to begin to evaporate and return to the atmosphere above the earth. The next place where we see this word in the book of Genesis was when God spoke to Noah and his sons in Genesis 9:15-16 after he came off of the ark. God told them in those verses, "And I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." Here God said that He would cause the rainbow to be in the cloud and remember His covenant and never again destroy all flesh with a flood. God said that He would cause the rainbow so that He and the people of the earth could be reminded that God would never destroy the earth again with a flood.

God stopped the fountains of the deep and He stopped the rain from the heaven after forty days so that no more water was coming from either source until the floodwaters had dried up. From that point on the waters began to go down throughout the earth as we see in verse 3 that the waters receded continually from the earth. The fountains of the deep opened up and the rains had come down for a total of forty days. In the previous topic we saw that the highest mountains were covered by at least 22 ½ feet of water. Genesis 8:3b-5 says, "At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen." The water receded for 110 days after the rain stopped or a total of 150 days since the rain began.

Genesis 7:11 tells us when the rain had started. That verse says, “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.” Here in Genesis 8:4 we see that the ark rested on the tops of the mountains of Ararat exactly 150 days after the rain had started. The mountains of Ararat are more than 17,000 feet high so the water still had a long way to recede before the level of the water would be back to the level that it was before the flood. (The mountain that some people feel is possibly Mount Ararat where the ark rested is covered by a permanent cap of snow which is about 350 feet deep based on satellite measurements.) In fact it took almost another two and a half months before the tops of all of the surrounding mountains could be seen.

The waters continued to drop as the winds blew and the water evaporated into the atmosphere. Finally on the first day of the tenth month it was possible to see the tops of the surrounding mountains. However, that meant that the water still had a long way to recede before the valleys would be able to be seen. After the water finally receded from the mountains the ground still had to become dry before Noah, his family and all of the birds, animals and creeping things could leave the ark.

As a result, Genesis 8:6-12 says, “So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.” Here we see that Noah waited another forty days after the tops of all of the mountains were seen.

Then Noah sent out a raven. However, ravens can survive by eating many things. Leviticus 11:14 said that the raven was an unclean bird because of the things that it ate. Leviticus 11:13-15 says, “And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, the kite, and the falcon after its kind; every raven after its kind.” These birds are considered unclean because they will eat rotting flesh. They also have strong wings and can keep flying from place to place. As a result, the raven did not return to the ark but flew from place to place until the water was dried up from the earth.

In contrast, Noah also sent out a dove to see if the waters had receded. A dove does not have nearly as strong of wings as a raven. As a result, the dove could not continue to fly. In addition, a dove will not eat many of the things that a raven will eat so there was no food that the dove could find to eat. The dove could not find a place to rest and so the dove returned to the ark to Noah. When the dove returned Noah knew that she could not find a place to rest so had returned to the ark. A dove is also called a pigeon in part of the verses where it is used in the Bible. Only clean animals or birds could be used as sacrifices. Leviticus 5:7 says, “If he is

not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring to the Lord, for his trespass which he has committed, two turtledoves or two young pigeons: one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering.” Here we see that a poor person could use a pigeon as a sacrifice instead of a lamb if the person was poor. That was possible because a pigeon or dove was a clean bird that did not eat dead flesh. Instead their food comes from different kinds of plants.

Noah saw that the dove had returned to the ark and so he reached out and took the dove and brought her back into the ark so that the dove would have a place to rest and be fed. Noah knew when the dove returned that there was no place for her to land and no food for her to eat. That was a clear indication that plant life was not yet growing enough to provide food for the animals, birds, creeping things and the family of Noah. As a result, Noah waited seven days and then sent out the dove again. This time the bird did not come back until the evening. When the dove returned, she had a freshly picked olive leaf in her mouth. This let Noah know that the trees were beginning to send out leaves which meant that the water of the flood was no longer on the earth.

Here we see that the trees and the plants were able to live through this time when they were under the water. In fact many plants need to periodically have floods or large amounts of water in order to grow properly. God told the people of Israel in Deuteronomy 11:13-14, “And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the Lord your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.” In these verses we see that God made it clear that plentiful rain was necessary for the crops to have a good harvest. In many places rivers will flood each year to provide the water that is needed for good crops to grow. As a result, the plants and the trees were able to survive the flood and begin to grow again once the flood receded.

Noah waited seven more days and then sent out the dove a third time. This time the dove did not return. This meant that the dove had found a place where it could rest. As a result, Noah knew that the land was beginning to dry and that they would soon be able to leave the ark. God had taken Noah through the flood in the protection of the ark. Soon it would be time for he and his family to begin to carry out the command that God had given to Adam to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. In fact God would soon repeat that same command to Noah. Genesis 9:7 says, “And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.” God continued to have His original plan to fill the earth with people even though most of mankind had become so evil that He had to destroy everyone except the family of Noah.

Today we have more than seven billion people living on the earth. The desire of God is for each of them to have the opportunity to hear how to have spiritual life as well as physical life. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that message clearly so that they can explain to others how to come to repentance and faith in Christ so that they can receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this message to others.

18.

The Lord Told Noah to Leave the Ark

In our last topic we saw that we want to learn to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how God took Noah and his family through the flood. We also saw that God wants all the people on the earth to hear how they can have spiritual life as well as physical life. That is the key message that we want to help our children learn to explain to others. In this topic we will see that God told Noah to leave the ark.

God sent out the dove in Genesis 8:12 and it did not return so Noah knew that it had found a place to rest which meant that the earth was becoming dry. Genesis 8:13-14 says, “And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.” Here we see that the waters of the flood had receded and the surface of the ground had become dry. However, God had not yet told Noah to leave the ark.

The word translated “covering” is used 16 times in the Old Testament. In all of the other verses where this word is used it refers to the coverings made from animal skins of the tabernacle or the things in it. Exodus 26:14 says, “You shall also make a covering of ram skins dyed red for the tent, and a covering of badger skins above that.” Here we see that there was a covering of ram skins and an additional cover of badger skins that was spread over the tent of the tabernacle. As a result, it is possible that the window that went around the top of the ark had been covered with skins during the time of the flood to protect the ark from the rain or the splashing of water into the ark. Genesis 6:16 says, “You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.” Here we see that this window was a cubit high and probably went around most of the ark.

In these verses we see that Noah removed this covering because it was no longer needed. Once the covering was removed Noah could look out the window in various directions and see what was happening on the earth. As he looked, Noah was able to see that the surface of the ground was dry. That made it possible for the dove to have plenty of places to rest. However, it did not yet mean that the ground beneath the surface was dry because God had not yet given instructions for Noah to leave the ark and God did not open the door yet. Instead God allowed the earth to become completely dried off before He told Noah to leave the ark. We see that God waited until the 27th day of the second month until the earth was completely dried. That meant that Noah spent a year and ten days on the ark after the flood began. Genesis 7:11 says, “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.”

Genesis 8:15-19 goes on to say, “Then God spoke to Noah, saying, ‘Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing

of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.” Here we see that God was the One who told Noah when it was time to leave the ark.

God gave Noah specific instructions to leave the ark with his wife, his sons and their wives. Then God told Noah that they were to bring out of the ark every living thing of all flesh that was with them on the ark. God specifically told them to bring out the birds, the cattle and all creeping things. Many of the creeping things were very small but God wanted every kind of creature on the ark to continue to multiply once they left the ark. Since the mountains of Ararat were over 17,000 feet high, once they left the ark Noah, his family and the animals would be moving from the mountains to the valleys and so God wanted them to get everything off of the ark. God had told Noah in Genesis 6:19, “And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.” Now God wanted all of these creatures to continue to live as they came off of the ark.

In fact God made it clear that He wanted the birds, animals and creeping things to be fruitful and multiply on the earth in addition to the people. God wanted all of these creatures to multiply and abound on the earth. The word translated “abound” means to bring forth abundantly. God had said in Genesis 1:20-21, “Then God said, ‘Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.’ So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.” God had created a large number of fish, birds, animals and other things when He created the earth. The fish and other sea life were in abundant supply after the flood because the flood did not destroy them. However, of the other creatures, only those on the ark had survived and so God wanted every creature on the ark to be fruitful and multiply on the earth.

