

Who am I?

Why am I here?

From an early age, we ask these two vital questions. We may not verbalize them but they simmer underneath the surface of every thought and choice we make. We long to understand our identity and our purpose in life. We long to know if we have value and if our lives have meaning.

As we go through life, other big questions begin to percolate in our minds.

What is wrong with me?

What is wrong with the world?

Who is God?

What is He like?

If He exists, why is there so much pain and suffering in the world?

How am I supposed to live?

What happens after death?

None of these questions are trivial. All of them strike at the heart of what we think about God, what we think about the world, and what we think about ourselves. And yet where can we go for answers? Who or what can we trust? Is there any “true truth” out there? If so, how can we know?

Welcome to the Book of Genesis.

DATE: Genesis was written approximately 3500 years ago (~1410 BC). It is one of the oldest books that we have in our modern world...and certainly one of the most read ancient documents. Even to a secularist, the message and literary impact of the Book of Genesis is hard to ignore. Genesis speaks to the biggest questions of life...and it speaks with authority and clarity. There is no other book that has sparked as much discussion, debate, and even derision than this one ancient book.

The Book of Genesis is of utmost value to the scientist, the historian, and the theologian: to the scientist for its cosmology, to the historian for its early history of Israel, and to the theologian for its basic philosophical implications. (John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison*)

The Book of Genesis is probably the most important book ever written. The Bible as a whole would surely be considered (even by those who don't believe in its inspiration) as the book that has exerted the greatest influence on history of any book ever produced. The Bible, however, is actually a compilation of many books, and the Book of Genesis is the foundation of them all. (Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*)

For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance, he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries. (Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*)

AUTHOR: Early Jewish and Christian traditions have unanimously attributed the authorship of Genesis—and the rest of the Pentateuch (“the five scrolls”)—to **Moses (1526-1406 BC)**. Jesus also affirmed Moses as the author of the first five books of the Bible—the Book of the Law, the Torah (cf. Matt. 19:8; Mark 7:10; 12:26; Luke 16:29-31; 20:37; 24:27; John 5:46-47; 7:19, 22).

Though some modern scholars like to deny the authorship of Moses in favor of a late compilation of multiple documentary sources, the evidence for such a theory is subjective and shaky at best.

Genesis reads as a unified story and ancient history gives credence to Moses as its primary author and compiler. As a man trained in the best Egyptian schools, with a knowledge of local customs and access to ancient documents, Moses was able to write the definitive history of the world and the history of Israel under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

PURPOSE: Moses wrote Genesis (and the Pentateuch), so that Israel, standing on the edge of the Promised Land, would know who they were and where they fit in the grand story of history.

*Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. **This Book of the Law** shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. —Joshua 1:7-8*

Genesis still speaks to us today, telling us who we are and where we stand in history as well.

OUTLINE: The structural outline of Genesis is formed around the Hebrew word, *toledot*, which is translated, “these are the generations of” (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2). Many scholars believe that this structure represents the original documents from which Genesis was compiled. In other words, Moses used several ancient records to write the Book of Genesis.

1. The book of the heavens and the earth (1-4)
2. The book of Adam (5)
3. The book of Noah (6-9)
4. The book of the sons of Noah (10)
5. The book of Shem (11)
6. The book of Abraham (12-24)
7. The book of Ishmael (25)
8. The book of Isaac (26-35)
9. The book of Esau (36)
10. The book of Jacob (37-50)

Thematically, Genesis is divided into two main sections.

- I. THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD (1:1-11:32)**
 - A. The Creation (1:1-2:25)
 - B. The Fall (3:1-5:32)
 - C. The Flood (6:1-9:29)
 - D. The Nations (10:1-11:32)

- II. THE BEGINNING OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL (12:1-50:26)**
 - A. The Life of Abraham (12:1-23:20)
 - B. The Life of Isaac (24:1-25:18)
 - C. The Life of Jacob (25:19-36:43)
 - D. The Life of Joseph (37:1-50:26)

The following study guide takes you through a weekly five-day exploration of the Book of Genesis.

Day 1: **OBSERVATION.** Reading the passage and observing what it says.

Day 2: **MEDITATION.** Reading key verse(s) over and over and memorizing them.

Day 3: **INTERPRETATION.** Doing a word study and/or exploring parallel passages.

Day 4: **DEVOTION.** Reading an excerpt from a classic commentary on Genesis.

Day 5: **APPLICATION.** Seeking to live out God’s Word in your daily life.

We encourage you to do this study individually *and* corporately. Spending time alone in God’s Word is a daily discipline that grows us in the faith. However, our spiritual growth is also connected to and lived out in community. Sharing what you are learning with others, praising God together, and loving and praying for one another are essential to our growth and to our joy.

THE POINT

GOD KEEPS GIVING US A CHANCE
WE LIVE IN A GOOD WORLD MADE GOOD

HOPE FOR A WOUNDED VICTOR
TO DEFEAT EVIL AT ITS SOURCE

GEN

GOD'S PLAN TO RESCUE AND through A
EXODUS 14-6 ISRAEL - "KINGDOM OF PRIESTS" TO SHOW OTHER NATION

1-11 GOD & THE WORLD

BIBLE PROJECT

1-2 DARKNESS

DISORDER

TREE OF LIFE

HUMANS' GOD'S IMAGE (REFLECTED - ADAM)

- REFLECTION OF GOD'S CHARACTER
- REPRESENTATIVES OF GOD'S KINGDOM
- HARNESS CREATIONS POTENTIAL AND CREATE BEAUTY AND ORDER

BLESSING

TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

CHOICE:

TRUST GOD'S DEFINITION OF GOOD & EVIL

OR

SEIZE AUTONOMY AND DEFINE GOOD AND EVIL FOR THEMSELVES...?

3 CREATURE IN REBELLION AGAINST GOD

3b WHY ARE YOU HIDING? SHE STARTED IT!!

3c SNAKE'S DEFEAT & HUMANITY'S GRIEF

WOUNDED VICTOR

"IN YOU, ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH WILL BE BLESSED."

LAND NATION NAME BLESS

ABRAM

121-3

TERAH NAHOR SERAH REU PELEG

4 ABEL, CAIN, & LAMECH

5a "SONS OF GOD" EVIL ANGELS OR KINGS WHO CLAIM DIVINE DESCENT

6-9 THE FLOOD

NOAH HAM

11 BABYLON

LET'S MAKE A NAME FOR OURSELVES!

SCATTERED

ESIS

BLESS HIS REBELLIOUS WORLD

Abraham's family
ISAIAH 11
PSALM 72
IS WHAT GOD IS LIKE. | FULFILLED IN THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM.

8-13

49 JACOB'S FINAL BLESSING

...AND RESTORE GOD'S BLESSING TO THE WORLD.

KING FROM THE LINE OF JUDAH...
...WHO WILL COMMAND OBEDIENCE OF THE NATIONS

12-50 GOD & ABRAHAM'S FAMILY

12-25a ABRAHAM



16 ABRAHAM SLEEPS WITH HAGAR



COVENANT PROMISE
ABRAHAM WILL BE FATHER OF MANY NATIONS AND A BLESSING TO THE WORLD...
(SIGN OF THE COVENANT = CIRCUMCISION)

15:17 GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM



25b-36 ISAAC AND JACOB



27-31 JACOB DECEIVED BY LABAN



32 JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD



37-50 JACOB'S SONS



39-40 JOSEPH ENSLAVED & IMPRISONED



41-46 ELEVATED, JOSEPH SAVES EGYPT & HIS FAMILY



GOD ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 1

DAY ONE Observation

Genesis introduces us to the Creator of the universe, the Author of world history, and the covenant-keeping God of Israel. Genesis 1:1 immediately informs us of God's existence, power, and sovereignty over all creation.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 1. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water.

³ Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

⁶ Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." ⁷ God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. ⁸ God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

⁹ Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. ¹¹ Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. ¹³ There was evening and there was morning, a third day.

¹⁴ Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; ¹⁵ and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. ¹⁶ God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. ¹⁷ God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

²⁰ Then God said, “Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.”

²¹ God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³ There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

²⁴ Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind”; and it was so. ²⁵ God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹ Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; ³⁰ and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so.

³¹ God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (NASB)

What thought or verse stands out to you in Genesis 1? Why?

Go back with a highlighter or colored pencil and mark every time that the word “God” is used in Genesis 1. **How many times is the word “God” used in this chapter?** _____

What does this tell you? _____

Now with a different color highlighter or pencil, go back and mark (or underline) all the verbs or actions that God does in Genesis 1. **Fill out the chart below.**

Verses	God's Action	What It Teaches Us about God
1:1, 21, 27		
1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29		
1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31		
1:4, 7	<i>God separated...</i>	<i>God makes distinctions between things. God orders things and puts them in their right place.</i>
1:5, 8, 10		
1:7, 16, 25, 31		
1:17		
1:22, 28		
1:29, 30		

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 1:1-5 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Now the earth was formless and empty,
darkness was over the surface of the deep,
and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*

*And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.
God saw that the light was good,
and he separated the light from the darkness.
God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night."
And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. (NIV)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

The name of God used in Genesis 1 is *Elohim*. It is the plural form of the Hebrew noun, *Eloah* or *El*, meaning “mighty, powerful one.” This name is rich in meaning and the plural form has evoked many interpretations. **Read the following excerpt to understand the name *Elohim* better.**

“God,” in Genesis 1:1, is used as the translation of the Hebrew plural noun *Elohim*. It can be translated “gods,” but the context demands otherwise. Biblical monotheism, as well as the fact that *Elohim* is often followed by a singular verb, reveals that Scripture conceives of only one God, even when it uses a plural name for Him.

Why, then, do the biblical authors use Elohim if it is a plural noun? Because the Lord’s character and attributes are multifaceted, *Elohim* describes the depth of the riches of His being. This use, the **plural of intensity**, emphasizes His transcendence and His authorship of the world’s diversity. *Elohim*, as a **plural of majesty**, highlights God’s oneness. Everything ascribed to deity finds its fullness in Him. He is the “Most High God” because *being* itself finds expression ultimately in Him. *Elohim’s* orderly cosmos reveals the order in Himself.

Elohim’s Trinitarian existence most fully demonstrates this principle. Three distinct persons exist harmoniously within God’s one essence. A universe of complexity and harmony exists to manifest His unity and complexity to His glory. Moses may not have had the doctrine of the Trinity in mind when He wrote Genesis, but it is not inconsistent with the name *Elohim*. This name was not inspired haphazardly, for it hints at His unity and complexity. (www.ligonier.org)

The Hebrew name *Elohim* is used over 2500 times in the OT. **Read the following verses that use the name *Elohim* for God.** Mark key words or thoughts as you read.

*Now it happened in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the slavery, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their slavery rose up to **God**. So **God** heard their groaning; and **God** remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And **God** saw the sons of Israel and **God** knew them. (Exodus 2:23-25)*

*And **God** said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” (Exodus 3:14)*

*“Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our **God**, Yahweh is one! You shall love Yahweh your **God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Deuteronomy 6:5-6)*

*The fool says in his heart, “There is no **God**.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good. (Psalm 14:1)*

*As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So my soul pants for You, O **God**.
My soul thirsts for **God**, for the living **God**;
When shall I come and appear before **God**? (Psalm 42:1-2)*

God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

On **God** my salvation and my glory rest;
The rock of my strength, my refuge is in **God**. (Psalm 62:7)

Know that Yahweh, He is **God**;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. (Psalm 100:3)

'Do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your **God**.
I will strengthen you, surely I will help you,
Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.' (Isaiah 41:10)

Write down seven things that you learn about *Elohim* from these verses.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 1" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 1:1 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word "created" and click on the Strong's number (H1254) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for "created"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially I.1. under the Outline of Biblical Usage.)

According to the definition, who is always the subject of this Hebrew verb? _____

What does that tell you? _____

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from **Matthew Henry's Exposition of the Old and New Testaments**. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) was a pastor, speaker, and author from Chester, England. He is best known for his exhaustive, six-volume, verse-by-verse commentary on the Scriptures. Charles Spurgeon stated that, "Every minister ought to read it entirely and carefully through once at least."

GENESIS 1:1-2

In Genesis 1:1, we find, to our comfort, the first article of our creed, that *God the Father Almighty is the Maker of heaven and earth*, as such we believe in him.

Observe, in this verse, four things—

1. **The effect produced**—*the heaven and the earth*, that is, the world, including the whole frame and furniture of the universe, the *world and all things therein*, Acts 17:24. The world is a great house, consisting of upper and lower stories, the structure stately and magnificent, uniform and convenient, and every room well and wisely furnished. It is the visible part of the creation that Moses here designs to account for; therefore, he mentions not the creation of angels...

In the visible world it is easy to observe...

- **Great variety**, several sorts of beings vastly differing in their nature and constitution from each other. *Lord, how manifold are thy works*, and all good!
- **Great beauty**. The azure sky and verdant earth are charming to the eye of the curious spectator, much more the ornaments of both. How transcendent then must the beauty of the Creator be!
- **Great order**. A mutual dependence of beings, an exact harmony of motions, and an admirable chain of causes.
- **Great exactness and accuracy**. With the help of microscopes, we can look into the

works of nature and they appear far more fine than any of the works of art.

- **Great power**. It is not a lump of dead and inactive matter, but there is virtue, more or less, in every creature: the earth itself has a magnetic power.
 - **Great mystery**. There are phenomena in nature which cannot be solved, secrets which cannot be fathomed nor accounted for. But from what we see of heaven and earth we may easily enough infer the eternal power and Godhead of the great Creator, and may furnish ourselves with abundant matter for his praises. And let our make and place, as men, remind us of our duty as Christians, which is always to keep heaven in our eye and the earth under our feet.
2. **The author and cause of this great work: GOD**. The Hebrew is *Elohim*, which tells us,
- **The power of God the Creator**. *El* signifies *the strong God*. What less than almighty strength could bring all things out of nothing?
 - **The plurality of persons in the Godhead**—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This plural name of God, in Hebrew, which speaks of him as many though he is one is to us a savor of life unto life, confirming our faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, which, though but darkly intimated in the Old Testament, is clearly revealed in the New. The Son of God, the eternal Word and Wisdom of the Father, was with him when he made the world (Prov. 8:30),

may, we are often told that the world was made by him, and nothing made without him, Jn. 1:3, 10; Eph 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2. O what high thoughts should this form in our minds of that great God whom we draw nigh to in religious worship, and that great Mediator in whose name we draw nigh!

