

GENESIS:

A Study In

BEGINNINGS



13 Lessons

Prepared by:

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TABLE of CONTENTS

"A study of Genesis"

Lessons	Topics	Pages
1	Introduction to the Study of Genesis	1-2
2	In the Beginning, God	3-4
3	The Beginning of Heaven and Earth	5-7
4	The Beginning of Living Creatures	8-9
5	The Beginning of Man	10-11
6	The Beginning of Marriage and the Home	12-13
7	The Beginning of Sin & Rebellion of Man	14-16
8	The Beginning of Religion	17-18
9	Beginning Anew	19-21
10	The Beginning of Nations	22-24
11	The Beginning of the Nation of promise	25-26
12	The Beginning of the Twelve Tribes of Israel	27-29
13	A Review Test	30

Lesson One

“Introduction to the Study of Genesis”

The Bible is referred to as “the book of books.” The more it is studied and understood, the more such a title seems appropriate. Genesis is one of the sixty-six books of the Bible that is not only interesting, but is arresting to the mind of man. It has been said of Martin Luther that he lectured on Genesis for eleven years. What does this book contain to claim such an interest? As the name indicates, it is a book of “beginnings.” The Jews gave it this name from the first word in the book—“bereshith.” When the Old Testament was translated into the Greek language, the translators used “genesis” to identify this book. The Latin Vulgate and our English versions have all carried this title over.

AUTHOR AND DATE OF WRITING

The first five books of the Old Testament are often referred to by the following terms: “The Books of Law,” “The Torah,” “The Pentateuch,” etc. All evidence points toward God using Moses to write, not only Genesis, but the other four books of Law. The following evidence is appealed to in order to confirm Moses’ authorship:

- 1) All Jewish parties have been unanimous in accepting the Mosaic authorship.
- 2) Statements in these and other Old Testament books indicate such. (Exo. 17:14; 24:4-8; 34:27; Num. 33:1-2; Deut. 31:9, 22; Josh. 1:7-8; 8:31; 23:6; 24:26; 1 Kings 2:3; 8:9, 53; 2 Kings 10:31; 11:12; 1 Chron. 16:40; 2 Chron. 12:1; Ezra 3:2; 6:18; Neh. 1:7; 8:1; Dan. 9:11).
- 3) Moses was the one through whom God spoke to the people in those days: “*as the Lord commanded Moses*” and “*The Lord spake unto Moses saying*” were constantly used to indicate this.
- 4) The New Testament adds its weight of evidence to confirm that God used Moses to write these five books. (Matt. 19:4-8; Mk. 12:18-27; Lk. 16:31; 24:27; Jn. 1:45; 5:46-47; Acts 15:21-25; Rom. 10:5; Heb. 13:12-13).
- 5) Moses had all the qualifications needed to be used by God to write these things down:
 - a) He was guided of God in his revelations to the people (Num. 12:1-8).
 - b) He was educated by the Egyptians, could write, knew social and religious customs, as well as the official and general practices of the courts of Egypt.
 - c) He lived for 40 years in the wilderness area through which he led the children of Israel from Egypt to Palestine.
- 6) The unity of the books, as well as the similarity of language, would indicate a common authorship.
- 7) There is no constructive and reasonable evidences to point to anyone else.

The dating of Genesis becomes a fairly easy matter once the Mosaic authorship is accepted. If the chronological information that we have access to is anywhere close to being correct, the date of writing would have to be around the 15th century B.C. The time would be during the Wilderness Wanderings after having left Egypt.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

From a reading of the book, it should be obvious that it is not to be considered as a general history of mankind, but only a brief historical thread into which the beginning of all things could be placed. Genesis is very necessary to serve as an answer to the questions about the origin of the universe, man, sin, religion, etc. And then, it gives a quick overview of the progress of mankind up to the choosing of a special nation of people to serve God's purposes. The book is easily divided into two main sections:

- a) Genesis 1-11—From Creation to the call of Abraham.
 - 1) Man is put in his cosmic setting.
 - 2) It shows him his peculiar uniqueness.
 - 3) It explains man's wonders as well as his flaws.
- b) Genesis 12-50—The early beginnings of the chosen nation of Israel.
 - 1) With Abraham as the father (beginner) of the chosen nation.
 - 2) With Isaac and Jacob.
 - 3) With the 12 sons of Jacob becoming the 12 tribes of Israel.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

Genesis serves as a background to the history of mankind, but in a special way to the background of the Israelite nation—whom God would use to bless all mankind. The purpose of the genealogical listings is to trace a lineage from Adam, through his son Seth, down to Abraham as the father of the Israelite nation.

Genesis contains the only authentic information which has ever yet reached the world of the origin and dignity of mankind, and the conditions under which man began his career on this earth. But it also gives an explanation of the existence of sin and misery and the plan of God to deal with such.

Continual confirmations have been uncovered over the years that show the accuracy of the Bible—from discoveries of all scientific fields. While so-called scientists may disagree with some statements in the Bible, the facts of scientific findings have all been in harmony with its statements and contents.

The brevity of the Bible is amazing! And the greatest illustration of its brevity is found in the early part of the book of Genesis as it deals with astronomical things in such brief statement of facts! The human mind desires more, much more, and is challenged to hunt and search to find more of the details involved in these first few chapters of this book.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Every book of the Bible is a challenge and a joy to read and meditate upon. But the book of Genesis possibly challenges us more than any other book because of the matter that it deals with in the early chapters. We hope you will look forward to this brief study of such an important book of the Bible.

Lesson Two

“In the Beginning, God....”

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear....” (1 Peter 3:15). The inspired Apostle Peter is calling on God’s people to stand up and be counted! Be prepared to let people know, not only what you believe, but why you believe it. We are living in a society that is becoming more and more atheistic in their beliefs that will require an effort on our part to be trained and equipped to deal with their arguments and ridicules. While the Bible may call such disbelievers, “fools,” it may not be appropriate for us to do so. Rather, we need to find ways to enlighten them, challenge them, and to encourage them to search diligently for the right answers. We need to confirm our own belief in the Bible as being the inspired Word of God. And then, we need to live consistently with its teachings. And finally, be ready to discuss intelligently and kindly with those who claim to be disbelievers.

IN THE BEGINNING

To what does “in the beginning” have reference? It is believed that it has reference to the beginning of “time” and “history.” Time and history did not exist before the “beginning!” They have a beginning and will have an ending. The Apostle John uses this expression also in John 1:1: ***“In the beginning was the Word....”*** Before there were men, animals, plant life, the heavenly objects or an earth, there was “someone” but not “some things.” God’s creation had a beginning and will also have an ending (2 Peter 3:10).

IN THE BEGINNING, GOD.....