As a result, we read that every creature left the ark according to their families. Most of the creatures only had two of each kind. As a result, it was necessary for those creatures to leave together so that they could be fruitful and multiply. There were seven of the clean animals and birds but we also see that they left the ark according to their families. We go on to read what Noah did with one of each of these clean animals and birds. Genesis 8:20-22 says, “Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.’” Here we see that the first thing that Noah did after they were off the ark was to build an altar where he and his family could offer burnt offerings to the Lord.

We see that these burnt offerings included one of every kind of clean animal and every kind of clean bird as a sacrifice to God. When Adam sinned, God had to kill animals to provide coverings for Adam and Eve. Genesis 3:21 says, “Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God

made tunics of skin, and clothed them.” The first sacrifice was by God to provide a covering for Adam and Eve because of their sin. In contrast, the first sacrifice after the flood was offered by Noah as an act of worship to God to thank God for His faithfulness in taking Noah and his family through the flood and preserve them alive. This was very pleasing to the Lord. This was a smell that brought delight to God. It was a sweet odor to Him. The word translated “aroma” means an odor that is pleasing. In most of the uses in the Old Testament it is talking about sacrifices offered to God. Numbers 28:6 called the lamb offered at the morning and the evening sacrifice, “It is a regular burnt offering which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord.” Here in Genesis 8 is the first time we read God was pleased with the smell of the sacrifice because it was offered in worship to Him.

God immediately responded in His heart with a covenant with His creation because of the worship of Noah. God said that He would never again curse the ground for man’s sake. He also said that He would never again destroy every living thing as He had done. This was true even though God recognized that the imagination of the heart of mankind is evil from his youth. God had seen the evilness of the heart of man and it had grieved Him. Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” In contrast, God saw here that one act of worship by Noah and God promised never again to curse the ground for man’s sake or destroy every living thing. In a very real sense the worship of Noah looked forward to the promise given in Romans 5:19 where we read, “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.” God was well pleased with the worship of Noah.

God also gave further promises about the earth as long as the earth remains. The earth experienced many changes both during the flood and as a result of the flood. However, God promised that four sets of events will continue as long as the earth remains. First, seedtime and harvest will continue as long as the earth remains. This had been stopped for one year but it would now continue. Second, cold and heat will continue. This began in the garden as Genesis 3:8 says that Adam and Eve heard the sound of God walking in the cool of the day. Third, God said winter and summer would continue as long as the earth remains. Winter and summer were not mentioned before the flood just as there was no rain before the flood. As a result, storms, severe hot and cold, natural disasters and many other things may be present that were not present before the flood. Romans 8:22 says, “For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.” These may be some of the results of the flood. Fourth, we see that day and night will not cease.

Noah brought great joy to the Lord by his worship of God through the offering of one of each of the clean animals of God as a sacrifice. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to practice and explain to others the fact that true worship from the heart brings great joy to the Lord. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain how the Lord views true worship.

19.

The Lord Established a Covenant with Noah

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why true worship brings joy to the Lord. We saw how Noah showed that true worship by his decision to sacrifice one of each of the clean birds and clean animals. In this topic we will learn about the covenant that God established with Noah.

Genesis 9:1-3 says, “So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.’” The Lord had smelled a sweet aroma when Noah offered one of every clean animal and bird as a sacrifice to the Lord. As a result, we see that God blessed Noah and his sons. Then God repeated one instruction that God had given when He created Adam and Eve. Genesis 1:28 says, “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” Here God told Noah to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth.

Then God established a new relationship between mankind and the animals. God said that the animals would fear man. Even the wildest animals will usually flee rather than attack mankind unless they are surprised, cornered or extremely hungry. God also said that the animals would have a dread of man. Dread speaks of the fact that the wild animals are dismayed and will even try to avoid contact if possible when they are able to keep out of sight. We see that God said that this would be true of the birds and the fish and everything that moves on the earth in addition to the animals. Here we see that God said that the animals and other creatures have been given into the hand of mankind.

In verse three we see that before the flood that the people were apparently vegetarians and got their food from the green herbs, trees and other plants. God said that mankind was now given every moving thing as food to eat. This meant that mankind was now free to eat the various animals, birds and fish as food. With this freedom to eat the various creatures, God also placed certain limitations on mankind in the following verses. Genesis 9:4-7 says, “But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man’s brother I will require the life of man. ‘Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man. And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.’”

First, we see that man was not to eat the flesh of the animals while the blood was still in the flesh. In Leviticus 17:11 we read, “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.” Here we see that later Israel had the reason explained why God had said not to eat

the blood. God said that the life of the flesh is in the blood. That is why God went on to say in Leviticus 17:12-14, “Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.’ Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’” In these verses we see that if an animal or bird was killed while hunting that the blood was to be poured on the ground and covered with the dust.

God said that He would demand a reckoning for the shedding of the lifeblood of any person. That was true even if the lifeblood of a person was shed by an animal. Exodus 21:28-29 says, “If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be acquitted. But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to his owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.” Here we see that an ox was to be put to death if it killed a man or a woman. In addition, the owner was also to be put to death if the owner knew that the ox had gored people in the past and did not confine the ox securely so that it could not get near a person. God also gave principles to make the distinction between manslaughter and murder and the said that the person guilty of murder was to be put to death.

Then God explained the reason why an animal or man was to be put to death if the person was guilty of shedding the blood of a man or a woman. God said that this is the penalty because God made man in His image. This is what makes man different from animals. We are made in the image of God and can have fellowship with God. Genesis 1:26 says, “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” Then I John 1:3 says, “That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” God has given each human being infinite value because He created us in His image and also chose to have fellowship with us. That infinite value was placed on human life by the fact that Christ chose to die for our sins so we can have forgiveness.

God then told Noah and his family to be fruitful and multiply. In these verses we see that God expanded those instructions. In addition, God told them to bring forth abundantly on the earth. He also told them to multiply in it. The word translated “bring forth abundantly” means to teem or to swarm. It is used in Exodus 8:3 where we read, “So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls.” We see that Moses told Pharaoh that from the river would come frogs that would be everywhere. As a result, Noah, his sons and their descendants were to produce so many descendants that there would be descendants throughout the earth.

Genesis 9:8-13 says, “Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: ‘And as for

Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ And God said: ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.’” This is the covenant with Noah.

We see that God told Noah that this covenant was not only with Noah but with all of his descendants that would ever live in the future. In addition, this covenant was also with every living creature on the earth. In the first part of the covenant God said that He would never again destroy all flesh with the waters of a future flood. Throughout history there have been various local floods that have destroyed some people and animals in that area. However, the promise here is that God will never again destroy all of the people animals, birds and creeping things with a flood. God said that there would never again be a universal flood that would destroy the entire earth.

This does not mean that the earth will not be destroyed in the future but it does mean that it will not be the result of a flood. In II Peter 3:10-15 we read, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” This judgment of the earth by fire will come after the final judgment of all unbelievers. Then we see that there will be a new heavens and a new earth that will be eternal because there will be no more sin. Instead the new earth and heavens will enjoy eternal righteousness.

God also gave the rainbow as a sign of this covenant that God made with Noah and all future generations. God said that He would set His rainbow in the cloud as a sign of the covenant that He made between Him and the earth. The word translated “bow or rainbow” is translated bow and refers to the bow used by a hunter. However, God said that this rainbow would be in the cloud instead of a bow used on the earth. It would be a permanent reminder to the people on the earth that God would never again completely destroy the earth by a universal flood. This is an eternal covenant which will include the new heavens and the new earth. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the meaning of the rainbow to others. We also want to help our children learn to explain what God taught Noah about the blood and explain why God said that the fact that we are created in His image makes us different than the animals. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Lord Saw the Disrespect of Ham

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why God placed the rainbow in the cloud. We also saw that we want to help our children explain why God said that mankind is different than any of the animals. In this topic we will learn more about the rainbow and also see that Ham showed a lack of respect for his father.

God went on to explain to Noah more about the rainbow. Since it had not rained before the flood, Noah had never seen a rainbow before. Genesis 9:14-19 says, “‘It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ And God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.’ Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.” God told Noah what to expect when He brought a cloud over the earth.