3. The manner in which this work was effected: *God created it*, that is, made it out of nothing. There was not any pre-existent matter out of which the world was produced. The fish and fowl were indeed produced out of the waters and the beasts and man out of the earth; but that earth and those waters were made out of nothing. By the ordinary power of nature, it is impossible that anything should be made out of nothing; no artificer can work, unless he has something to work on. But by the almighty power of God it is not only possible that something should be made of nothing (the God of nature is not subject to the laws of nature), but in the creation it is impossible it should be otherwise, for nothing is more injurious to the honor of the Eternal Mind than the supposition of eternal matter. Thus the excellency of the power is of God and all the glory is to him.

4. When this work was produced: *In the beginning*, that is, in the beginning of time, when that clock was first set a going: time began with the production of those beings that are measured by time. Before the beginning of time there was none but that Infinite Being that inhabits eternity. Should we ask why God made the world no sooner, we should but darken counsel by words without knowledge; for how could there be sooner or later in eternity? And he did make it in the beginning of time, according to his eternal counsels before all time. The Jewish Rabbis have a saying, that there were seven things which God created before the world, by which they only mean to express the excellency of these things—the law, repent-

ance, paradise, hell, the throne of glory, the house of the sanctuary, and the name of the Messiah. But to us it is enough to say, *In the beginning was the Word*, Jn. 1:1.

Let us learn hence,

- **Atheism is folly**, and atheists are the greatest fools in nature; for they see there is a world that could not make itself, and yet they will not own there is a God that made it. Doubtless, they are without excuse, but the god of this world has blinded their minds.
- **God is sovereign Lord** of all by an incontestable right. If he is the Creator, no doubt he is the owner and possessor of heaven and earth.
- **With God all things are possible**, and therefore happy are the people that have him for their God, and whose help and hope stand in his name, Ps. 121:2; 124:8.
- **The God we serve is worthy of all blessing and praise**. If he made the world, he needs not our services, nor can be benefited by them (Acts 17:24-25), and yet he justly requires them, and deserves our praise. If all is *of* him, all must be *to* him.

In Genesis 1:2, we have an account of the first matter and the first mover.

1. A chaos was the first matter. It is here called the earth because it did most resemble that which afterwards was called *earth* (1:10), mere earth, destitute of its ornaments, such a heavy unwieldy mass was it; it is also called *the deep*, both for its vastness and because the waters which were afterwards separated from the earth were now mixed with it. This immense mass of matter was it out of which all bodies, even the firmament and visible heavens themselves, were afterwards produced by the power of the Eternal Word.

The Creator could have made his work perfect at first, but by this gradual proceeding he would show what is, ordinarily, the method of his providence and grace.

Observe the description of this chaos.

- There was nothing in it desirable to be seen, for it was *without form and void*—Hebrew, *tohu* and *bohu*—*confusion and emptiness*, Isa. 34:11. It was shapeless, useless, without inhabitants, without ornaments, the shadow or rough draught of things to come, *and not the image of the things*, Heb. 10:1. The earth is almost reduced to the same condition again by the sin of man, under which the creation groans. To those who have their hearts in heaven this lower world, in comparison with that upper, still appears to be nothing but confusion and emptiness. There is no true beauty to be seen, no satisfying fullness to be enjoyed, in this earth, but in God only.
- If there had been anything desirable to be seen, yet there was no light to see it by; for *darkness*, thick darkness, *was on the face of the deep*. God did not create this darkness, for it was only the want of light, which yet could not be said to be wanted till something was made that might be seen by it. If the work of grace in the soul is a new creation, this chaos represents the state of an unregenerate graceless soul: there is disorder, confusion, and every evil work; it is empty of all good, for it is without God; it is dark, it is darkness itself. This is our condition by nature, till almighty grace effects a blessed change.

2. The Spirit of God was the first mover. *He moved upon the face of the waters.* When we consider the earth without form and void, methinks it is like the valley full of dead and dry bones. Can these live? Can this confused

mass of matter be formed into a beautiful world? Yes, if a spirit of life from God enter into it, Ez. 37:9. Now there is hope concerning this thing; for the Spirit of God begins to work, and, if he works, who or what shall hinder? God is said to make the world by his Spirit, Ps. 33:6; Job 26:13; and by the same mighty worker the new creation is effected...

Learn hence, That God is not only the author of all being, but the fountain of life and spring of motion. Dead matter would be forever dead if he did not quicken it. And this makes it credible to us that God should raise the dead. That power which brought such a world as this out of confusion, emptiness, and darkness, at the beginning of time, can, at the end of time, bring our vile bodies out of the grave, though it is *a land of darkness as darkness itself, and without any order* (Job 10:22), and can make them glorious bodies.

GENESIS 1:3-5

We have here a further account of the first day's work, in which observe,

1. The first of all visible beings which God created was light. Light is the great beauty and blessing of the universe. Like the first-born, it does, of all visible beings, most resemble its great Parent in purity and power, brightness and goodness. By it we see other things, and are sure that it is, yet we know not its nature, nor can describe what it is... By the sight of it, let us be led to the contemplation of him who is light, infinite and eternal light (1 John 1:5), and the *Father of lights* (James 1:17), and who dwells in inaccessible light, (1 Timothy 6:16).

In the new creation, the first thing wrought in the soul is *light*: the blessed Spirit captives the will and affections by enlightening the understanding... Those that by sin were darkness by grace become light in the world.

2. The light was made by the word of God's power. He said, *Let there be light*; he willed and appointed it, and it was done immediately: *there was light*, such a copy as exactly answered the original idea in the Eternal Mind. O the power of God's Word! *He spoke, and it was done*, done really, effectually, and for perpetuity, not in show only, and to serve a present turn, for *he commanded, and it stood fast*: with him it was *dictum, factum—a word, and a world*. Christ is the Word, the essential eternal Word, and by him the light was produced, for *in him was light, and he is the true light, the light of the world*, Jn. 1:9; 9:5. The divine light which shines in sanctified souls is wrought by the power of God, the power of his word and of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, opening the understanding, scattering the mists of ignorance and mistake, and giving the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ, as at first, *God commanded the light to shine out of darkness*, 2 Co. 4:6.

3. The light which God willed, when it was produced, he approved of: *God saw the light that it was good*. It was exactly as he designed it, and it was fit to answer the end for which he designed it. It was useful and profitable; the world, which now is a palace, would have been a dungeon without it. It was amiable and pleasant...

4. God divided the light from the darkness, so put them asunder as that they could never be joined together, or reconciled; for

what fellowship has light with darkness? 2 Cor. 6:14. And yet he divided time between them, the day for light and the night for darkness, in a constant and regular succession to each other... God has thus divided time between light and darkness, because he would daily remind us that this is a world of mixtures and changes. In heaven there is perfect and perpetual light, and no darkness at all; in hell, utter darkness, and no gleam of light. In that world between these two there is a great gulf fixed; but, in this world, they are counterchanged, and we pass daily from one to another, that we may learn to expect the like vicissitudes in the providence of God, peace and trouble, joy and sorrow, and may set the one over against the other, accommodating ourselves to both as we do to the light and darkness, bidding both welcome, and making the best of both...

5. That this was the first day's work, and a good day's work it was. *The evening and the morning were the first day*. The darkness of the evening was before the light of the morning, that it might serve for a foil to it, to set it off, and make it shine the brighter. This was not only the first day of the world, but the first day of the week. I observe it to the honor of that day, because the new world began on the first day of the week likewise, in the resurrection of Christ, as the light of the world, early in the morning. In him the day-spring from on high has visited the world; and happy are we, forever happy, if that *daystar arise in our hearts*.