In the beginning before there was “anything” existing, there was “someone!” That someone was God! He has always existed—He is eternal, everlasting, with no beginning or ending (Hebrews 7:3; 9:14; Romans 1:20; 16:26; Isaiah 43:13). While He created time; yet, time is not a factor with God (2 Peter 3:8). He is not limited by time nor space—He is everywhere present (Psalm 139:7-10; Jeremiah 23:23-24). God is not a super man, nor limited like man, but all powerful. His power is what we call “limitless!” (Numbers 23:19; Matthew 16:17; Romans 1:20). God is a Spirit (John 4:23-24). He cannot be seen by man. But to reject God simply because we cannot see Him would be very inconsistent of us. We cannot see time, but we do not deny its existence. Unfortunately, man wants to see the God he worships, so he has created idols that he can see. Then, man attributes human attributes to his gods such as: likes, dislikes, weaknesses, prejudices, etc. The Apostle Paul reminded the Athenians that the true God does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is His nature like gold or silver or stone (Acts 17:24, 29). And as Jesus pointed out, He is to be worshipped with man’s spirit (John 4:24). But there is a factor that we must understand about God. He is often described in terminology that man can grasp and understand, but we must keep in mind that such language is only accommodating us. He is Spirit, not flesh and blood like us (Matthew 16:17). If God is Spirit, how can we prove that

He does exist? And the answer is simple, the same way that we prove anything exist that cannot be seen—by evidences of its existence. God has left endless evidences unto man for his existence. Psalm 19:1-3 states it clearly, ***“The Heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.”*** The question of God’s existence comes down to a choice between two things: An eternal God or an eternal non-living, non-intelligent matter. So which of the two makes sense? Does our universe shows signs of intelligence, purpose, design, planning, etc. If so, there must have been a planner behind all of this. This is the reason why an unbeliever is called “foolish,” because the evidence for God’s existence is everywhere.

THE TRIUNE GOD

Has God been alone for all eternity, or did He have someone with which to fellowship? The God of the Bible is portrayed as triune in Nature! The term is short for Tri-Unity—that is, three-in-one. Deity is pictured to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So, God was not lonely, nor in need of the creation of all these things. The following passages show this concept: (John 17:5, 24; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:20; Titus 1:2, etc.). Deity is ascribed to all three. They work in total harmony to accomplish the plans of God. The triune nature of God is also seen immediately in the first chapter of Genesis: (1:2; 1:26, 27). Even the very name for God in the first few chapters is plural (Elohim) with a singular verb.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Before time and history began, there was God—the Eternal One! He is described as the ***“I am that I am!”*** (Exodus 3:14; John 8:58). While it is easy to understand such thoughts, it is not easy to envision such because we are finite, human, exist in time and place. We had a beginning. To us, all things have to have a beginning in order to exist! But God did not have a beginning—he has always existed.

What a privilege we have had that we could come to be exposed to and to come in fellowship with the true God of heaven. While in the minds of men there are many gods and lords, we have come to know that there is only one God and Father and one Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 8:4-6). How blessed we are to know Him!

Lesson Three

“The Beginning of Heaven and Earth”

When did time begin? When did the heavens and earth come into existence? The two would seem to be tied together. The expression “in the beginning” carries with it the concept that they had a starting time. The meaning of the term “create” is to bring something into existence that had not existed before—thus, a beginning! In some sense, time began when the heavens and earth were created! ***“From the beginning of the creation”*** (Mk. 10:6; 2 Peter 3:4; Rev. 3:14) is the way the Lord expressed it in these references.

The very concept of creation (bringing something into existence that did not exist before) says that “matter” is not eternal. And all factual evidence points to this fact of creation (having a beginning point).

- a) Our universe is expanding outward from a beginning point.
- b) Our universe is slowly running down indicating a beginning also.
- c) Our universe shows signs of intelligent design by a designer.
- d) Only life can exist on our earth, which speaks volumes concerning a designer.
- e) The inability of “chance” to logically explain our orderly universe is obvious.
- f) And, without the concept of creation by God, there is no meaning or purpose to our existence on earth.

THE FIRST CONDITIONS OF THE HEAVENS & EARTH

What were the heavens and earth like when first brought into existence? There are two approaches given in answer to this question.

a) It was complete and perfect for what God designed it. But a time came when (for some reason unknown) the conditions were drastically changed. How much lapse of “time” was involved is not indicated at all before God began to bring order out of “chaos.” Thus, Genesis 1:2 is supposed to be the beginning of the “reworking” or “renovation” of the chaotic heavens and earth. This theory is felt necessary to help explain the extremely long time for the earth’s existence as calculated by some scientists. But it also helps to explain some passages that identifies Satan as the ruler of this world that may have brought about the chaotic condition.

b) Genesis 1:1 is a general statement of bringing matter into existence and the work God did on it over a period of 6 days. At this point in my study, I would prefer to believe this approach from what evidences we have from Scripture. Genesis seems to start with the general and then come back and give more specifics. If so, Genesis 1:2-31 is giving the processes that was involved in the over-all creation of heaven and earth. Genesis 2 does start over again and gives more detail about the creation processes—especially in regards to man. The only mention of time in connection with creation is that it was done in six days—not six days and a previous time at another effort at creating.

BRINGING ORDER TO HEAVEN AND EARTH

Two words in particular are used to indicate the work of God—**Bara** and **Asah**. Bara (Genesis 1:1, 21, 27; 2:3-4; 5:1, etc.) is to create something out of nothing and Asah (Genesis 1:7, 16, 25, 26, 31; 2:3, 4; 5:1, etc.) is to form or make something out of existing matter. All three words are used in Isaiah 43:7 with reference to man's beginning. The phrase, "*let there be...*" (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15, 20, 24, 26) seems to be used in connection with both Bara and Asah as a continuation of the creative act or forming or making process.

As God began to work on creating, forming and making of the heavens and earth, it seems to have been done in steps.

1. Creating the raw materials of the universe. Out of this matter, all other matter could be formed or fashioned as God desired. "*The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep...*" Things are now ready to be finalized by God.

2. Light was created in the midst of darkness. (Gen. 1:3-5). A separation took place so there would be a clear distinction between the two. The Light was called Day. The Darkness was called Night.

3. An expanse or "space" was brought into existence. (Gen. 1:6-8). It was done by separating the waters from the waters. The Sun, Moon, and Stars may have already been a part of the original process of creation, but made functional on the 4th day of creation. The expanse was to be called Heaven.

4. Dry Land was brought into existence. (Gen. 1:9-10). It was evidently already there, but it was covered entirely by water. God caused a separation to take place so that dry land appeared and the waters were gathered into one place. The Dry Land was called Earth. The Waters were called Seas.

5. Vegetation and seeds were brought into existence. (Gen. 1:11-13). Grass, vegetables, plants, trees of all kinds were brought into existence with seed in them to reproduce after their kind. This is referred to as life, but unconscious life that was brought into existence.

6. God next made lights to be in the heavens. (Gen. 1:14-19). God causes the Sun, Moon, and Stars to come into existence, or caused them to give forth their light. Purpose of these bodies was to separate the day from the night on a daily basis. The Sun to give light for daytime and the Moon to give light for the nighttime....as well as the stars. They were also to be for signs and seasons as well.