The family of Noah had never seen it rain before the flood. As a result, it would have been easy for them to become fearful when they saw clouds come since the flood was the only time that it had rained in the past. Then God made a very important statement. He said that when He saw the rainbow in the cloud that He would remember His covenant. He would remember that He had promised Noah and all future descendants as well as every living creature that He would never destroy all living creatures with a flood again. God said that He would remember that this was an everlasting covenant. The word translated “remember” is a key word because it tells us that when God remembers we can know that He will also take action. Exodus 2:24 says, “So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.” Then the following verses in chapter three tell about God calling Moses to lead the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Here we see that God sees the rainbow in the cloud and it is a constant reminder to Him of His everlasting covenant not to destroy all flesh with another worldwide flood. In fact God said twice in these verses that He will remember. Joseph explained to Pharaoh in Genesis 41:32 the certainty of anything that God says twice. That verse says, “And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.” Anything that God establishes will be remembered and will certainly be carried out as He has said. Then we see that Noah and his three sons and their wives when out of the ark. We are also told that Ham was the father of Canaan. That is important because we see that God will later place a curse on Canaan and his descendants. God also makes it very clear that the whole earth was populated through the three sons of Noah. This is one of the key things that those who reject God will try to deny because of their decision to reject God and His Word.

Genesis 9:20-23 goes on to tell us, “And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father’s nakedness.” We do not know what kind of work Noah had done before he began to build the ark. However, we see here that after he came off the ark that he became a farmer. One of the things that he planted was a vineyard.

We see that when Noah drank the wine that came from his vineyard that he became drunk. We do not know if wine caused fermentation and drunkenness before the flood because it is not mentioned before the flood. He went into his tent and was uncovered in his tent either because of his drunkenness or because of the heat. The word translated “he was uncovered” is used many times in Leviticus 18:6-19 and 20:17-21. Two of those uses are in Leviticus 18:6-7 where we read, “None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I *am* the LORD. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness.” The word is used three times in these two verses.

While Noah was asleep because of his wine, we see that Ham, the father of Canaan came into the tent and saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers who were outside. As the verses above shows Israel was told at a later time not to uncover the nakedness of a parent. We see that Ham showed a lack of respect to his father by going and telling his brothers about the nakedness of their father. In the Ten Commandments Israel was later told in Exodus 20:12, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.” We will see the impact that this lack of respect had in the following verses.

However, first we see the response of the two brothers. Instead of joining their brother in his disrespect, Shem and Japheth laid a garment on both of their shoulders and went into the tent backward and covered the nakedness of their father. We see that they had their faces turned away so that they did not even see the nakedness of their father. Here we see that they showed an attitude of respect for their father which was very different than the attitude of their brother. Ephesians 6:2-3 says, “‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” We will see in the following verses that their respect for their father caused him to give them a blessing that has had a continuing impact throughout history. God honored their respect throughout all their future generations.

We see that Noah recognized what had happened when he woke up. Genesis 9:24-29 says, “So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. Then he said: ‘Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren.’ And he said: ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem; and may Canaan be his servant.’ And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.” Here we see that the Lord caused Noah to realize what had happened while he was asleep from his wine.

The word translated “awoke” usually means to awake from sleep. Genesis 28:16 says, “Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, ‘Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.’” Jacob had been asleep and God had spoken to him in a dream and reminded him of the covenant given to Abraham and Isaac. That was why he woke up and realized that God was with him. In contrast, when Noah awoke from his wine he realized a very different thing. He realized that Ham had shown disrespect for him by what he had done to him. However, he did not choose to curse his son but chose instead to curse one of the sons of Ham. Genesis 10:6 says, “The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.” Here we see that Ham had four sons but only one of the four was cursed. This meant it is possible that Canaan was with Ham and his attitude also showed disrespect for his grandfather.

In the curse Noah said, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren.” At the time that Moses wrote the book of Genesis, Israel was traveling toward the land that God had promised to Abraham. That land was occupied by the descendants of Canaan. Between the time of Canaan and Abraham the descendants of Canaan became very evil. The land where the descendants settled is described in Genesis 10:19 where we read, “And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.” The previous verses give us the names of all of the families of Canaan that settled in this land. Clay tablets reveal that the descendants of Canaan had no respect for human life. They offered part of their children as human sacrifices to their god Molech. That was why God told Israel in Leviticus 18:21, “And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.” They also practiced various forms of sexual perversion.

God gave the descendants of Canaan a long time to repent of their sins. In fact God told Abraham in Genesis 15:16, “But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” The Amorites were the descendants of one of the children of Canaan. It was over 600 years after God told Abraham these words in Genesis 15:16 that He brought Israel into their land and told Joshua to completely destroy the people of the land because of their sinfulness and disrespect for human life. As a result, we see that God showed great mercy to give them such a long time to repent even though they had already become very evil by the time of Abraham.

This chapter concludes by telling us that Noah lived for 350 years after the flood. As a result, he was able to see several generations of his descendants before he died. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why God chose to show great mercy to the descendants of Canaan and gave them many years to repent even though they became very evil. This is a reminder of the fact that the mercy of God is great but that one day judgment will come for all those who never repent and turn to Christ. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

21.

The Lord Summarized the Spread of the Nations

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why God showed great mercy to the descendants of Canaan even though they became very evil and offered many of their children as human sacrifices to their false god. In this topic we will learn about the development of the nations through the three sons of Noah and learn key lessons about some of them.

In Genesis 10:1-5 we read, “Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood. The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.” In these verses we have the descendants of Japheth. Following the changing of the languages at the Tower of Babel which will be described in the next chapter we see that the descendants of Japheth gradually moved and settled in the continent of Europe and the northwest part of Asia. The word translated “coastlands” means region, coast or islands. These verses show that the people divided into various regions based on the languages, families and nations that God had given to them.

We go on to read about the descendants of Ham. We are given more details about two sons of Ham. Genesis 10:6-14 says, “The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, ‘Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.’” And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city). Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and Capthorim).” The descendants of Ham gradually settled in the Mideast and on the continent of Africa.

One of the sons of Ham was Nimrod. We read that he became a mighty one on the earth. The word translated “mighty one” is used 158 times in the Old Testament and is used to speak of a man who is known for his power as a warrior. In I Samuel 16:18 this word is used to describe David. Saul was looking for a man who could play the harp well and was told in that verse, “Then one of the servants answered and said, ‘Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the Lord is with him.’” Then in I Samuel 17:51 we read, “Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.” These uses show that the word can be used about a mighty man who was

either good or evil. In this verse the word is used to speak of Goliath, the Philistine. These and other men about whom this word is used were often mighty warriors. We see this word was used three times about Nimrod.

Twice we see that Nimrod is called a “mighty hunter before the Lord.” The word translated “before” appears either as before or by several words like face and similar words. It is used twice in Genesis 4:5-6 where it talks about the countenance or face of Cain being fallen. Genesis 4:5-6 says, “But He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?” Here we see that it talks about a very angry face. In many other places it talks about either the face of a person, the face of the earth or the face of God. We see that the face can describe joy, anger, or even rebellion. Here we see that the face of Nimrod probably showed his rebellion against God. Several of the cities established by Nimrod were very evil as these verses indicate that he was probably the leader in the decision to build the Tower of Babel. He was also involved in the beginning of Babylon and Nineveh during his lifetime. Each of these places showed great rebellion against God and Israel as Nineveh later destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel and Babylon later destroyed Judah. We see that the Philistines were descendants of Nimrod and they fought against Israel many times.

We also have more details about Canaan and his descendants. He was another of the sons of Ham. We have already seen that Canaan was cursed in the previous chapter when Ham showed disrespect for Noah which may mean that Canaan was with Ham. Genesis 10:15-20 says, “Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. These were the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands and in their nations.”

We see that afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed in verse eighteen. The word translated “were dispersed” is used three more times in Genesis 11. First, the people used the word to show their rebellion against the commandment of God to multiply and fill the earth. Genesis 11:4 says, “And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’” Here we see that the people chose to rebel against God so that they would not be scattered. Then Genesis 11:8-9 says, “So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.” In these verses we see that the Lord scattered the people by confusing the language.