What thought from Matthew Henry's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE Application

Re-read Genesis 1 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 1 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 1?



We see several actions of God in Genesis 1. These actions give us a glimpse into His character.

- **God creates.** He is powerful and creative.
- **God speaks.** He is personal and intentional.
- **God sees.** He is aware and involved.
- **God separates.** He is holy and orderly.
- **God calls.** He is all-knowing and all-wise.
- **God blesses.** He empowers and guides.
- **God gives.** He loves and provides.

Which action of God in Genesis 1 encourages your heart the most right now? Why?

Read and meditate on Psalm 33. This psalm of praise exalts God as the Creator of the world.

Sing for joy in the Lord, you righteous ones;
Praise is becoming to the upright.
Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre;
Sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings.
Sing to Him a new song;
Play skillfully with a shout of joy.
For the word of the Lord is right,
And all His work is done in faithfulness.
He loves righteousness and justice;
The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
And by the breath of His mouth all their lights.
He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;
He puts the depths in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the Lord;
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
For He spoke, and it was done;
He commanded, and it stood firm.
The Lord nullifies the plan of nations;
He frustrates the plans of peoples.
The plan of the Lord stands forever,
The plans of His heart from generation to generation.
Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
The people He has chosen for His own inheritance.

The Lord looks from heaven;
He sees all the sons of mankind;
From His dwelling place He looks out
On all the inhabitants of the earth,
He who fashions the hearts of them all,
He who understands all their works.

The king is not saved by a mighty army;
A warrior is not rescued by great strength.
A horse is a false hope for victory;
Nor does it rescue anyone by its great strength.
Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him,
On those who wait for His faithfulness,
To rescue their soul from death
And to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the Lord;
He is our help and our shield.
For our heart rejoices in Him,
Because we trust in His holy name.
Let Your favor, Lord, be upon us,
Just as we have waited for You.

Circle 3-5 key words, phrases, or commands in this passage. What do you circle? Why?

Go outside and notice the glory of the created world around you. Walk and look at the skies, the birds, the trees, the flowers. Praise God for His power, beauty, and creativity! Listen to a song of praise to God's creative power, such as *God of Wonders* (Third Day) or *All of Creation* (Mercy Me).

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

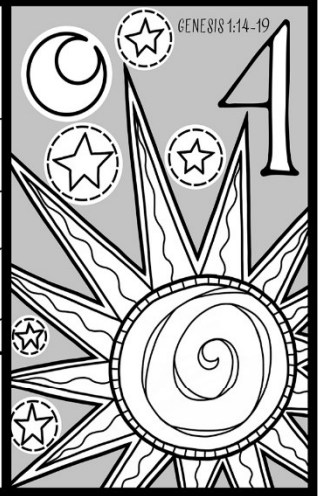
Astronomers now find they have painted themselves into a corner because they have proven, by their own methods, that the world began abruptly in an act of creation to which you can trace the seeds of every star, every planet, every living thing in this cosmos and on the earth. And they have found that all this happened as a product of forces they cannot hope to discover. That there are what I or anyone would call supernatural forces at work is now, I think, a scientifically proven fact.

Robert Jastrow

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What is one of the most beautiful places that you have seen in this world? What thoughts or emotions did you feel as you viewed the beauty and glory around you?
- What word, verse, or thought stands out to you as you read Genesis 1? Why?
- What do you learn about God from Genesis 1?
- Which action of God stands out to you the most in Genesis 1? Why?
- Share at least one thing that amazes you in God's creation, whether it be something in the heavens, something in the animal world, something in the plant world, or something within your own body? Why does this amaze you so much?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Matthew Henry? If so, what?
- Close your time in prayer together. Praise God as the Creator.

At the beginning GOD created the heavens and the earth. GENESIS 1:1



GOD saw everything He had made, and it was very good. behold, it was very good. GENESIS 1:31

7 God blessed the seventh day, and made it holy. GENESIS 2:3

HUMANITY ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 1:26-2:7

DAY ONE Observation

Genesis 1-2 not only introduce us to the existence and character of God but they also introduce us to ourselves as humans. We are created by God, made in His image, and given a purpose in His creation.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 1:26-2:7. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

²⁶ 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.” ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 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.”

²⁹ 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. ³⁰ 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. ³¹ Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² 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. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

⁴ 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, ⁵ 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; ⁶ but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

⁷ 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. (NKJV)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Complete the following sentences from this passage:

Let us make man in _____, according to _____ (1:26).

Let them have _____ over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air... (1:26).

So God created man [male and female] in _____ (1:27).

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was _____ (1:31).

The Lord God formed man of the _____ of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the _____ of life; and man became a living being (2:7).

What specific responsibilities did God give to humanity (1:28)?

What provision did God give to humanity (1:29)? _____

Write down five things that you learn about humanity from this passage.

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 1:27 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*And God created man in His own image,
in the image of God He created him;
male and female He created them. (LSB)*

*Bara Elohim adam betzalmo
Betzelem Elohim bara oto
Zakar veneqebah bara otom. (Hebrew Transliteration of Gen. 1:27 = 3 lines of 4 words and 10 syllables.)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Our creation design enables us to understand our identity, our significance, and our purpose.

Read the following passages. Mark key words and phrases as you read.

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. (Genesis 5:1-2)

*Whoever sheds man's blood,
By man his blood shall be shed,
For in the image of God
He made man. (Genesis 9:6)*

*If He should set His heart on it,
If He should gather to Himself His spirit and His breath,
All flesh would breathe its last together,
And man would return to dust. (Job 34:14-15)*

*O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth,
Who have set Your glory above the heavens!*

*Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.*

*When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,
What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?
For You have made him a little lower than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory and honor.*

*You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,
All sheep and oxen—
Even the beasts of the field,
The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the seas.*

*O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth! (Psalm 8)*

*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.
Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.
And in Your book they all were written,
The days fashioned for me,
When as yet there were none of them. (Psalm 139:13-16)*

He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, "For we are also His offspring." (Acts 17:25b-28)

*For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.
But one testified in a certain place, saying:*

*"What is man that You are mindful of him,
Or the son of man that You take care of him?
You have made him a little lower than the angels;
You have crowned him with glory and honor,
And set him over the works of Your hands.
You have put all things in subjection under his feet."*

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. (Hebrews 2:5-9)

Write 5-7 things that you learn about us (humanity) from these passages.

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from **Matthew Henry's Exposition of the Old and New Testaments**. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) was a pastor, speaker, and author from Chester, England. He is best known for his exhaustive, six-volume, verse-by-verse commentary on the Scriptures. Charles Spurgeon stated that, "Every minister ought to read it entirely and carefully through once at least."

GENESIS 1:26-28

The second part of the sixth day's work is the creation of man, which we are, in a special manner, concerned to take notice of, that we may know ourselves.

1. **Man was made last of all the creatures**, that it might not be suspected that he had been in any way a helper to God in the creation of the world: that question must be forever humbling and mortifying to him, *Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?* Job 38:4. Yet it was both an honor and a favor to him that he was made last: an honor, for the method of the creation was to advance from that which was less perfect to that which was more so; and a favor, for it was not fit he should be lodged in the palace designed for him till it was completely fitted up and furnished for his reception.