To this point in the narrative, we have the beginnings of the Heavens and Earth. There is still the need for "conscious" life to be placed on the earth. For after all, that is what this creation is all about—especially for human life. Creation is not describable scientifically because it is a different process with which we are not familiar. Conclusions drawn based on the processes of nature now may not be valid in regards to the creation process.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. What does the word, “Genesis,” mean?**
- 2. What is the difference between these two words: Make & Create?**
- 3. What other book in the Bible begins with the phrase: “In the Beginning....”?**
- 4. What was the condition of the earth when first brought into existence?**
- 5. How long was it in this condition?**
- 6. What necessary things were done to prepare the earth for man’s existence?**
- 7. In what two senses is the word “Day” used in Genesis 1-2?**
- 8. What did God call the expanse (firmament)?**
- 9. What did God do to bring about dry land?**
- 10. How did God provide for a continued existence of food for man and living creatures?**
- 11. Why were the lights placed in the heavens?**
- 12. What great distinction was made between the two lights?**
- 13. What is significant about the creative process?**
- 14. What is important for us to know about creation?**

Lesson Four

“The Beginning of Living Creatures”

God’s creative process is coming close to the end. There is only “living” “conscious” creatures left to be brought into existence. Both words (Bara & Asah) are used to describe their creative process. There are three crucial points of creation:

- 1) **Genesis 1:1.** The creation of Heaven and Earth out of nothing. Then, the continued creative action in the form of “forming” or “making” is noted.
- 2) **Genesis 1:21.** The creation of “conscious” life for living creatures. Then, the continued creative action in the way of “forming” or “making” is noted also. Such brought water, land, and air living things into their full being.
- 3) **Genesis 1:27.** The creation of the “conscious” life for man. Then, the continued creative action in the way of “forming” or “making” is noted a third time. The more detail description of man’s creation is given in Genesis 2:7, 18-25.

A difference was made between “non-conscious” life and “conscious” life. But also there was another distinction between those who have conscious life—those with lower consciousness and those with higher consciousness.

THE ORDER OF LIVING CREATURES

All has been done thus far to make life possible for living creatures. It is now time for them to be brought into existence. God deals first with the lower conscious life and later with man himself.

- 1) **Creating living creatures in the waters. (Genesis 1:20-22; 9:10; Acts 10:12).** These needed to be plentiful for God’s future purposes, so the waters “teemed” with swarms of living creatures. Plant life seems to have been the basic food of man and the lower creatures until after the flood (Genesis 9:3). The conscious creatures are now definitely designed for our food.
- 2) **Creating living creatures in the air. (Genesis 1:20-23).** All kinds of birds with which to bless man’s existence. Each was to bring forth after their kind. God commanded them to be fruitful and multiply.
- 3) **Creating living creatures on the land. (Genesis 1:24-25).** All kinds of creatures that live on the land—both cattle as well as wild beasts. Again, it emphasized that each would bring forth after its kind.

It is interesting to note that the Apostle Paul made this same distinction about living creatures. He said that all flesh is not the same. Man’s flesh is different from the rest of living

creatures. There is also a distinction between the flesh of animals, the flesh of fish, and the flesh of birds. (1 Corinthians 15:35-39).

SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT LIVING CREATURES

The Flood destroyed all living creatures on the earth and those that fly in the air unless Noah took a pair of them into the Ark in order to start the process all over again. With the basic groupings, it was possible to begin again as at the beginning of Creation. The evolving process is always within their kind, not crossing kind. The fossil records help to show this conclusively. So, all of the living creatures that presently live on land and in the air came from the ones that were in the Ark.

We are continually amazed at the variety of living creatures God has placed on this planet. They have all kinds of shapes, sizes, natures, and color. Some of which can be tamed and others not so easily tamed. Some live on grass or vegetation, while others live on meat. Some are for serving man, as well as some also for food. And it would seem obvious that all are for man's welfare and enrichment. God gives us all things to richly enjoy (1 Timothy 6:17). Some try to forbid the eating of certain foods, but they are wrong and to be marked as false teachers (1 Timothy 4:1-5).

It says that the waters were to bring forth living things. With sufficient instruments, 30,000 tiny creatures can be seen in a single drop of water! Each is a perfect specimen. Also, it seems that fish must reproduce into the thousands so that man's need for food is always there. All of this shows the great power of God, as well as His great wisdom. But it also shows the way that God providentially cares for His highest order of creatures—man!

IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) Discuss the differences between “Bara” and “Asah” in the creative process of living creatures.
- 2) Discuss the idea of the evolving of living creatures, and yet with their “kind.”
- 3) What have you learned about the fossil records from the school studies?
- 4) Discuss why God created so much variety in living creatures.
- 5) Discuss why the difference in kinds of flesh.
- 6) Discuss the concept of why the use of Create in the three different areas.

Lesson Five

“The Beginning of Man”

We are now ready to look briefly at the “crowning” of God’s creation—the ***“apple of His eye”*** (Psalm 8:5; 17:8; Hebrews 2:7)—man in all his glory and beauty. The Psalmists sang praises to God, not only for how man was made a little lower than the angels, but crowned him with glory and honor. And then, gave him dominion over all of God’s creatures. Man is certainly differentiated from the lower living creatures. But, the great honor given to the creation of man is that he is made in the image of God, which was said of no other (Genesis 1:26-27). A second and more detailed creation of man is recorded in Genesis 2:7, 18-22).

THE ORDER OF MAN’S BEGINNING

The sequence of the creation of man (both male and female) is given in two locations (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7, 18-22). In the second account a distinction is made between that part of man that was created (something from nothing) and that part that was formed or made (from existing matter).

1. Man is a created being. (Genesis 1:27). In some way he was created in God’s Image or Likeness. It would seem obvious that this is what makes man different from the lower creatures. Some suggest that this difference is in his **intelligence, immortal soul or spirit, and his moral and spiritual nature.**

2. The forming or making of man. (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7, 15-22). Not only did God create something about man, but he also made and formed him as well. Genesis 2:7 states that man was formed out of that which already existed—the dust of the ground. Then, when God breathed into his nostrils the breath (or spirit) of life, man became a living being (entity).

3. The forming or making of woman. (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18-22). In creating the lower creatures, God provided a way of reproduction which entailed a companion(s) for living creatures. As Adam named all the animals, he observed that he alone had no companion like himself (Genesis 2:20). God put Adam to sleep and operated on him. He took one of his ribs out and made or formed another human that could be a companion for man and be able to reproduce after their kind (Genesis 2:21-22).

SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT MAN’S BEGINNING

Man was created and formed as a triune being (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The indication is that they were created full-grown. They were created male and female—differentiation made between. Thus, man became a most beautiful representation of Deity. He was made in order to communicate and fellowship with God—to relate to God as no other creature can do. He alone was made to be susceptible to moral and spiritual influences.

Man's superiority is seen in the giving of dominion over the creation of God. All are made subject to him (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 8:4-6). This privilege also brings with it the responsibility to care for God's creation (Genesis 2:19-20; Psalm 115:16).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

All creation is completed and good (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). All are functioning as designed by God. They all reflect His genius. Everything glorifies the Maker. But God only gave us the very bare essentials of His creative acts. They are not detailed out. Yet, the truth was factuality stated.

God worked at creation for six days and then rested on the seventh day (Genesis 2:1-2). He was not tired because He is God (Isaiah 40:28). He ceased because he had finished His creation. This information is the only reason for a 7-day week. Days, months, and years are regulated by the heavenly bodies, but not the week.