When the families of Canaan left the area of the Tower of Babel we see that they moved to the area which became known as the land of Canaan. The land of Canaan where the descendants of Canaan settled stretched from Sidon on the north as far as Gaza along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and as far south as the south end of the west side of the Dead Sea. We also see that all of the descendants of Ham were scattered according to the languages in their lands

and in their nations. When God confused the language we see that the descendants of the sons of Noah were scattered to the lands and formed the nations that God had planned for them.

We go on to read about the descendants of Shem. Genesis 10 21-32 says, “And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder. The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. Arphaxad begot Salah, and Salah begot Eber. To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother’s name was Joktan. Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east. These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations. These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.” We see that the descendants of Shem spread eastward across Asia including the islands and Australia. They also spread across what is now called the Bering Straits to the Americas.

Noah gave a blessing to Shem and then to Japheth when He pronounced judgment on the descendants of Canaan. Genesis 9:26-27 says, “Blessed *be* the LORD, the God of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem; and may Canaan be his servant.” The descendants of Shem far outnumber the descendants Ham. In addition, the descendent of Japheth outnumber the descendants of Ham although by a much smaller number. We see that it was during the days of Peleg that the people of the world were divided. God chose to make it very clear that the entire world is populated by the descendants of the three sons of Noah. They also experienced the changing of the language at the same time. This section about Shem ends the same as the sections about the descendants of Japheth and Ham ended. We see that the descendants of Shem also spread according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands and in their nations.

Then we are given the summary for the entire family of Noah. The word translated “generations” means to bring forth and is another word for their descendants in most cases. However, it is used in Genesis 2:4 to speak of the act of God in creation. That verse says, “This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.” In this verse the word is translated history. Most uses are more like Genesis 5:1 where we read, “This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.’ In this verse it is translated by the word genealogy. One of the questions that many people have is, “Where did we come from?” The world tries to deny the creation by God. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what the Bible teaches so that they can help others to understand that we came from Adam through Noah and through one of his three sons. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Lord Confused the Language

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what the Word of God teaches about the spread of the nations from the family of Noah. In this topic we will see that the people began to rebel against God again as they decided to build a tower so that they would not be scattered abroad.

God had destroyed the earth with a flood because of the fact that the hearts of the people were evil continually. When Noah and his family came off the ark God said in Genesis 9:1, “So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’” Within a short time we see that the people chose to rebel against filling the earth. Genesis 11:1-4 says, “Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. Then they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’” Here we see that the people rebelled because they did not want to be scattered so that they could fill the earth.

As the number of people began to increase after the flood we see that they all had the same language and speech. The word translated “language” is most often translated lip and spoke of speaking with the lip. In a few places it is translated by words that speak of the shore of a river or sea. However, in several places it is used to speak of the fact that people are speaking a language or speech with their lips. In these verses it is translated language three times and its second use in verse seven is translated speech. It is also translated by language in Isaiah 19:18 where we read, “In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the LORD of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction.” This meant that everyone could understand each other.

We see that the people traveled as a group until they found a fairly level area in Shinar (later called Babylon). The two names of Babylon and Shinar are used together in Daniel 1:1-2 where we read, “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.” As a result, these names both refer to the same area. The people settled down in that area and remained there. We see in Genesis 10:9-10 that Nimrod became the king of this kingdom. Those verses say, “He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, ‘Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.’ And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Here we see that he formed a kingdom with these four cities which were all located in the area of Babylon.

The leaders of these cities began to talk together about building a new city with a tower that

would reach into the heavens. Together they discussed making bricks and baking them thoroughly. Then they said that they had asphalt for mortar to hold the bricks together. The word translated “asphalt” is tar and was later common in the tar pits around the Dead Sea. Genesis 14:10 says, “Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains.” As the king and the leaders talked together we see that they decided to build a city with a very high tower in it. Their purpose for this new city with its high tower was to make a name for themselves. Here we see that they were controlled by their own pride. Their pride was what caused them to rebel against the command of God.

God had said to multiply and fill the earth. In their pride these leaders wanted to build this city and tower so that they would not be scattered abroad on the face of the earth. It was this very attitude of pride that caused Satan to originally rebel against God. We see the five “I wills” of Satan (Lucifer) in Isaiah 14:13-14 where we read, “For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’” Here we see that Nimrod and the other leaders of these cities had a similar attitude. They wanted to make a name for themselves instead of scatter and fill the earth. They even had unity in their rebellion because they had one language, one purpose, and a will to work together to accomplish that purpose.

However, Genesis 11:5-7 says, “But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. And the Lord said, ‘Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.’” God knew the pride in the hearts of Nimrod and the other leaders. God also knew the destructive potential that this pride would cause because they had one purpose, language and had a will to work together. God knew that this combination of things meant that anything they agreed to do could be accomplished. The word translated “will be withheld” means to fence, fortify or restrain. In Deuteronomy 9:1 we read, “Hear, O Israel: You *are* to cross over the Jordan today, and go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven.” Here the word is translated “fortified up” which normally meant that they could not be defeated.

God saw this rebellion and knew it had to be stopped. We see that the whole Trinity acted in unity to end this rebellion (let US go down and confuse their language). The word translated “confound” means to mix, mingle, confuse or confound. It is used in most passages to speak of so completely mixing oil with flour that there is oil in every single part of the flour. Leviticus 7:12 uses the word twice when it says, “If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil.” Here we see that God said that they would so mix their language that the different families would not be able to understand one another’s speech.

At the same time God made a statement about the results of having a unified purpose, language and a will to work together to accomplish that purpose. God said that with this combination

that, “nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.” These people were in rebellion against God. He knew that if this rebellion was allowed to continue that the situation would soon be like it was before the flood. That situation is described in Genesis 6:5 where we read, “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” When people are unified around a common evil purpose, God made it clear that men will become more and more evil. That was the very reason why God had earlier found it necessary to destroy the earth with a flood.

This time God chose to deal with that rebellion in a different way. God confused the speech so that each extended family or clan had a different language when they spoke. This meant that the people were no longer able to understand one another. We see the results of this lack of understanding in Genesis 11:8-9. Those verses say, “So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.” In these verses we see that once the people could no longer communicate with one another that they then began to scatter out over the whole earth.

We see that the name of Babel was given to describe what had happened to this city. The word translated “Babel” means to confuse or confusion. Babylon is the Greek spelling of the name which is spelled Babel in Hebrew. In Genesis 10:10 and 11:9 the name is used to refer to this city which they started to build. In the other 257 uses after the Tower of Babel this word is always translated Babylon and refers either to the city or to the nation of Babylon. We also see that this confusion of the language affected the entire earth just as the earlier flood had affected the entire earth. We might say that what God did in one day had a longer and greater impact on the people of the earth than the flood even though it took Noah one hundred years to build the ark.

This confusion of the language of the earth continues to have an impact throughout the world. God gave a tiny reversal of this confusion of the language on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:6 says, “And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.” Here we see that God chose to reverse the effects of the confusion of the language in Genesis for a short time on the day of Pentecost as a sign to the Jews. The confusion of language was only on earth because in heaven all are able to understand one another. This is illustrated in Revelation 7:9-10 where we read, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn that the confusion of language will end when we get to heaven. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Lord Gave the Genealogy from Shem to Abram

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how God confused the language on the earth at the Tower of Babel. This change did not affect heaven as we saw that people of all nations, tribes, people and tongues will be able to worship the Lord together because there is no confusion of language in heaven. In this topic we will see that God called Abraham to form a new nation.

The Tower of Babel showed that the hearts of mankind continued to be filled with evil even though mankind had seen the world destroyed by the flood. God had planned before the creation of the world that Christ would come one day to pay the penalty for sin. Ephesians 1:4 says, "Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Then Ephesians 1:7 adds, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." In order for Christ to buy us back from sin, there had to be a godly line through which Christ could come. As a result, Genesis 11 gives the family line from Shem to Abraham through which Christ would one day come.

First, we are given the line from Shem to the confusion of language. Genesis 11:10-17 says, "This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah. After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber. After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg. After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters." In this genealogy we see that Shem had a son that was born two years after the flood named Arphaxad. According to Genesis 10:22 Shem had a total of five sons, "The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram." However, this was the son from which Christ would one day come.