Man, as soon as he was made, had the whole creation before him, both to contemplate and to take comfort in. Man was made the same day that the beasts were, because his body was made of the same earth with theirs; and, while he is in the body, he inhabits the same earth with them. God forbid that by indulging the body and the desires of it we should make ourselves like the beasts that perish!

2. **Man's creation was a more signal and immediate act of divine wisdom and power than that of the other creatures.** The narrative of it is introduced with something of a solemnity and a manifest distinction from the rest. Hitherto, it had been said, "Let there be light," and "Let there be a firmament," and "Let the earth, or waters, bring forth"; but

now the word of command is turned into a word of consultation, *Let us make man*, for whose sake the rest of the creatures were made: this is a work we must take into our own hands." In the former he speaks as one having authority, in this as one having affection; for his *delights were with the sons of men* Prov. 8:31. It should seem as if this were the work which he longed to be at; as if he had said, "Having at last settled the preliminaries, let us now apply ourselves to the business, *Let us make man.*" Man was to be a creature different from all that had been previously made. Flesh and spirit, heaven and earth, must be put together in him, and he must be allied to both worlds. And therefore God himself not only undertakes to make him, but is pleased so to express himself as if he called a council to consider of the making of him: *Let us make man.* The three persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—consult about it and concur in it, because man, when he was made, was to be dedicated and devoted to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Into that great name we are, with good reason, baptized, for to that great name we owe our being. Let him rule man who said, *Let us make man.*

3. **Man was made in God's image and after his likeness**, two words to express the same thing and making each other the more expressive; *image* and *likeness* denote the nearest resemblance of any of the visible creatures. Man was not made in the likeness of any creature that went before him, but in the likeness of his Creator; yet still between God and man there is an infinite distance. Christ only is the *express* image of God's person, as the Son of his Father, having the same nature.

It is only some of God's honor that is put upon man, who is God's image only as the shadow in the glass, or the king's impress upon the coin. God's image upon man consists in these three things:

- **In his nature and constitution**, not those of his body (for God has not a body), but those of his soul. This honor indeed God has put upon the body of man, that the Word was made flesh, the Son of God was clothed with a body like ours and will shortly clothe ours with a glory like that of his. And this we may safely say, That he by whom God made the worlds...formed the human body, at the first, according to the platform he designed for himself in the fullness of time. But it is the soul, the great soul of man, that does especially bear God's image. The soul is a spirit, an intelligent immortal spirit, an influencing active spirit, herein resembling God, the Father of Spirits, and the soul of the world. *The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.* The soul of man, considered in its three noble faculties, understanding, will, and active power, is perhaps the brightest clearest looking-glass in nature, wherein to see God.
- **In his place and authority:** *Let us make man in our image, and let him have dominion.* As he has the government of the inferior creatures, he is, as it were, God's representative, or viceroy, upon earth; they are not capable of fearing and serving God, therefore God has appointed them to fear and serve man. Yet his government of himself by the freedom of his will has in it more of God's image than his government of the creatures.
- **In his purity and rectitude.** God's image upon man consists in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, Eph 4:24; Col 3:10. He was upright, Eccl. 7:29. He had an habitual conformity of all his natural powers to the whole will of God. His understanding saw divine things clearly and truly, and

there were no errors nor mistakes in his knowledge. His will complied readily and universally with the will of God, without reluctance or resistance. His affections were all regular, and he had no inordinate appetites or passions. His thoughts were easily brought and fixed to the best subjects, and there was no vanity nor ungovernableness in them. All the inferior powers were subject to the dictates and directions of the superior, without any mutiny or rebellion.

Thus holy, thus happy, were our first parents, in having the image of God upon them. And this honor, put upon man at first, is a good reason why we should not speak ill one of another (Jam. 3:9), nor do ill one to another (Gen. 9:6), and a good reason why we should not debase ourselves to the service of sin, and why we should devote ourselves to God's service. But how art thou fallen, O son of the morning! How is this image of God upon man defaced! How small are the remains of it, and how great the ruins of it! The Lord renew it upon our souls by his sanctifying grace!

4. **Man was made male and female**, and blessed with the blessing of fruitfulness and increase. God said, *Let us make man*, and immediately it follows, *So God created man*; he performed what he resolved. With us saying and doing are two things; but they are not so with God. He created him male and female, Adam and Eve—Adam first, out of earth, and Eve out of his side. It should seem that of the rest of the creatures God made many couples, but of man *did not he make one?* (Mal 2:15), whence Christ gathers an argument against divorce, Mt. 19:4-5. Our first father, Adam, was joined to one wife; and, if he had put her away, there was no other for him to marry, which plainly intimated that the bond of marriage was not to be dissolved at pleasure. Angels were not made male and female, for they were not to propagate their kind (Lu. 20:34-36); but man was made so, that the

nature might be propagated and the race continued... God made but one male and one female, that all the nations of men might know themselves to be made of one blood, descendants from one common stock, and might thereby be induced to love one another. God, having made them capable of transmitting the nature they had received, said to them, *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.* He gave them,

- **A large inheritance:** *Replenish the earth.* It is this that is bestowed upon the children of men. They were made to *dwell upon the face of all the earth,* Acts 17:26. This is the place in which God has set man to be the servant of his providence in the government of the inferior creatures, and, as it were, the intelligence of this orb; to be the receiver of God's bounty, which other creatures live upon, but do not know it; to be likewise the collector of his praises in this lower world, and to pay them into the exchequer above (Ps. 145:10); and, lastly, to be a probationer for a better state.
- **A numerous lasting family,** to enjoy this inheritance, pronouncing a blessing upon them, in virtue of which their posterity should extend to the utmost corners of the earth and continue to the utmost period of time. Fruitfulness and increase depend upon the blessing of God. It is owing to this blessing, which God commanded at first, that the race of mankind is still in being, and that as *one generation passeth away another cometh.*

5. God gave to man, when he had made him, a dominion over the inferior creatures, *over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air.* Though man provides for neither, he has power over both, much more *over every living thing that moves upon the earth,* which are more under his care and within his reach. God designed hereby to put an honor upon man, that he might find himself the more strongly obliged to bring honor to his Maker.

A more particular account of the creation of man is in 2:7. Man is a little world, consisting of heaven and earth, soul and body. Now here we have an account of the origin of both and the putting of both together: let us seriously consider it, and say to our Creator's praise, we are *fearfully and wonderfully made,* Ps 139:14

Of the other creatures it is said that they were *created* and *made*; but of man that he was *formed*, which denotes a gradual process in the work with great accuracy and exactness. To express the creation of this new thing, he takes a new word borrowed from the potter's forming his vessel upon the wheel; for we are the clay, and God the potter, Isa. 64:8.

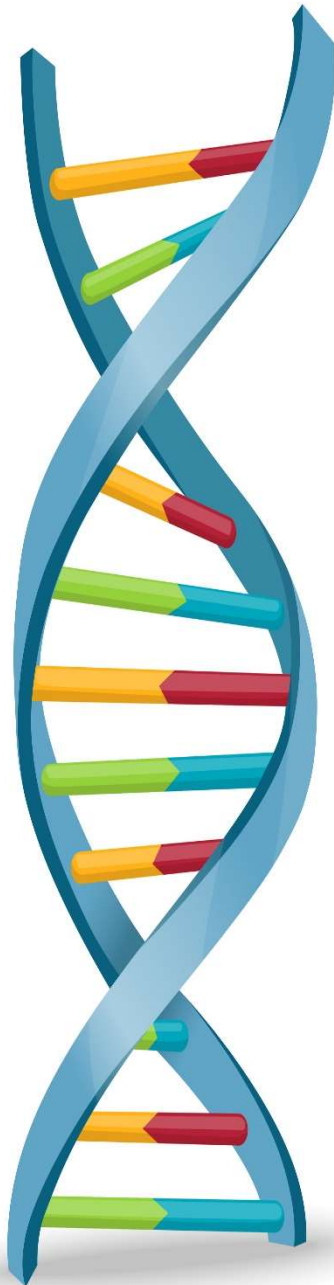
The body of man is curiously wrought, *The workmanship exceeded the materials.* Thus, let us present our bodies to God as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1), as living temples (1 Cor. 6:19), and then these vile bodies shall shortly be formed like Christ's glorious body, Phil. 3:21.