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. What is the meaning of "Adam?"**
- 2. What is the meaning of "Woman?"**
- 3. What is the meaning of "Eve?"**
- 4. How was man made in the image of God?**
- 5. What was made given to eat?**
- 6. What four rivers help to identify where the Garden of Eden was located?**
- 7. How was the ground first watered?**
- 8. What is a living soul?**
- 9. Why was Adam provided a help-meet?**
- 10. Why did God rest on the 7th day?**
- 11. Should man feel responsible for the world around him? Why?**
- 12. What else besides man was formed from the dust of the ground?**
- 13. When did God say that His creation was "very good?"**

Lesson Six

“The Beginning of Marriage and the Home”

As Adam was naming the lower creatures, it became apparent that he did not have another human like himself to serve as a companion (Genesis 2:20). Imagine being Adam and observing all of God’s creation. Then, it dawns on you—“*I don’t have someone like me to be a helper suitable*” (NKJV). But that would not be the only factor involved in this absence of another human. All living creatures were designed to reproduce and had the means of doing so. But, it was not so with man! Thus, the creation of the woman was a necessity if man was to “***Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth***” (Genesis 1:28). God put man to sleep and created another human, but sufficiently different so that they would be capable of reproduction and complimentary to one another.

THE BEGINNING OF MARRIAGE

The next question that had to be dealt with was—will man be like the lower animals and reproduce indiscriminately, or will he be different? God’s answer was made quite clear at the very outset! The woman (Eve) was to be Adam’s “wife.” (Genesis 2:24). The Hebrew word is **ISHSHAH**. It is translated as woman, wife, or female. The context determines which one to use to translate the term. The concept seems obvious—not only in this context—but everywhere else the word is used in the Old Testament. Another factor that helps to pin this down is when the New Testament quotes this passage (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5) it also uses the word for wife **GUNE**. Still another factor that helps with this understand is the use of the possessive pronoun “his.” “***For this cause shall a man leave HIS father and HIS mother and be JOINED to HIS wife.***” It is Adam’s wife—not someone else’s wife. And this is the way it is clearly understood by Jesus in His remarks in Matthew 19:3-9. He even makes a remark that nails down a term even clearer when He said: “***What God has JOINED together, let not man separate***” (19:6). The man and the woman are joined together by God when they commit themselves to be faithful to one another in a marital relationship.

THE BEGINNING OF THE HOME

Not only is the man and woman to be joined together in the covenant of marriage, but they are to become “one!” (Genesis 2:24). They become a separate “unit.” Another phrase that makes this clear is: “***For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother....***” The idea of leaving is to make their own “home”—their own unit separate from their parents. Then, in Genesis 4:1-2, it clearly indicates that through this arrangement of marriage that children are brought into this world.

THE ORDER OF THE HOME

We have come to recognize that a home is ideally made up of a husband-father and a wife-mother with children. They constitute their own separate unit from all other units in the world. They manage and run their own home. But there needs to be order in that home and God has given the instructions for such:

1. The husband-father is to be the leader (head) of the home. (Genesis 3:16; Ephesians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 11:3, 5, etc.). The man was made first (1 Timothy 2:13) which gives him priority. The woman was made from the man (1 Corinthians 11:8) and for the man (1 Corinthians 11:9).

2. The wife-mother is to be in the submissive role in the home. (Genesis 3:16; Ephesians 5:22, 24, 33, etc.). Even though she was made from man, the man is also dependent upon the woman for his continual existence (1 Corinthians 11:11-12; 1 Timothy 2:15).

3. The children are to honor, respect, and be obedient to their parents. (Ephesians 6:1-3). They are to also be taught and trained by their parents to know God and his Word for their lives (Deuteronomy 6:1-9).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

While Genesis gives just the bare essentials of what constitutes marriage and the home, it serves the purpose to show that such is not the invention of man, but the design of God, Himself. Therefore, such should be respected and followed!

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. How would you define marriage?**
- 2. What constitutes a home?**
- 3. Why did God create Adam first before Eve?**
- 4. What is a “helper suitable?”**
- 5. To what does the phrase “Joined to his wife” have reference?**
- 6. Of what significance is the use of the possessive pronoun “his?”**
- 7. How did Jesus understand these brief verses (Genesis 2:23-24) as recorded in Matthew 19:3-9?**
- 8. Who does the joining of the man and woman in marriage?**
- 9. In what situation are children to be brought into the world?**
- 10. How do we show we respect God’s arrangement of marriage and the home?**

Lesson Seven

“The Beginning of Sin & Rebellion of Man”

The innocent state of man was the ideal! He was made in the image of God. He was given a wife and companion of beauty. He was given dominion over all of God’s creation. He was completely surrounded by a perfect environment (Genesis 2:8; 3:8). He had constant fellowship with God (Genesis 3:8). He was given work that was enjoyable to do—to dress and keep the Garden (2:8, 15). He had everything that was needed for his welfare and happiness.

Man was expected by God to reciprocate his love by loving God in return by believing in His Word and be obedient to it (Deuteronomy 5:4-6). God did not make man a machine (mechanical). A machine can mechanically obey God and it is doing all that can be expected. But man is to love God, not mechanically, but out of choice. Here is the one thing created that has a choice whether to operate as God designed it—a unique creature in the universe. Man had to have something that would give him a choice between two things—obeying God or disobeying God. So, God placed a special tree among other trees in the Garden—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God did not create an evil tree, but He created a tree to give man a choice! Adam and Eve knew good for all that was around them was good. They also knew evil only as God told them (Genesis 2:17). But when they ate, they had experimental knowledge of evil in contrast to good. The sin was not in having the knowledge of good and evil, but of their making a wrong choice in disobeying God—which was evil!

THE BEGINNING OF SIN

Sin had a beginning like other things began. It has not existed eternally! So, when did sin have its beginning? It is generally believed that sin originated with Satan, who also had a choice, and rebelled against God out of pride (1 Timothy 3:6). And through deception was able to encourage other angels to rebelled against God also (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). They were cast from the presence of God to the earth (Revelation 12:7-9 (?)). The Devil has sinned since the beginning (1 John 3:8), and he is constantly trying to get others to rebelled against God. The beginning here could have reference to when God created all things. We are not told when God created the angels, but it is generally supposed that it was done before the creation of man. It would seem that man is caught between the two vying for his allegiance. But one thing for sure, Satan is not like God—he is not eternal in nature or existence! Satan is under the control of God in a sense and he is also limited in his means of deceiving and tempting man. But he has proven himself to be quite effective in his efforts!