From this list we see that there were five individuals listed from Shem to the confusion of the language – Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber and Peleg. In Genesis 10 the genealogies there show that the three sons of Noah together had a total of 16 sons. Then each of those sons had several sons. This continued for three more generations. As a result, the earth had quite a number of people on it by the time of Peleg. Then Genesis 10:25 says, "To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan." The word translated "divided" means split or divided and is used four times in the Old Testament. I Chronicles 1:19 gives the same genealogy that is given in Genesis 10:25. God uses the word as He questions Job in Job 38:25 where we read, "Who has divided a channel for the overflowing water, or a path for the thunderbolt?" When David was being oppressed by the wicked, he said in Psalm 55:9, "Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues, for I have seen violence and strife in the city." The word translated "destroy" in this verse could also be translated confuse and may refer to the confusion of the language in Genesis 11.

The second part of this list takes us from Peleg and the confusion of the language to Terah, the father of Abram (later changed to Abraham). Genesis 11:18-26 says, “Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu. After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters. Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug. After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters. Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor. After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah. After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters. Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.” From this list we see six individuals listed from Peleg to Abram – Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Abram. Throughout this list we see that in addition to the son that carries on the future line of Christ that there were other sons and daughters born to these men as the population of the earth continued to grow.

Although Terah was the father of Abram, he was not a worshiper of the true and living God who created the heavens and the earth. Joshua 24:2 says, “ And Joshua said to all the people, Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.’” Here we see that Terah and his family were serving other gods at the time that God called Abram.

By reading several other verses we see that Terah became a father when he was seventy years old but that Abram was not his oldest son. Genesis 11:32 says, “So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.” Then Genesis 12:4 says, “So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.” Then Acts 7:2-4 says, “And he said, ‘Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,’ and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell.” That meant that Terah was 130 at the time that Abram was born. Haran was probably the oldest son as he died in the land of Ur of the Chaldeans before Terah, Nahor and Abram moved to Haran.

When we get to Genesis 12 we will see that God had called Abram while he was still in the land of Ur. Genesis 12:1 says, “Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you.’” This meant that Abram had learned about God sometime before he left Ur of the Chaldeans even though his father worshiped other gods. Hebrews 11:8 says, “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” Here we see that Abram demonstrated that his faith was in God by leaving the land where he has grown up even though he had no idea where God was going to take him.

However, part of the family moved with Abram as Genesis 11:27-32 says, “This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. And Haran died

before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. But Sarai was barren; she had no child. And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran." In these verses we see that Haran, one of the brothers of Abram, died while the family was still in the land of Ur. However, before he died his wife gave birth to a son and two daughters. The name of the son was Lot and the daughters were Milcah and Iscah.

In these verses we see that Abram and Nahor were married before they left the land of Ur of the Chaldeans. We see that Nahor married Milcah, the son of his older brother, Haran. Later we see that Nahor and Milcah eventually had eight children. Genesis 22:20-22 says, "Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, "Indeed Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel." Abram married Sarai but she did not have any children. We learn later in Genesis that Abram was married to his half sister. Genesis 20:12 says, "But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife." Here we see at this time that they could still marry close relatives. That was not changed until the law was given to Israel at the time of Moses.

Haran had died in the land of Ur so Terah, Nahor and Abram took his son, Lot, with them when they left the land of Ur. They were on their way to Canaan but stopped at a place named Haran and lived there until the death of Terah. We saw in a previous paragraph that God had called Abram and told him to leave his country and go to a land that God would show him. He had also been told to leave his relatives. However, part of his family had gone along with him as he left to go to the land of Canaan. That may have been why they stopped in Haran for a period of years until Terah died. Nahor also chose to stay in Haran and that would become important in the future for the family of Abram. However, it was important for Abram to separate from his family because they were still idol worshipers as that is seen later in the book of Genesis.

The city of Haran was northeast of the land of Canaan near the Euphrates River. They had traveled along the Euphrates River as they moved toward Canaan because that provided water and grass for their cattle and flocks as they traveled. A more direct route across the desert would not have provided water and grass for the animals. As a result, we see that God was leading Abram and he was moving in the direction that God was leading him. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand and be able to explain that God called Abram out of a city and family that were idol worshipers and called him to go to a new land where he could worship God. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Lord Made a Covenant with Abraham

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God called Abram to leave Ur, the idols of that city, the idols of his family and follow Him. In this topic we will see the details of that call and the obedience of Abram as he went to the land of Canaan.

In Acts 7:2-4 we see that God had called Abram while he was still in Ur. Those verses say, “And he said, “Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell.” We are given the details of that call in Genesis 12:1-3 where we read, “Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’” In these verses we see that God had called Abram to leave his land and his family.

God also gave Abram some wonderful promises as he called Abram. First, God said Abram was to go to a new land. Then in Genesis 15:18 God told Abram, “On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: ‘To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates.’” Here we see that God promised Abram that this land was given to him and would one day belong to his descendants. Second, God said that He would make Abram a great nation. Here we see that God promised national blessing to Abram. Later God expanded that promise to Abram when He said in Genesis 17:5-6, “No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.” God changed his name to Abraham which means, “Father of many nations,” and said that many nations would come from Abraham.

Third, God promised Abram personal blessing. This personal blessing included several parts. God said he would make his name great. God said Abram would be a blessing to others. God said He would bless those who blessed Abram. God said He would curse those who cursed Abram. All of these things were part of the personal blessing that was promised to Abram. Fourth, God told Abram “And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Here we see that God promised Abram that blessing of all of the families of the earth would come through him. This promise is explained more fully in Galatians 3:8, 16 where we read, “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed...Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ.” These verses make it very clear that this blessing of all of the families of the earth would come through Christ who would descend from Abram.

The fulfillment of this promise is illustrated in the future because Revelation 7:9-10 says, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” In these verses we see that people of every nation, tribe, people and tongue will one day stand before God because of the blessing promised to Abram that was fulfilled in Christ. All families of the earth can rejoice in this promise.

We go on to read what Abram did when this promise was repeated in Haran. Genesis 12:4-6 says, “So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land.” Here we see that Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran.

Once the father of Abram died, we see that Abram left most of his family in Haran as God had told him to do but we see that He did take his brother’s son, Lot. The fact that Lot traveled with Abram to the land of Canaan was going to be the cause of some conflicts between the servants of Abram and the servants of Lot. We also see that the Lord had blessed Abram during the years that he was in Haran. During the time that Abram lived in Haran we see that the Lord had blessed Abram and Sarai. We see that they took all of the possessions that they had gathered. They also took all of the servants that they had acquired while they were living in Haran.

We see that Abram along with all of his servants and his possessions traveled to the land of Canaan. They passed through the land until they came to the city of Shechem. This is located a little over thirty miles north of Jerusalem in a valley between two mountains by the names of Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. The reason why this land was called Canaan was due to the fact that the descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham and grandson of Noah, had settled in this region. This is the one on whom Noah had placed a curse in Genesis 9:25 where we read, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren.” We see that God knew these descendants would become very evil and that God said that the day would come when they would be judged for this evil.

We go on to read in Genesis 12:7-9, “Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.” Two things happened while Abram was at Shechem. First, we see that the Lord appeared to Abraham. This is one of the many times that Christ appeared to a particular individual in the Old Testament. We saw in Genesis chapter 1 that Christ was the One who spoke the creation into existence. Then He appeared to various people throughout the Old Testament. That is why John 1:14 says, “And

the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” The fact that it says the “Word became flesh” speaks of the fact that Christ became a man as well as God at the time that He came into the world to die for our sins and in our place on the cross.

Second, we see that the Lord promised Abram that He would give that land to the descendants of Abram. Third, we see that Abram built an altar to the Lord who had appeared to him. Abram may have built other altars to the Lord earlier but this is the first one that is mentioned. This word translated “altar” is used 402 times. It speaks of an altar on which sacrifices were offered either to God or to idols. In I Kings 18:26 the prophets of Baal leaped on their altar to try and get their god to send fire to burn their sacrifice. In contrast, just a few verses later Elijah repaired the altar of God. In I Kings 18:30-32 we read, “Then Elijah said to all the people, ‘Come near to me.’ So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, ‘Israel shall be your name.’ Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed.” Here we see that one altar was built to offer a sacrifice to Baal and the other altar was built to offer a sacrifice to God.