What thought from Matthew Henry's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 1:26-2:7 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 1:26-2:7 to your life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 1:26-2:7? Why?



Who are you? What does your “self-talk” say about yourself?

Who are you in God’s eyes? (Review the verses on pp. 23-24.)

How do you tend to view other people that you meet?

How should you view others, based on God’s Word?

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. —James 3:9-10

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare.

All day long we are, in some degree helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all of our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics.

There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal.

Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.

C. S. Lewis

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- Bring one of your best pictures (individual or family) to your community group. Share with the group the background to the picture and why it is so special to you.
- What do you think it means to be made in the image of God?
- What did you learn about us (humanity) from reading the verses on pages 23-24?
- A photograph is a good example of the “image” of a person. How you treat the picture often reflects what you think about the person. What does it say about us when we mistreat people who are made in the image of God?
- Read the C. S. Lewis’ quote below. What are your thoughts after reading this?
- Who are you? What does your self-talk often say? What does God’s Word say?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Matthew Henry? If so, what?
- Take a group picture and share it with the group. Use it as a reminder to pray for each other during the week.

SEXUALITY ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:4-23

DAY ONE Observation

As humans, we are each made in the image of God. We are also each made as either male or female. This is part of God's creation design. So what does it mean to be male? What does it mean to be female?

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 1-2. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

.....

⁴ This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven. ⁵ Now no shrub of the field was yet on the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. ⁶ But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. ⁷ Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living person. ⁸ The Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. ⁹ Out of the ground the Lord God caused every tree to grow that is pleasing 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.

¹⁰ Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there as well. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and tend it. ¹⁶ The Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it you will certainly die."

¹⁸ Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." ¹⁹ And out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the sky, and to every animal of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. ²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²² And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said,

"At last this is bone of my bones,
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called 'woman,'
Because she was taken out of man." (NASB)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

What responsibilities were given by God to both the man and the woman? (1:26-28)

What specific task did God give to the man? (2:15) _____

What specific command did God give to the man? (2:16-17) _____

What was "not good" in God's creation? (2:18) _____

How does God describe the woman? (2:18) _____

How does God create the woman? (2:21-22) _____

What is Adam's response to the woman? (2:23) _____

DAY TWO
Meditation

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 2:18, 21-22 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*Then Yahweh God said,
“It is not good that the man is alone.
I will make for him a helper as his counterpart.”*

.....
*And Yahweh God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man.
While he slept, he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh where it had been.
And Yahweh God fashioned the rib which he had taken from the man into a woman
and brought her to the man. (LEB)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 2" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 2:18 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word "help meet" and click on the Strong's number (H5828) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for "help meet"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

To better understand the meaning of this word, click on the Root Word (Etymology). **Write the definition of this root word for "help meet"?** (Note especially Strong's and Gesenius' Lexicon.)

Read the following passages that use this Hebrew word. Mark key words or phrases.

*Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has **helped** us." (1 Samuel 7:12)*

*But You, God, see the trouble of the afflicted;
You consider their grief and take it in hand.
The victims commit themselves to You;
You are the **helper** of the fatherless. (Psalm 10:14)*

*Our soul waits for the Lord;
He is our **help** and our shield. (Psalm 33:20)*

*Surely God is my **help**;
The Lord is the one who sustains me. (Psalm 54:4)*

*I will lift up my eyes to the hills—
From whence comes my **help**?
My **help** comes from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1-2)*

*We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's snare;
The snare has been broken, and we have escaped.
Our **help** is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 124:7-8)*

*So do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and **help** you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)*

What do you learn about this Hebrew word for “help” or “helper” from these verses?

Next, go back to Genesis 2:18 on blueletterbible.org. Find the phrase “for him” and click on the Strong’s number (H5048) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the OT.

What is the Hebrew word for “for him”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially “with preposition” in the Outline of Biblical Usage.)

Based on these two words, how would you describe the design and purpose of the woman?

Next, go back to Genesis 2:18 on blueletterbible.org. Find the word “alone” and click on the Strong’s number (H905) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the OT.

What is the Hebrew word for “alone”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially Strong’s and the Outline of Biblical Usage.)

Based on this word, what is the one thing that God says is “not good” in His creation?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from **Matthew Henry's Exposition of the Old and New Testaments**. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) was a pastor, speaker, and author from Chester, England. He is best known for his exhaustive, six-volume, verse-by-verse commentary on the Scriptures. Charles Spurgeon stated that, "Every minister ought to read it entirely and carefully through once at least."

GENESIS 2:18

The Creator's care of man and his fatherly concern for his comfort, v. 18. Though God had let him know that he was a subject, by giving him a command (v. 16-17), yet here he lets him know also, for his encouragement in his obedience, that he was a friend and a favorite, and one whose satisfaction he was tender of. Observe...

1. How God graciously pitied his solitude:

It is not good that man, this man, should be alone. Though there was an upper world of angels and a lower world of brutes, and he between them, yet there being none of the same nature and rank of beings with himself, none that he could converse familiarly with, he might be truly said to be *alone*. Now he that made him knew both him and what was good for him, better than he did himself, and he said, "It is not good that he should continue thus alone."

- **It is for his comfort;** for man is created as a sociable creature. It is a pleasure to him to exchange knowledge and affection with those of his own kind, to inform and to be informed, to love and to be beloved. What God here says of the first man, Solomon says of all men that *two are better than one*, and *woe to him that is alone* (Eccl 4:9). If there were but one man in the world, what a melancholy man must he needs be! Perfect solitude would turn a paradise into a desert, and a palace into a dungeon. Thus, those who are selfish are indeed foolish because they would make themselves alone in the earth.

- **It is for the increase and continuance of his kind.** God could have made a world of men at first, to replenish the earth, as he replenished heaven with a world of angels: but the place would have been too limited for the designed number of men to live together at once; therefore, God saw fit to make up that number by a succession of generations, which, as God had formed man, must be from two, and those male and female; one will be ever one.

2. How God graciously resolved to provide society for him.

The result of this reasoning concerning him was this kind resolution, *I will make a helpmeet for him; a help like him*, one of the same nature and the same rank of beings; a help *near* him, one to cohabit with him, and to be always at hand; a help *before* him, one that he should look upon with pleasure and delight. Note hence...

- In our best state in this world we have need of one another's help; for we are members one of another, and *the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee*, 1 Cor. 12:21. We must therefore be glad to receive help from others, and give help to others, as there is occasion.
- It is God only who perfectly knows our wants, and is perfectly able to supply them all, Phil. 4:19. In him alone our help is, and from him are all our helpers.
- A suitable wife is a help-meet, and is from the Lord. The relation is then likely to be most joyful when... mutual helplessness is the constant care and endeavor, 1 Cor. 7:33-34 ...