THE PROCESS OF TEMPTATION

Satan has to allure man away from God. He used a serpent in the Garden in his approach and temptation. Did the Devil take on the physical appearance of a serpent? How did the Serpent talk to Adam, or was this the normal thing? There are a lots of questions and very few answers to satisfy our curiosity. He approached Eve, not Adam. He questioned God’s Word, and in reality

called God a liar. His approach to deceive is done through three basic avenues: (1) The lust of the flesh; (2) The lust of the eyes; and (3) The pride of life (Genesis 3:4-6; 1 John 2:16). He denied the threats of God and deceived Eve as to the real consequences of disobedience to God. Through disbelief of God's Word, she disobeyed. She gave to Adam and he ate also. Sin means to miss the mark. Man failed in being obedient to his Maker—he missed the mark! Man's faith was tested and he failed the test.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF YIELDING TO TEMPTATION

When Eve believed Satan's lie rather than God's truth, she conceived sin in her heart and acted it out when she ate. Their disobedience marked the beginning of sin and its continual consequences on the whole human race (Romans 5:12-19). But since we all have sinned (Romans 3:23), we are all in need of Redemption as well (Colossians 1:21). As a result of these things, God's judgment was pronounced upon: (1) The serpent (Genesis 3:14); (2) Satan (Genesis 3:15); (3) The Woman (Genesis 3:16); and (4) Adam (3:17-19). The consequences of their sin were far-reaching:

- 1. "You shall surely die." (Genesis 3:3).** Eventually they would die physically because they no longer would have access to the tree of life. They did die spiritually that day which is separation from God's fellowship. If they died physically in that estranged condition, they would be separated from God for all eternity (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).
- 2. "The eyes of both of them were opened." (Genesis 3:7).** They had been naked, but now they not only realized their nakedness, but were ashamed and self-condemned. There was a sense of guilt before God and in His presence. What once was a joy has now become a fearful thing. They knew they had done wrong.
- 3. They knew good and evil by experience. (Genesis 2:17).** The knowledge was not to their glory, but to their shame.
- 4. Special curses were placed upon both the man and woman. (Genesis 3:15-16).**
- 5. They were driven from the Garden. (Genesis 3:22-24).** While this was a bad consequence of their sin; yet, God was merciful to them by not letting them stay and eat from the tree of life and live forever in their condemned state. But neither did he leave man to perish in his sin. The promise of a redeemer was given to take away their curse (Genesis 3:15).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Fallen man was still man and had value in the sight of God (Genesis 9:6). He still bears the image of God that is worth saving. So, the rest of the story of man is telling how God was going to save man from the just penalty of death and still be just and uphold His Law. This is a fascinating story and well worth every man learning about it.

Lesson Eight

“The Beginning of Religion”

There was no religion in the Garden of Eden; just as there is no religion in Heaven. There is worship in heaven, just as there was worship in the Garden. There was a perfect relationship between the angels and God, just as there was a perfect relationship between man and God. There was no need of religion until man sinned! The meaning of the term “religion” is: *“To bind back again.”* When man sinned, he destroyed that perfect relationship and came under the threat of eternal death away from God. If he was to escape that penalty and be bound back into a desirable relationship with his Maker, he had to turn around and believe and be obedient to God again. But what about man’s sins—how can the guilt and penalty be removed. There had to be some special things to be done in order to atone for the sins of man. God’s love for his creatures has provided the means of atoning for man’s sins in a just way and still upholding His Law. God’s love was actually shown by creating man with a choice—knowing he would be disobedient. He also revealed his love for man by telling us that He planned for man’s redemption even before He created us (Matthew 25:34; Ephesians 1:3-14, etc.). In the fullness of time He sent forth His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (Genesis 3:15; 1 John 2:2). How could God do this? Because He is Love (John 17:24; 1 John 4:8, 16). God delights in self-giving. True love is never selfish. True love is never satisfied until it expresses itself toward its object at real cost to self. God’s love is so abundant towards man that it calls for man’s returning of that love by choice and by being obedient to the Will of God in our lives (John 14:15).

THE NECESSITY FOR SACRIFICE FOR SIN

Jesus is the perfect sacrifice or sin-offering for mankind! (Hebrews 9:12). But the problem for man was—Jesus did not come (in time) to earth for hundreds of years. What does man do until Jesus would become that perfect sacrifice? God had that planned too! He initiated the concept of having an innocent animal’s life to be taken in the place of man, so that man could escape the just punishment he deserved. While the blood (the life) of an animal had no merit in and of itself to take away man’s sin (Hebrews 10:4), it became the representation of Jesus’ sacrifice that was able to take away man’s sin (Hebrews 9:23-26). Man had to be obedient to God in offering the sacrifice and trusting that God would forgive him when he obeyed.

This concept is illustrated in the first recorded attempts of man to seek God’s forgiveness through sacrifice (Genesis 4:1-7). An animal sacrifice for atonement is conclusive proof that true religion is of Divine origin. No man could have ever originated the idea. For upon what process of reasoning could he come to the conclusion that if he killed an innocent animal, that such would expiate his sin? It seems obvious that it is God (the offended) that must dictate the conditions and nature of the offering, not sinful man. This was to be done in harmony with the Will of God, not the whims and wishes or passions of sinful man. This explains why Abel’s sacrifice was accepted by God and Cain’s rejected. Both brought sacrifices to God in their worship offered to God. But one offered what God dictated, while the other offered what he thought God should accept (Hebrews 11:4; 9:22). God faced Cain with his disobedience and

called for his repentance. Turn around and do what you should have in the first place! In stead, he continued on in the way of sin and rebellion against God (Genesis 4:6-8). Cain becomes a picture of man without God. His line begins with rebellion, and then murder, and ends with Lamech praising murder.

THE MORAL AND POSITIVE NATURE OF RELIGION

Religion is a larger term than morality. A man can be moral, but not truly religious. Or, he can be religious, but not moral. True religion requires both “moral” and “positive” Laws or Principles. The “moral” is commanded because it is right; the “positive” is right because it is commanded by God! Moral commands are founded in the nature of things. The Positive is founded in the revealed Will of God. The Moral deals with man’s relationship to man, while the Positive deals with man’s relationship to God. The Ten Commandments can be divided in just such a fashion, as well as the two greatest commandments (Exodus 20; Matthew 22:37-39). Morality is based on reason, while the Positive is based on God’s stated Will which appeals more to our faith in Him. The Positive is right because God says so. Both are required to be pleasing to God. Morality is for man’s social nature, while the Positive is for man’s spiritual nature. One fits him for Heaven, while the other for society.

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. What is the meaning of Religion?**
- 2. Where did the idea of animal sacrifices come from and why?**
- 3. How is Religion different from just Worship?**
- 4. Why did God accept Abel’s sacrifice and not Cain’s?**
- 5. What is the two-fold concept of Religion?**
- 6. What is the purpose of “moral laws?”**
- 7. What is the purpose of “positive laws?”**
- 8. What makes our religion valid?**
- 9. Which of the two brothers do we identify with—Cain or Abel?**

Lesson Nine

“Beginning Anew”

The physical world when first created was pronounced as being very good by God (Genesis 1:31). God had made a perfect abode for man. The earth brought forth abundantly to provide for man's wants, comforts, and pleasures. There was no need to struggle for existence. It is conjectured by Geologists that believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God that there was a mild temperature existing throughout the earth, not like it is now. The reasons why they believe this are: (1) Finding the remains of certain plants that only grow in warm climates in real cold climates now; and (2) Finding huge animals frozen and preserved in such cold areas in which they could not possibly have lived. It was truly a world rich in plant and animal life from all indications.

The world before the great flood was evidently well populated. According to possible estimates (based on the longevity of life) the population could have been as much as two billion or greater. Conditions were very favorable for propagation. They lived longer, were stronger, and had greater vitality of body and mind. Climatic conditions, virgin soil, and unlimited riches could easily have played a big role in population explosion.