These verses in Genesis make it clear that the altars that Abram built were to offer sacrifices to God and not to some idol. Verse 7 says that Abram built the altar to the Lord who had appeared to him. True worship from the heart is always pleasing to the Lord. The Lord made that clear in Genesis 8:20-21 where we read, “Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.’” Throughout the rest of his life as Abram moved to various areas we see that he built other altars to offer sacrifices to God.

This is illustrated by the very next move of Abram. The next place he moved was to a mountain on the east side of Bethel. After he built that altar we see that Abram called on the name of the Lord. Hebrews 11:9-10 says, “By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” It was more important to Abram to build these altars to worship God than to build a house for himself. As a result, he lived in tents the rest of his life. In faith he was waiting for the city that God is building where Abram and all who come to God in repentance and faith will have the privilege of spending eternity in the presence of the Lord. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why it was so important to Abram to worship God and enjoy fellowship with him. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Lord Saw Abraham Sin in Egypt

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why it was so important to Abram to worship God and enjoy fellowship with Him. However, that did not mean that Abram was perfect but he knew that he was forgiven for sin. In this topic we will see how Abram sinned in Egypt.

After Abram had been in the land of Canaan for a period of time, they experienced a famine in the land. The word translated “famine” means hunger or famine. In the time of the Old Testament there was no way to preserve food and it was not easy to transport food from one place to another. As a result, when the land of Canaan did not get much rain for a year or two there would be a severe shortage of food which resulted in much hunger. This was a severe famine so it probably meant that the land had gone for more than a year without rain. As a result, Abram decided to move to Egypt where there would be enough food for the cattle and sheep as well as the people near the Nile River.

Genesis 12:10-13 says, “Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land. And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, ‘Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance. Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you.’” When they got close to Egypt we see that Abram made a request of his wife, Sarai. By this request Abram put his wife in danger to protect himself.

Abram recognized that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. Abram realized that the Egyptians would recognize that she was beautiful. This caused Abram to have a fear of what the Egyptians might do. Here we see that Abram was driven by his own fear instead of being led by the love of God. He feared that the Egyptians would kill him if they knew that he was the husband so that one of the Egyptians could take Sarai as his wife. Later God told husbands in Ephesians 5:25-27, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” Here we see that husbands are to protect and care for their wives.

As a result, Abram asked Sarai to, “Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you.” Here we see that Abram was only thinking to protect himself instead of taking the responsibility to protect his wife. This meant that Sarai would be in danger of being forced to become the wife of another man. Later Abram did this a second time to Sarai and then tried to justify himself to Abimelech. Genesis 20:10-12 says, “Then Abimelech said to Abraham, ‘What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?’ And Abraham said, ‘Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and

they will kill me on account of my wife. But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.” Abram was telling a lie that was a half-truth in order to protect himself regardless of what happened to his wife.

Because of this lie, the very thing that Abram feared happened. Genesis 12:14-16 says, “So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful. The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh’s house. He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.” Abram was right about the beauty of Sarai. The Egyptians saw Sarai and saw that she was very beautiful. In fact the princes of Pharaoh saw that she was so beautiful that they went and told Pharaoh about her beauty. Then Sarai was taken into the house of Pharaoh. Pharaoh planned to make her a part of his harem once she had passed the time of purification required by many rulers in that day.

We see that Pharaoh gave Abram a large dowry when he took Sarai into his household. Pharaoh gave Abram sheep and oxen. He also gave Abram male and female donkeys. Then he gave some camels to Abram. In addition, Pharaoh also gave both male and female servants to Abram. In his efforts to protect himself, Abram was even willing to receive the gifts of Pharaoh so that Pharaoh would not know that he was taking the wife of another man into his harem. However, God was not going to allow Abram to hide his sin. Galatians 6:7-8 warns, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” Since Abram was a follower of God, He chose to expose the sin of Abram since Abram would not experience eternal judgment. This is a reminder that we cannot hide our sin from God even though we might hide it from other people.

In His mercy God did choose to protect Sarai even though Abram had failed to protect her. We go on to read in Genesis 12:17-20, “But the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife. And Pharaoh called Abram and said, ‘What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? Why did you say, ‘She is my sister’? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way.’ So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.” Here we see that God protected Sarai by bringing great plagues on the house of Pharaoh.

The word translated “plagues” means to touch or to plague. Here we see that God touched Pharaoh and all those in his household with great plagues because of Sarai being taken into the household of Pharaoh. The next place this word is used in the Old Testament is in Exodus 11:1 where we read, “And the Lord said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.” This was a different Pharaoh about 600 years later. However, the plague that came on Egypt 600 years later was the death of the oldest child in each Egyptian household. Although we do not know exactly how God touched the Pharaoh in the time of Abram we see that the things that happened are called great plagues so Pharaoh immediately called Abram once Pharaoh knew that these plagues were happening because he had taken Sarai into his household.

We see that Pharaoh gave Abram a very strong rebuke. Pharaoh made it very clear to Abram that he was at fault for what was happening to Pharaoh and to his household. Instead of Abram bringing glory to God by being able to help Pharaoh and the people of Egypt learn about the true and living God, Abram was rebuked for his sin. This is an example of the fact that our sins cannot bring glory to God. That is why I Corinthians 10:31 tells us, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” This is a negative example and shows us that God allows the sins of His followers to be revealed here on the earth even though it hurts the work of God. That is why we need to make it our goal to bring glory to God by all that we say or do.

Pharaoh used three questions to help Abram realize his sin. The first question “What is this you have done to me?” spoke of the fact that Abram had personally sinned against the Pharaoh. He and his whole household had endured much suffering because of the failure of Abram to tell the truth. The second question “Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?” spoke of the fact that Abram had sinned against his wife by not protecting her. The third question “Why did you say, ‘She is my sister’?” made it clear that Abram was guilty of sin because he had told a lie. Sometimes when followers of God sin they do not think of how their sin will affect others, how it will affect their own family or how it will affect their own character. Pharaoh pointed out all three of these things by his questions to Abram.

Then Pharaoh gave Sarai back to Abram and told him, “Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way.” Pharaoh did not want to see Abram again after the plagues Abram had caused to happen to him and his family. As a result, Pharaoh told Abram to take his wife and leave. Here we see that one of the consequences of his lie was that Abram was no longer welcome in the land of Egypt. This is a reminder that sin always has consequences. Then we see that Pharaoh gave a command to his men regarding Abram. We see that it was the men of Pharaoh who actually made certain that Abram left their land. This meant that neither Pharaoh nor the men who served him learned to respect Abram or the true and living God because of the poor example that Abram provided. This is a reminder that our sins become a negative testimony about the Lord because others see that our lives and our words do not agree.

As a result, Abram and Sarai left the land of Egypt and took all that they had. He realized that he needed to get back to the place where he had built an altar at first. Genesis 13:4 tells us that Abram went, “to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the Lord.” This is an important lesson that we want to teach our physical and spiritual children. When we realize that we have sinned we need to confess that sin and quickly get back to the place where we are able to enjoy fellowship with the Lord again. Our children will learn that lesson best by the example that we provide for them. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to quickly restore their fellowship with the Lord.

The Lord Saw Abraham Separate from Lot

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn from the example of Abram that when we lie it will have a negative affect on others, on ourselves and on our children. Abram had to learn that lesson the hard way by being expelled from Egypt with everything that he had. In this topic we will see that Abram learned the benefits of letting God guide him to make wise choices.

In Genesis 13:1-7 we read, “Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South. Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the Lord. Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.” Here we see what happened when Abram returned from Egypt.

When Abram and Sarai along with everyone and everything that they had returned from Egypt they went to the area toward the South part of Canaan also known as the Negev. The Lord had been blessing Abram as He had promised Abram when He made the covenant with Abram. As a result, Abram had become very rich in livestock, silver and gold. As Abram continued to move with his cattle and flocks they moved from the South as far north as Bethel. This was the place where Abram had first gone when he came into the land of Canaan and the Lord had appeared to him. Genesis 12:7-8 says, “Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’” And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.” At that time Abram had built an altar to the Lord.