- He that has a good God, a good heart, and a good wife to converse with, and yet still complains, would not have been easy and content even in paradise; for Adam himself had no more... Even before Eve was created, we do not find that Adam complained of being alone, knowing that *he was not alone, for the Father was with him*. Those that are most satisfied in God and his favor are in the best way, and in the best frame, to receive the good things of this life.

GENESIS 2:19-20

In these verses is the creatures' subjection to man and his dominion over them: *Every beast of the field and every fowl of the air God brought to Adam*, either by the ministry of angels, or by a special instinct, directing them to come to man as their master... God brought them to him, that he might name them, and so might give...

1. **A proof of his knowledge**, as a creature endued with the faculties both of reason and speech, and so *taught more than the beasts of the earth and made wiser than the fowls of the heaven*, Job 35:11.
2. **A proof of his power**. It is an act of authority to impose names (Dan. 1:7), and of subjection to receive them. The inferior creatures did now, as it were, do homage to their prince at his inauguration, and swear fealty and allegiance to him.

If Adam had continued faithful to his God, we may suppose the creatures themselves would so well have known and remembered the names Adam now gave them as to have come at his call, at any time, and answered to their names. God gave names to the day and night, to the firmament, to the earth, and to the sea; and he *calleth the stars by their names*, to show that he is the supreme Lord

of these. But he gave Adam leave to name the beasts and fowls, as their subordinate lord; for, having made him in his own image, he thus put some of his honor upon him.

The creatures' insufficiency to be a happiness for man: *But for Adam there was not found a help meet for him*. Observe...

1. **The dignity and excellency of the human nature**. On earth there was not like man, nor its peer to be found among all visible creatures; they were all looked over, but it could not be matched among them all.

2. **The vanity of this world and the things of it**. Put them all together, and they will not make a help-meet for man. They will not suit the nature of his soul, nor supply its needs, nor satisfy its just desires, nor run parallel with its never-failing duration. God creates a new thing to be a help-meet for man—not so much the woman as the seed of the woman.

GENESIS 2:21-23

In these verses is the making of the woman to be a help-meet for Adam. This was done upon the sixth day, as was also the placing of Adam in paradise, though it is here mentioned after an account of the seventh day's rest; but what was said in general (1:27), that God made man male and female, is more distinctly related here. Observe...

1. **Adam was first formed, then Eve** (1 Tim. 2:13), and she was made of the man, and for the man (1 Cor. 11:8-9), all which are urged there as reasons for the humility, modesty, and submissiveness, of that sex in general, and particularly the submission which wives owe to their own husbands. Yet man being made last of the creatures, as the best and most excellent of all, Eve's being made after Adam, and out of him, puts an honor upon that sex, as the glory of the man, 1 Cor. 11:7.

If man is the head, she is the crown, a crown to her husband, the crown of the visible creation. The man was dust refined, but the woman was dust double-refined, one remove further from the earth.

2. Adam slept while his wife was in making... He had been made sensible of his want of a helpmeet; but, God having undertaken to provide him one, he does not afflict himself with any care about it, but lies down and sleeps sweetly, as one that had cast all his care on God, with a cheerful resignation of himself and all his affairs to his Maker's will and wisdom. Jehovah-Jireh, let the Lord provide when and whom he pleases. If we graciously rest in God, God will graciously work for us and work all for good.

3. God caused a sleep to fall on Adam, and made it a deep sleep, that so the opening of his side might be no grievance to him. While Adam knows no sin, God will take care he shall feel no pain. When God, by his providence, does that to his people which is painful...by his grace he can so quiet and compose their spirits as to make them easy under the sharpest operations.

4. The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.

Adam lost a rib, and without any diminution to his strength or comeliness (for, doubtless, the flesh was closed without a scar); but in lieu thereof he had a help meet for him, which abundantly made up his loss: what God takes away from his people he will, one way or other, restore with advantage. In this (as in many other things) Adam was a figure of him that was to come; for out of the side of Christ, the second Adam, his spouse the church was formed, when he slept the sleep, the deep sleep, of death upon the cross, in order to which his side was opened, and there came out blood and water, blood to purchase his church and water to purify it to himself.

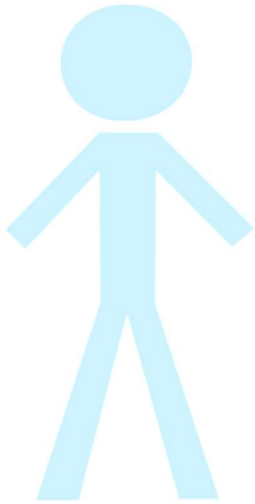
Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. —Ephesian 5:25-27

What thought from Matthew Henry's words stands out to you the most? Why?

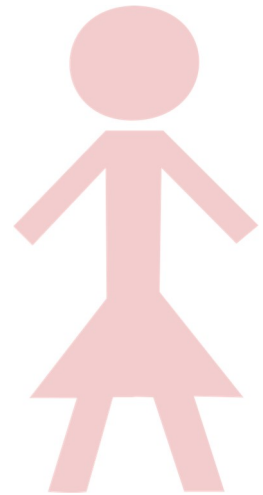
DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 2:4-23 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 2:4-23 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 2:4-23?



What did you learn about what it means to be a man from your father and/or grandfather?



What did you learn about what it means to be a woman from your mother and/or grandmother?

In what ways have you struggled with “being a man” or “being a woman”?

Based on Genesis 1-2, what do you think it means to be a “man of God”? Or a “woman of God”?

Give thanks to God for His marvelous design of male and female!

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

The unashamed masculinity I love to follow in my home is far more impressive than macho pride.

It's masculinity that is willing to take the painful shrapnel in the battle against his own sin, rather than run from sin and hide in the comfort of silence. It is a masculinity that willingly exposes its life to the iron-sharpening-iron of open and honest accountability relationships.

It is a masculinity that guards the hearts in my home by putting away rash, cutting words that pierce like a sword.

My husband's Christ-honoring masculinity understands the power of words, and he uses words to bring healing to me and our children. The unashamed masculinity I cherish in my home is such that fixes its eyes on Jesus and turns its eyes away from all the vain things of this world that hold a potent charm over other men.

Gloria Furman

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What did you learn about what it means to be a man from your father or grandfather? What did you learn about what it means to be woman from your mother or grandmother?
- What is the stereotype of a man in our culture? What is the stereotype of a woman?
- What was God's original design for the man? For the woman?
- Why do you think being alone was the one thing that was "not good" in God's creation?
- What does it mean that woman was created as "a helper suitable for him"?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Matthew Henry? If so, what?
- What has been one of your struggles with being a man? Or being a woman? Have you ever felt uncomfortable in your own skin? Why? How has God helped you with this?
- Have a time of prayer together with men being together and women being together.

MARRIAGE ACCORDING TO GOD
Genesis 2:18-25

DAY ONE
Observation

God’s creation design of male and female is at the heart of marriage. Men and women are created as complements to one another. And in marriage, their complementary design not only reflects the fullness of the image of God but it also results in the miracle of procreation and the creation of the family.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 2:18-25. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

¹⁸ Then Yahweh God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.” ¹⁹ And out of the ground Yahweh God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and He brought each to the man to see what he would call it; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ And the man gave names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. ²¹ So Yahweh God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²² And Yahweh God fashioned the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman, and He brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said,

“This one finally is bone of my bones,
And flesh of my flesh;
This one shall be called Woman,
Because this one was taken out of Man.”