The civilization of the antediluvian world is believed to have arrived at a very high level. They were building cities early (Genesis 4:17). Musical instruments of the string and wind variety had been invented (Genesis 4:20-24). They were master craftsmen in brass and iron. This presupposes the mining, smelting, purifying, molding, and shaping of useful tools. Genesis 2:11-12 makes reference to fine gold and precious stones. And Noah was commanded to build an Ark of such a size that only within the last 50 years has any nation built one that size. This presupposes a considerable knowledge of mathematics, the possession and use of tools, and an advanced understanding of the art of building. Noah must have lived in a society much advanced. And evidences of high types of civilizations have been uncovered that would date back to the time of the flood. It truly seems that man had multiplied, become a great people, taken possession of the earth, and reached a high stage of civilization and culture.

But what about the religion of the old world? While man had developed in one direction, religion went the other. It was a steady course of moral decay and spiritual degeneracy. Polygamy began early in the generation of Cain, as well as murder and violence. The Bible tells us that the intermarriage of the godly line with the ungodly line is what brought about mankind's downfall. The "sons of God" married the "daughters of men" and produced exceedingly wicked men (Genesis 6:1-4). The corruption of man was so over-whelming that there was no further hope for man to continue to exist on earth. They filled the earth with their violence. The people were proud, lawless, and utterly unconcerned about God and His Will. They were materialistic and carnal in their philosophy of life. This explains why God decreed their destruction and to wipe their memory from the face of the earth (Genesis 6:5-7). It grieved God deeply about His creatures becoming so wicked (Genesis 6:6).

THE GREAT FLOOD

In the midst of such developing wickedness and violence, two men stand out that God tells us about who were righteous: (1) Enoch, who walked with God, and he was not for God took him (Genesis 5:21-24); and (2) Noah, who found favor in the eyes of the Lord, that was a righteous man, blameless in his time and also walked with God (Genesis 6:8-9). So, God chose to use Noah and his family to repopulate the earth with people and to preserve sufficient numbers of living creatures to repopulate their kind on the earth (Genesis 6:11-22). This was to be accomplished by Noah building a huge boat that could accomplish God's plan of renewal. But, at the same time bring a great flood over all the earth to destroy every living creature on the earth (Hebrew 11:7; Matthew 24:36-37, 38-41).

The Flood came as God had promised, after some 120 years (Genesis 6:3; 1 Peter 3:20-21; 2 Peter 2:5). God hates sin and if the sinner will not repent and turn to Him, He will punish as He has promised. His promises are sure (2 Peter 2:9-11; 2 Peter 3:7-12).

THE NEW BEGINNING FOR MAN

After one year and seventeen days, Noah and his family were able to leave the Ark and to begin again to repopulate the earth. As soon as Noah was out, he offered up sacrifices to God with some of the animals that he had saved in the Ark. God was pleased and made a vow to never again destroy the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth, nor destroy every living thing. He added, that he would never again cut off mankind by a flood or to destroy the earth—and then, gave a sign of that promise for all mankind to see and be assured of—the rainbow! (Genesis 8:18-9:17). It is important to see the clear-cut distinction of God's promise—not to destroy man by a flood, but that does not rule out by fire (2 Peter 3:1-10).

Some major changes were made to the earth during the flood that has affected both man and living creatures. One of the interesting changes in God's allowance was to let man eat animals as well as the green plants (Genesis 9:3). One of the strong emphasis that God made was on respecting the lives of other humans (Genesis 9:5-7). It also became quite obvious that God no longer intended for man to live as long as the earth as previously. Now, all mankind will come through the lineage of Noah's three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Genesis 9:18-19).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

It is interesting to notice how much use God makes of past history to try to let us know, He means what He says! (2 Peter 2:1-11). God's willingness to make us creatures of choice can be a blessing to us if we choose wisely—that is, to do the Will of God in our lives. But when man chooses otherwise, the judgment and condemnation will come (Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10-11).

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. What would account for a great population of people before the flood?**
- 2. How advanced was the ante-diluvium world from indications in the Bible?**
- 3. How religious was the old world before the flood?**
- 4. What two men stood out in the midst of the world before the flood?**
- 5. Where did Cain get his wife?**
- 6. What was the name of the first city?**
- 7. How was Noah described?**
- 8. How could Noah have built such a huge boat?**
- 9. Does the Bible say Noah was a preacher before the flood?**
- 10. How long was Noah in the Ark?**
- 11. What promise did God make concerning the destruction of man and living things?**
- 12. What sign did God give of His vow to Noah?**
- 13. What changes took place after the flood that we know of from the Bible?**
- 14. How such we use these story from the Old Testament?**

Lesson Ten

“The Beginning of Nations”

The destruction of mankind was now complete with the exception of Noah and his family. After a year and seventeen days, they left the Ark. It is believed that the Ark rested in the mountains of Armenia, some 200 miles north of Nineveh. Tradition says that Noah was buried at the foot of these mountains at the age of 950 years—some 350 years after the flood (Genesis 9:28-29). The first thing that Noah did after leaving the Ark was to sacrifice to God (Genesis 8:20). God made a covenant with every living thing not to destroy them again with a flood (Genesis 9:11). The Rainbow is God’s reminder. He also promised that as long as the earth stands there will be seasons, climatic conditions, seed-time, and harvest (Genesis 8:22).

As man began again the arduous task of making a living, Noah planted a vineyard and later drank of the juice of the grapes that had become wine and got drunk. His son, Ham, found him naked in this condition, but did not cover him. The two other sons did cover their father without looking upon him. (There may have been more than just looking on Ham’s part (Genesis 9:24)). This situation brought on what seems to have been inspired prophecies about the descendants of these three sons (Genesis 9:20-27). The following ideas seem to be what was involved in these prophecies:

- (1) The descendants of Ham were to be servants of the descendants of the other two sons.
- (2) The Descendants of Shem were to preserve the knowledge of the True God.
- (3) The Descendants of Japheth were to have the largest portion of the world, and to supplant the Semitic races as teachers of God.
- (4) Ham means “heat”—possibly indicated they would live in hotter lands.
- (5) Shem means “the name”—God used them to reveal the nature and name of the Redeemer.
- (6) Japheth means “extension”—They spread themselves out over the earth.

The earth was repopulated from these three sons of Noah. In general:

- (1) Shem’s descendants mainly populated Asia.
- (2) Ham’s descendants mainly populated Africa.
- (3) Japheth’s descendants mainly populated Europe.

THE ONENESS OF THE PEOPLE

This was one time that oneness of the people became a problem. God wants His people to speak the same things and to be of one mind and one heart or judgment (1 Corinthians 1:10). But He also wanted them to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 9:1). They wanted to stay in one place. They did not want to be scattered over the earth (Genesis 11:2-4). They began to build a city and also a tower that could be seen for long distances. They were united in their efforts, had a common language, great numbers of people could then accomplish great things. In fact, God’s observations about this condition was: ***“Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.”*** (Genesis 11:7). They were one, they had a great

vision, and they had a mind to work. The only problem—they were in rebellion against God’s Will. Something had to be done and God did it!