Here we see that Abram returned to the place where he had built that altar. This showed his desire to fully restore his fellowship with the Lord. Meanwhile Lot, the nephew of Abram, was traveling with him. Abram had been told to leave his family but he had brought Lot with him because the father of Lot had died before they left Ur and now that was beginning to cause conflict. The wealth of Lot had also increased and he also had flocks, herds and tents. The fact that both men had large flocks and herds created this conflict. The land could not grow more grass fast enough to feed both of their herds and flocks. The herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock began to have conflict between them because they both needed more grass for their flocks. In addition, there were also Canaanites and Perizzites that lived in that area.

As a result, Abram let God show him a way to avoid conflict with Lot. Genesis 13:8-13 says,

“So Abram said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left.” And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.” Abram was the leader but we see that he gave Lot the opportunity to make the choice about the land that he wanted.

These verses teach two key lessons about solving conflict. First, Abram took the leadership to discuss the problem with Lot. He reminded Lot that they were brethren and made it clear that they needed to resolve conflicts. He told Lot that they needed to separate so that there would not be conflict between their herdsmen. Second, Abram showed servant leadership by giving Lot the opportunity to choose which part of the land he wanted. Abram was learning that he could trust God to lead him instead of trying to make sure that he got what he wanted. II Corinthians 5:7 says, “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” Then Hebrews 11:9-10 speaks about the faith of Abraham when those verses say, “By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Abram was learning not to focus on what he saw but to focus on the city whose builder is God.

However, we see that Lot was walking by sight instead of walking by faith. Abram gave Lot the choice to choose the right or the left and said that he would go the opposite way from the way that Lot chose. Lot looked carefully in both directions. Since they were on the mountain ridge he could see all of the plain of Jordan. He saw that the plain of Jordan was well watered everywhere. Even from a distance he could see that the whole plain was green. This was before the Lord destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. In fact we see that this plain was compared to the garden of the Lord. Genesis 2:10 says, “a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.” Here we see that the Garden of Eden had been well watered which made it very beautiful. Abram and Lot had just come from Egypt and so Lot saw that the area was similar to the land along the Nile River.

Sodom and Gomorrah were close to the city of Zoar which was near the southeast end of the Dead Sea. Lot would later flee to the city of Zoar when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Lot chose the Jordan plain on the east because it was such a beautiful green area due to the fact that it was well watered. That meant that he left the land to the west of the mountains as the place for Abram to live. However, we see that Lot also made a second choice. He set up his tent close to the city of Sodom. We read that the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord. Genesis 19:4-5 says, “Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.’” Then Jude 7 adds, “As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves

over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Here we see that God judged these cities because they were exceedingly evil.

In contrast, we see that the Lord blessed Abram after he separated from Lot. Genesis 13:14-18 says, “And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.” Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the Lord.” Abram had let Lot choose because Abram was learning to walk by faith. Here we see that God honored that faith by speaking to Abram after Lot had separated from him and moved toward the city of Sodom.

Abram was still on the mountain where he could see all four directions. God told Abram to carefully look all four directions. Then God reminded Abram of the promise that He had given to Abram in Genesis 12:1, “Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you.’” Abram had separated from the last family member with Lot leaving and moving toward Sodom. God immediately reminded him of the promise that God had given to him by telling Abram to look in all four directions. Then God said, “All the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.” Here we see that God reminded Abram of the fact that this was the land that He had promised would belong to the descendants of Abram forever. This promise is still in effect because God said that it was forever. This promise means that the day will come in the future when the descendants of Abram will again occupy all of the land that God promised to him.

In addition, God reminded Abram about the promise that He had made to Abram about his descendants. This promise in Genesis 13:16 says, “And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.” Here we see that God reminded Abram that the number of his descendants would become so great that they could not be counted. God has also kept this promise about the number of descendants that Abram would have. Then God told Abram to walk through the land so that he could personally see the land that God had promised to his descendants. One of the places to which Abram moved his tent and went there was to the area called Hebron. There we see that Abram built another altar to the Lord. Here we see the growing faith of Abram as he made certain that the first thing he did when he got to this place was to build an altar. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how the faith of Abram grew as he was learning to walk by faith. This is a key lesson that every child needs to learn as he or she grows if that child is going to walk in faith. This will help our children in this learning process as they learn to walk by faith in their own lives. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children by your own life what it means to walk by faith.

The Lord Allowed Lot to be Taken as a Captive

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the way that Abram grew in faith as he learned to walk with God. In this way we also help them learn to walk by faith in their own lives. In this topic we will see that Lot moved into the city of Sodom and was taken captive when that city was conquered.

In Genesis 14:1-4 we read, “And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.” The land called “Shinar” means country of two rivers. It was the original name by which Babylon was called. Ellasar was a city-state in the region of Babylon about 29 miles east of the city of Ur of the Chaldeans. The land called “Elam” was an area east of the area of Babylon and northeast of the lower Tigris River.

We see that the fourth kingdom was the title given to an area that was known as the nations. The word translated “nations” is used 558 times in the Old Testament and is translated by the words, nations, heathen, Gentiles and people. The first uses are in Genesis 10. In Genesis 10:5 we read, “From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.” It is used twice in this verse – the first time translated Gentiles and the second time nations. In Genesis 10:31-32 we read, “These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations. These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.” In these verses it is translated nations all three times. As a result, we are uncertain of the exact area of the fourth nation referred to by this word.

The five cities which they conquered were all in the lower Jordan Valley in the general area where the Dead Sea is now located. Many people think that the Valley of Siddim was the large point of land that sticks out into the Dead Sea on the east side and that it may have been connected all of the way across so that the Dead Sea was smaller at that time. These five cities were united together by their need to try and protect themselves from the nations to the east. However, when these nations conquered them it meant that they were forced to pay taxes (tribute) to these nations from the east. They paid these taxes for twelve years. Then in the thirteenth year they decided to rebel against Chedorlaomer and did not send the tribute money to Chedorlaomer and the other kings.

That resulted in Chedorlaomer and the kings coming to invade that area with a large army the next year. Genesis 14:5-7 says, “In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by

the wilderness. Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar.” These armies from the east started their attacks against some of the other cities in Canaan before coming to the area of the Dead Sea. The word translated “Rephaim” means giants. This word is also used in II Samuel to speak of the sons of Goliath as well as in a number of other places. In fact the word is used a total of 25 times in various places mostly in the area of the Philistines along the Mediterranean Sea. The armies of the east began their attacks in Ashtoreth-karnaim which means the city of Ashtoreth between two mountain peaks. This area was on the east side of Jordan in the area of Bashan near the Sea of Galilee.

The location of Ham (which means hot or sunburned) was probably also on the east side of the Jordan River but the location is not definitely known. The people living in that area were known as the Zuzim. Shaveh Kiriathaim means the plain of two cities and these cities were where the people of Emim lived. The word “Horites” means the people who lived in caves. They lived on Mount Seir west of the cities of the Jordan Valley. This later became the area of Edom where the descendants of Esau later lived. Chedorlaomer and his armies continued on south to El Paran which was near the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea and nearly 100 miles south of the Jordan Valley. Then they came back north and attacked En Mishpat (Kadesh) and the whole surrounding area. They also attacked the city of Hazezon Tamar where the Amorites were located. This city was to the north and west of the cities in the lower Jordan Valley.

However, the five cities in the lower Jordan Valley realized that these armies of the east were attacking all of the nearby areas so there would be no help for the five cities when the armies of the east began to attack them. As a result, the five cities of the lower Jordan Valley gathered their armies and went out to fight against these armies from the east. Genesis 14:8-12 says, “And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains. Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. They also took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.”

Here we see that the five kings of the cities in the lower Jordan Valley met the armies of the east under the command of Chedorlaomer at the Valley of Siddim when they went out to fight them to protect their cities. We said earlier in this topic that the Valley of Siddim was probably where the land sticks out into the Dead Sea on the east side and that it may have gone all the way to the western shore so that the Dead Sea was not as large at that time. That would have meant that the area south of peninsula was a part of the lower Jordan Valley and the Valley of Siddim. We read that the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits (tar pits). The material in these pits could be used to seal things. In the other two places where this word is used we read in Genesis 11:3, “Then they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.” Here we see that word used for the mortar that held the bricks together on the Tower of Babel. Then Exodus 2:3 says, “But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with

asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank." This speaks of the ark in which Moses was placed as a baby. The material from these pits could be used both to cause bricks to stick together and to waterproof the ark in which Moses was placed.