THE CONFUSION OF THEIR LANGUAGE

Of the three great rules of success, God chose to undermine the first one—to disunify them! He confused their language so that they could not communicate well with one another. This not only stopped the building process, but it also began the process of scattering abroad on the face of the earth. It may be of interest to note that languages have all been traced back to three main sources, which identifies with the three sons of Noah and their descendants. A basic genealogy is given of each of the three sons and where their descendants settled. This is shown as follows:

JAPHETH						
Gomer (Celts)	Magog (Scythians)	Madai (Medes)	Javan (Greeks)	Tubal	Mesheck	Tiras (Thracians)
HAM						
	Cush (Ethiopia)	Mizraim (Egypt)	Phut (Libya)	Canaan (Palestine)		
SHEM						
Elam (Elamites)	Asshur (Assyrians)	Arphaxad (Chaldeans)	Lud (Lydians)	Aram (Syrians)		

The term “Babel” has been identified with the confusion of tongues that brought about the settling of the nations in different areas. *“From these coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.”* (Genesis 10:5). Special mention is made of one of the descendants of Ham through Cush named Nimrod. He became a mighty one in the earth. He was able to build up a kingdom over which he ruled in Babel, Erech, Accad, Calneh, Ninevah, Rehobothir, Calah, and Resen (Genesis 10: 6-12).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Some significant changes evidently took place because of the flood. One of them in particular is the greatly shortening of man’s life-span. Even though Noah lived another 350 years after the flood, and others lives into the 400’s; but, by the time of Abraham the life-span was down to under 200 years. Abraham’s father, Terah, lived to be 205 years old (Genesis 11:32). Abraham only lived to be 175 years old (Genesis 25:7).

Clay tablets have been found telling us of many of the dynasties during this period of time. Sargon I was one of the great kings. Hammurabi (Amraphel) was also an outstanding

warrior, built temples, dug canals, and compiled a legal code. He lived and reigned about the time of Abraham. The Pyramids are also dated to this same period of time and are an attestation to the ability of these early people (comparable to the tower of Babel).

Religion degenerated quickly into heathenism and idolatry. Idolatry is a religion of sight in opposition to that of faith (2 Corinthians 5:7). Even though they went further away from the True God, they still maintained the offering of animal sacrifices. They still held to some remnants of truth.

There were still some strongly righteous men during this time that the Bible tells us about, such as Abraham, Job, Melchizedek, etc. The book of Job shows deep conviction of some still serving God.

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. Why can knowledgeable people tell us that all languages come from three main sources?**
- 2. Has God promised that man will not be destroyed again by a flood?**
- 3. Why did Noah offer animal sacrifices to God?**
- 4. What descendant of Ham became a “mighty hunter before the Lord?”**
- 5. What major areas did each of the sons of Noah populate?**
- 6. Whose descendants primarily settled the land of Canaan?**
- 7. During the life-time of what man did it say the earth was divided (Genesis 10)?**
- 8. By the time of Abraham, how much had the life-spans of people been cut down?**
- 9. What prophecies were given by Noah concerning the destinies of his 3 sons?**
- 10. What three religions have come through the descendants of Shem?**

Lesson Eleven

“The Beginning of the Nation of Promise”

Everything in the past 11 chapters of Genesis has led up to this important event—the choosing of the person to be the Father of the Jewish nation (Chosen Nation of people). The rest of the Old Testament is basically about this nation as it exists to carry out God’s plan of redemption for mankind. Chapter 11 ends with the genealogy from Shem down to Terah and his three sons: Abraham, Nahor, and Haran. Terah lived in the Ur of the Chaldees where his three sons were born and raised. Haran died while they still lived in Ur. After this, God calls to Abraham (not his father, Terah) and tells him to leave from his homeland and go into Canaan—which he did—but carrying his father and Lot with he and his wife (Genesis 11:31). An interesting side-line thought just here is to see who was possibly living at this time of Abraham’s call by God. If the genealogies are complete and the numbers given can be totaled up as covering the time from Noah to Abraham—Noah lived to the time of Abraham. Shem lived during most of the time of Abraham. It states that Terah took Abraham and Lot and Sarai with him to Haran and there they settled for some time (Acts 7:1-4). After Terah’s death, Abraham, Sarah, and Lot left Haran and journeyed into the land of Canaan. Abraham was 75 years of age when they left (Genesis 12:4).

GOD’S PROMISES & COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM

The first recording of God’s promises to Abraham is found in Genesis 12:1-3, 7. Seven things are promised to him:

- (1) I will make you a great nation. (Israel)
- (2) I will make you a blessing.
- (3) I will bless you and make your name great.
- (4) I will bless them who bless you.
- (5) I will curse them who curse you.
- (6) In you will all families of the earth be blessed. (Galatians 3:15-29)
- (7) You will possess the land of Canaan.

These promises were repeated in one form or another in Genesis 13:14-17; 15:5, 18; 17:1-8. As a token of that covenant God required that Abraham and all his male descendants that was to make up the nation of Israel would be circumcised (Genesis 17:9-14). God also promised to Abraham and Sarah that she would bare a son in her old age (Genesis 17:15-22). Isaac was to be born one year from the day of the promise (Genesis 17:21). In Genesis 15, God did tell Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in another land for 400 years before they would inherit the land of Canaan as their own (verses 13-16). In accord with the above promises, both Abraham and Sarah’s names were changed to better reflect God’s promises to them.

SOJOURNEYING IN THE LAND OF CANAAN

Abraham remained a sojourner in the land of Canaan for the rest of his life. As he travels around, he build altars upon which to offer sacrifices to God: Schechem, Bethel, Ai, Hebron, etc.

Some of the highlights of his life during this time are as follows:

- 1) Because of famine in Canaan, he goes into Egypt for a time (Genesis 12:10-20).
- 2) Separation of Abraham and Lot—Lot goes into Sodom (Genesis 13:1-18).
- 3) Abraham rescues Lot from captivity by foreign kings (Genesis 14:1-16).
- 4) Abraham pays tithes to Melchizedek, king of Salem (Genesis 14:17-24)
- 5) God promises Abraham a son in his old age (Genesis 15:1-21).
- 6) Sarah suggest to Abraham to have a son by her handmaiden (Genesis 16:1-16)
- 7) God gives to Abraham the covenant of circumcision (Genesis 17:1-27)
- 8) Abraham entertains three messengers from God and is reassured of a son by Sarah within the next year (Genesis 18:1-19).
- 9) God reveals his plans of punishing Sodom and Gomorrha (Genesis (18:20-33).
- 10) God’s destruction upon the cities of the plains, but spares Lot and family (Genesis 19:1-29).
- 11) Lot’s daughters have children by their father by making him drunk (Genesis 19:30-38).
- 12) Abraham & Sarah’s encounter with Abimelech (Genesis 20:1-18).
- 13) The birth of Isaac (Genesis 21:1-8).
- 14) Ishmael sent away (Genesis 21:9-21).
- 15) Abraham’s Covenant with Abimelech (Genesis 21:22-34).
- 16) The Offering of Isaac and God’s promise to Abraham (Genesis 22:1-24).
- 17) Sarah’s death and burial (Genesis 23:1-20).
- 18) Isaac marries Rebekah (Genesis 24:1-67).
- 19) Abraham’s death at 175 years (Genesis 25:1-11).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Abraham was one of the great characters of the Old Testament. God chose a special nation of people to fulfill his plan for the Redemption of mankind. Abraham was chosen to be the father of these people. Abraham is mentioned many times in the New Testament, primarily because of his faith or trust in God. Spiritually, we become the “children of Abraham” when we show the same kind of faith or trust!

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. What great promises were given to Abraham?**
- 2. What caused Abraham and Lot to separate?**
- 3. Why did Abraham give tithes to Melchizedek?**
- 4. Who are the descendants of Ishmael?**
- 5. How many righteous people could have saved Sodom and Gomorrha?**
- 6. Why was Lot’s wife turned to a pillar of salt?**

Lesson Twelve

“The Beginning of the Twelve Tribes of Israel”

God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations (Genesis 17:4, 15). The more obvious fulfillment of this is seen in:

- 1) The Nation of Israel through Isaac and Jacob.
- 2) The Nation of Edom through Esau, Jacob’s brother.
- 3) The Arabian Nations through Ishmael (Genesis 16:1-12; 21:13; 25:12-18).
- 4) Several nations through Keturah’s children (Genesis 25:1-4)
- 5) Possibly others as well.

But the main thrust of God’s promise and the historical account is concerning the Nation of Promise—Israel—through whom the Messiah was to come to bless all nations of people. It is because of this special Nation that Abraham, before his death, sent away all of the concubines and their children from Isaac with gifts. But Isaac was given the inheritance of all that Abraham possessed.

ISAAC, THE SON OF PROMISE

Isaac was next in line in a sequence of persons that led to the eventual Nation of Israel becoming a reality. It actually took around 400 years for this to happen (Genesis 15:12-21). The story of Isaac has its own special interest in the series of events that led to Abraham’s descendants becoming a nation.

- 1) He was a promised son to Abraham and Sarah, born in their older years (Genesis 21:1)
- 2) There was friction for a period of time between Isaac and Ishmael, until God intervened (Genesis 21:9-21)
- 3) The offering of Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:1-24)
- 4) The story of Isaac getting a wife is quite fascinating (Genesis 24:1-67).
- 5) Isaac has two sons—Jacob & Esau (Genesis 25:19-26)
- 6) Esau selling his birthright to Jacob for a meal (Genesis 25:27-34)
- 7) Isaac continues to be a sojourner in Canaan (Genesis 26:1-35).

JACOB, THE PRINCE OF GOD

The historical narrative now turns to consider the next one in line to form the Nation of Israel—Jacob. His name was changed to Israel—meaning, Prince of God. His twelve sons became known as the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel—each tribe bearing the name of one of Jacob’s sons. Jacob is a fascinating character from several viewpoints. The following events in his life can illustrate:

- 1) With the help of Rebekah, Jacob deceives his father into giving him “the blessing” which Esau was supposed to have, but did not receive (Genesis 27:1-46)
- 2) Jacob leaves and goes to Padan-aram to seek a wife (but to also flee from Esau) (Genesis 28:1-9)
- 3) Jacob’s dream, God’s reassurance, and his vow to God (Genesis 28:10-22)

- 4) Jacob meets and marries two daughters of Laban. He had 12 sons from these two women plus their handmaids (Genesis 29:1-30:43).
- 5) Jacob has to leave secretly to return to Canaan and experiences several crucial events on the way:
 - a) Reason for his leaving (Genesis 31:1-16)
 - b) Laban pursues Jacob, but does him or his family no harm (Genesis 31:17-55).
 - c) Jacob's fear of meeting up with his brother Esau was planned for (Genesis 32:1-23).
 - d) Jacob wrestles with an angel—has his name changed (Genesis 32:24-32).
 - e) The meeting with Esau goes very well (Genesis 33:1-20).
- 6) Jacob settles in Shechem, but is forced to move because of the treachery of his sons (Genesis 34:1-31).
- 7) God appears to Jacob at Bethel and reassures him of the promise given to Abraham that it would be fulfilled (Genesis 35:1-15).

JOSEPH, A SPECIAL SON OF JACOB

The historical narrative takes a special turn to tell about one of Jacob's sons that was able to save his family from starvation. Joseph was blessed by God to have special dreams that were foretelling future events. It didn't set well with his eleven brothers, because his dreams seemed to have been a put down of them. They eventually sold him into slavery and he wound up being sold to an important person in Egypt. The final outcome briefly stated was that he advanced to a very high position in Egypt and was able to save his family from starvation during the seven years of famine. In trying to see why God had these things recorded, it could be suggested that the 12 tribes actually became 13 tribes because the two sons of Joseph each became a head of a tribe.

Another factor that shows why the narrative centers on Joseph is that all of Jacob's family were moved to Egypt where they remained for about 400 years. During that time they became slaves to the Egyptians. Upon their release, they traveled back towards Canaan, finally conquered the inhabitants and settled Canaan as their own homeland. Thus, God's promise to Abraham about the land was finally fulfilled. The book of Genesis then ends with a prophecy by Jacob that the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). Both the deaths of Jacob and Joseph are recorded in Genesis 50.

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. How do you think Isaac felt as he was being prepared to be offered to God?**
- 2. Why was Abraham and Isaac so concerned about their sons marrying someone from their kinfolks?**
- 3. How was Jacob and Esau different?**

- 4. Why did Jacob vow to give a tenth of all his increase?**
- 5. Why did Rachael steal the gods of her father?**
- 6. How long did Jacob serve with Laban?**
- 7. How did the sons of Jacob avenge their sister Dinah?**
- 8. Why did Joseph's brethren hate him?**
- 9. To what extent was Joseph blessed in Egypt?**
- 10. How many people came down into Egypt who were descendants of Jacob?**
- 11. Why were the Israelites asked to dwell in Goshen?**
- 12. What special blessing was given to Joseph's two sons?**
- 13. Where was Jacob and Joseph buried?**

Lesson Thirteen

“A Review Test”

- Multiply the number of days of Creation by the number of chapters in Genesis _____
- Subtract your answer from the age of Seth when he died _____
- Subtract your answer from the age of Methuselah when he died _____
- Subtract your answer from the age of Noah at the time of the flood _____
- Subtract the number of days the water prevailed upon the earth from you answer _____
- Add to your answer the age of Shem when he begat Arphachshad _____
- Subtract your answer from the age of Terah when he died _____
- Add to your answer the age of Abraham when he left Haran _____
- Subtract your answer from the number of years God told Abraham his descendants
 Were to be afflicted by the nation in whose land they would sojourn _____
- Subtract the age of Ishmael when Abraham was circumcised from your answer _____
- Subtract the age of Sarah at the time of her death from your answer _____
- Subtract your answer from the number of shekels of Silver paid for a burial place
 For Sarah _____
- Subtract the age of Esau when he married Judith from your answer _____
- Subtract the number of years Jacob labored for his 2 wives from your answer _____
- Subtract your answer from the age of Isaac when he died _____
- Multiply your answer by the number of cattle in Pharoah’s dream that Joseph
 Interpreted _____
- Subtract the age of Joseph when he interpreted the dreams of Pharoah from your answer _____
- Add to your answer the number of days required for embalming people _____
- Add 2 to your answer and subtract the age of Joseph when he died _____

Your answer should be _____.

NOTE: The answers to the above problems can be found in chronological order in reading the book of Genesis. In case you miss an answer, but find the next one in your reading, you will know to go back and look again within the past chapter or two.