When the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, all of the men scattered. Some were killed in the valley or fell in the asphalt pits while the rest fled to the mountains. As a result, it was no problem for the kings of the east to capture the cities because their fighting men were either killed or had gone into hiding. We see that these armies of the east took all of the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah. The word translated "goods" meant anything of value including gold, silver, possessions, animals and anything else that had any value. The word translated "provisions" meant any kinds of food supplies that they found in the cities. As a result, nothing of value was left in these cities. This word is used several times in Genesis chapters 41-47 to speak of the food in the land of Egypt that Joseph gathered during the seven years of plenty so that there was food in the years of famine.

We also see that they took Lot who was then living in the city of Sodom. We said in an earlier topic that Abram walked by faith while Lot walked by sight. Now we see the first consequences of that choice. Notice the choices of Lot. Genesis 13:10-11 says, "And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other." Lot made his first choice by what he saw. Then Genesis 13:12-13 says, "Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord." Here we see the second choice that Lot made. He moved into the middle of the plain where the five cities were located and pitched his tent near Sodom. Then here in Genesis 14:12 we read, "They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed." Here we see the third choice of Lot. He had moved out of his tent and was now living in the city of Sodom even though the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful.

These continuing choices are going to cost Lot everything he had over the coming years. Here we see that Lot and all of his goods were taken by the armies of the east when they captured the city of Sodom. As a result, Lot, his family and all of his goods were taken captive by these armies from the east. They were on their way to lives of slavery and had temporarily lost everything. Here we see an example of some of the consequences of wrong choices. However, we will see that the consequences got much worse for Lot and his family. II Corinthians 5:7-8 says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how the life of Lot shows that the consequences of sin are the result of choosing to walk by sight instead of walking by faith. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain why it is important to learn to walk by faith.

The Lord Allowed Abraham to Rescue Lot

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why choosing to walk by faith will help them and others to avoid the consequences of sin. In this topic we will see that God is a God of mercy and allowed Abram to rescue Lot so that he had another opportunity to choose to walk by faith.

Genesis 14:13-16 says, “Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram. Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.” Lot and the people of Sodom had been taken as captives by the kings of the east.

However, we see that one person escaped and came and told Abram that Lot had been captured by the armies of the east. We see that Abram is called Abram, the Hebrew. This is the first time that anyone is called a Hebrew in the Old Testament. However, we will see that in the future that the descendants of Abram called themselves Hebrews and also the people of other nations called them Hebrews. The next recorded time this name is used is when the wife of Potiphar said in Genesis 39:14, “...she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, ‘See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice.’” At that time Abram was living by a large grove of terebinth trees owned by Mamre. This was in the area of the city of Hebron. Mamre, Eshcol and Aner were brothers and they were friends and allies of Abram so they also joined him to help rescue Lot.

Abram had 318 trained servants that had been born in his own house. Mamre and the men related to he and his brothers also joined with Abram to try and help him rescue Lot. Abram had trained his servants because they had to help Abram protect his possessions and flocks from groups like the army of men that had come from the east. Abram and those with him had to travel more than 150 miles before they caught up with the armies of the east. Abram was a wise fighter so he divided those with him into smaller groups. Then they attacked during the middle of the night. Gideon used a similar tactic to destroy the Midianites several hundred years later in the book of Judges. Then they chased those who remained as far as the city of Hobab which was north of Damascus. They were able to rescue all of the hostages that had been captured by the armies of the east. Abram and his army were able to rescue both the people and their goods when they defeated these armies from the east. Then Abram and his army brought back all of the people and goods that had been taken from Gomorrah

Genesis 14:17-20 says, “And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh

(that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him. Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: 'Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand.' And he gave him a tithe of all." The king of Sodom was quick to go out and meet Abram when he came back after he had rescued Lot and the rest of the people from the city of Sodom. This is the only place where the Valley of Shaveh (King's Valley) is mentioned. However, many think this valley is the Kidron Valley just east of the present city of Jerusalem. This valley is a small valley that goes between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.

The Lord gave Abram a very special blessing. Melchizedek, the king of Salem (Jerusalem) is also mentioned in these verses. Since this valley was only a few hundred feet from the city of Salem, we see that Melchizedek brought out bread and wine for Abram and the king of Sodom. In addition to being the King of Salem, these verses tell us that Melchizedek was also the priest of God Most High. Psalm 110 verses 1 and 4 say, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool'... The Lord has sworn and will not relent, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.'" Then Psalm 110:4 is quoted twice in Hebrews 7:17 and 21. Before these two quotes, Hebrews 7:14-16 says, "For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life." As a result, we see that Melchizedek is an Old Testament picture of Christ and some even think it was an Old Testament appearance of Christ.

We see that Melchizedek also gave a blessing to Abram. Melchizedek said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." Here we see that in the blessing Melchizedek pointed out the fact that this blessing of Abram was in the name of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth. The fact that Melchizedek pointed out the fact that the true and living God is the possessor of heaven and earth and the One from whom this blessing for Abram came made it clear that that Melchizedek was not talking about any of the false gods of the Canaanites.

Melchizedek also gave a blessing to the God Most High because of the fact that He had delivered the enemies into the hand of Abram. The armies of the kings of the east were large armies. However, the size of the armies did not matter to God. Even though Abram only had 318 trained servants plus Mamre, Eshcol and Aner and probably a few servants with them, God had given Abram a complete victory over the kings of the east and all of their armies. Many years later Jonathan, the son of Saul said in I Samuel 14:6, "Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor, 'Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us. For nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few.'" The Lord does not need a great army to conquer a great army. As Jonathan said, the God Most High can use many or few. He is not limited the way that we are as people. Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tithe of all. This tithe was to show that Abram worshiped the true and living God of whom Melchizedek was a priest and was much greater than Abram was.

Genesis 14:21-24 then says, "Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, 'Give me the persons, and

take the goods for yourself.’ But Abram said to the king of Sodom, ‘I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich’— except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.’” The king of Sodom then made an offer to Abram. He said, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.” Here we see that the king of Sodom was offering all of the possessions of the city of Sodom to Abram as a gift if he would give the people of Sodom back to the king.

This sounds like a generous offer but it was really an attempt by Satan to deceive Abram. We will see in a few chapters just how evil the king and people of Sodom were. Abram had made a promise to God before Abram ever when after the kings of the east and their armies that he would take nothing from the king of Sodom when they returned. He had promised God that he would not even take a string or the strap of a sandal from the king of Sodom because he knew that then the king of Sodom would then say that he had made Abram rich. Abram realized that everything that he had was given to him by the Lord. He wanted to bring glory to God by this decision. I Corinthians 10:31 says, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” That is why he said that the only thing that they would take was the food that his servants had eaten as they traveled back to this place after they had defeated the kings of the east. The food they had eaten in those few days was gone and Abram wanted nothing more.

At the same time Abram also recognized that Aner, Eshcol and Mamre had to make their own decision about whether they would take anything from the king of Sodom. As a result, Abram told the king of Sodom that it was between the king and those men whether they wanted to take a portion of the things that they had captured when they defeated the kings of the east. We see that the king of Sodom had to talk to those men separately as that was their decision to make. In I Thessalonians 5:22 we read, “Abstain from every form of evil.” Abram may have known that those men needed some of the things that they had captured because of the fact that they had to leave their own work for a period of time to go along with Abram. As a result, Abram wanted to leave that decision to them.

Abram was learning to walk with God by faith. He was learning to look to God for the blessing of the God Most High. Hebrews 11:9-10 says, “By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Abram was developing an eternal view and not just a focus on the things of this world. In the same way we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to walk by faith. That will only happen as we provide an example of faith by our own lives. As a result, Abram gives us two important examples by his life about what it means to put God first and not be deceived by the traps that Satan uses to trick us. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children how to walk by faith.