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.
²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (LSB)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Use a highlighter or colored pencil to mark the name “Yahweh God” or “He” in this passage.
Fill out the chart below.

<i>Vs.</i>	<i>God’s Action</i>	<i>What does this tell you about God?</i>
18		
19a		
19b		
21a		
21b		
22a		
22b		

If God had already said that He was going to make a suitable companion for Adam, what do you think was the point of bringing all the animals before Adam to be named first? (2:18-20)

The first words that we hear from Adam’s mouth are poetic, possibly even sung. **How would you summarize the message of this poem from Adam? (2:23)**

Write out the three actions in 2:24. What is the significance of each action?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What does 2:25 tell you about their relationship? _____

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 2:24-25 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother
and hold fast to his wife,
and they shall become one flesh.*

And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (ESV)

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 2" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 2:24 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word "leave" and click on the Strong's number (H5800) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for "leave"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially Strong's Definition and Gesenius' Lexicon.)

Next, go back to Genesis 2:24 on blueletterbible.org. Find the word "cleave" and click on the Strong's number (H1692) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the OT.

What is the Hebrew word for "cleave"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially Gesenius' Lexicon and the Outline of Biblical Usage.)

Read the following passages that use this Hebrew word. Mark key words or phrases as you read.

*You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and **hold fast** to him. (Deuteronomy 13:4)*

*He will afflict you again with all the diseases of Egypt, which you dreaded, and they will **cling** to you. (Deuteronomy 28:60)*

*Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to **cling** to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul. (Joshua 22:5)*

*They are joined one to another, they **stick together** and cannot be parted. (Job 41:17)*

What do you learn about this Hebrew word from these verses? _____

Read the following passages on marriage. Mark key words or phrases as you read.

*Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm;
For love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave.
It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.
Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away.
If one were to give all the wealth of one's house for love,
It would be utterly scorned. (Song of Songs 8:6-7)*

And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." (Matthew 19:3-6)

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:21-33)

Write down five things that you learn about marriage from these passages.

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpts from John Chrysostom's **Homilies on the Bible**. John Chrysostom (347-407) was the bishop of Constantinople. He was nicknamed "golden tongue" because his sermons were both exegetically rich (going verse-by-verse) and rhetorically excellent. Over 800 of his sermons survive today.

The moment has arrived at long last, however, it would seem, for us to proceed with the theme of the reading. *The Lord God said*, the text goes on, "*It is not good for the human being to be alone.*" [Gen 2:18]

Notice how the good God does not stop short, but adds kindness to kindness, and, in an abundance of riches, wants to clothe this rational being in every degree of esteem, and along with this esteem to regale him with a life of ease... So that Adam may learn that the being in process of being formed is meant to enjoy equality of esteem with him... God says, "*Let us make him a helpmate like himself.*" Both expressions, *helpmate* and *like himself* have much significance. I do not want him to be alone, Scripture is saying, but to have some support from company, and not this only but a helpmate suited to him should be produced, hinting at woman.

Further, God formed from the earth all the wild beasts of the field and all the birds of heaven; he led them to Adam to see what he would call them, and each name Adam gave a living being, that was its name. [Gen 2:19]

It is not idly and to no purpose that this happens, but on account of what was due to take place shortly afterward. In his foreknowledge, God shows us the great intelligence with which he endowed the being created by him. The text says: *He led them to Adam to see what he would call them.* He does this out of a desire to provide us with a demonstration of Adam's great intelligence. And further, *The name Adam gave*, the text says, *was its name.* This happens, not that we may merely learn of his intelligence but that a symbol of his dominion may be provided through the

imposition of the names. I mean, dearly beloved, do not pass the expression idly by; consider, instead, I ask you, the extent of his intelligence demonstrated by his giving names to such species of winged creatures, reptiles, wild beasts, beasts of burden and the other brute beasts, the tame and the wild, those that inhabit the deeps, those that spring from the earth—to all these he gave names that indicated his dominion and that were appropriate to each species... Giving them all their right names how could he not be full of intelligence and understanding?

Consider finally from this passage how great the force of that breathing, and the intelligence of that incorporeal soul which the Lord had granted him in constituting such a remarkable rational being of two elements, and intertwining the incorporeal element of the soul with the body, like an excellent craftsman related to his instrument. So, whenever you ponder the extent of this being's intelligence, marvel at the Creator's power. After all, if the visible beauty of heaven prompts a well-disposed onlooker to praise its creator, much more readily will this rational being, the human person, be able to reason from the manner of its own formation, the eminence of esteem and greatness of gifts accorded it, and thus come to celebrate unceasingly the provider of such ineffable kindnesses and give praise to the Lord for his power...

For Adam, however, there proved to be no helpmate of his kind, as if blessed Moses were teaching us in saying these words that, while all these animals were created and received from Adam the assignment of names, nevertheless none of them proved to be adequate for helping him. Accordingly, he

wants to teach us about the formation of the being about to be brought forth and the fact that this being due for creation is the one he was speaking about. *“Let us make him a helpmate like himself,”* meaning of his kind, with the same properties as himself, of equal esteem, in no way inferior to him. Hence his words, *For Adam, however, there proved to be no helpmate of his kind,* by which this blessed author shows us that whatever usefulness these irrational animals bring to our service, the help provided for Adam by woman is different and immeasurably superior.

God caused drowsiness to come upon Adam and he slept. [2:21]

Notice the precision of the teaching. This blessed author has stipulated both things, or rather the Holy Spirit through his tongue, teaching us the sequence of what happened. It wasn't simply drowsiness that came upon him nor normal sleep; instead, the wise and skillful creator of our nature was about to remove one of Adam's ribs. Lest the experience cause him pain and afterwards he be badly disposed towards the creature formed him from His rib, and through memory of the pain bear a grudge against this being at its formation, God induced in him this kind of sleep... His purpose was that, far from allowing man to suffer any sense of what was happening, he should, like some excellent craftsman, supply for any deficiencies and in his own loving kindness create what had thus been taken from man.

The Lord God fashioned the rib he had taken from Adam into a woman.

See the precision of Scripture. It no longer said, *He formed,* but *He fashioned...* He didn't perform further shaping, but took some small part of the shaping already done, fashioned this part and made a complete being. How great the power of God, the

master craftsman, making a likeness of those limbs from that tiny part, creating such wonderful senses, and preparing a creature complete, entire and perfect, capable both of speaking and of providing much comfort to man by a sharing of her being. For it was for the consolation of this man that this woman was created...

So, from man's rib God creates this rational being, and in his inventive wisdom he makes it complete and perfect, like man in every detail rational, capable of rendering him what would be of assistance in times of need and the pressing necessities of life. It was God, you see, who was arranging everything in his wisdom and creative power...

“Now there is someone, bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.” [Gen 2:23]

Notice here, I ask you, dearly beloved, how along with this ineffable intelligence bestowed on him by God, which he demonstrated to us by the imposition of names he gave to all those species of brute beasts, he was endowed also with the prophetic grace... On seeing the woman, he describes her creation precisely, you may have no doubt that he is saying this under the influence of the prophetic grace and the inspiration of instruction by the Holy Spirit. When God led her to him, he said, without knowledge of anything that had happened, *“Now there is someone bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.”*

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. [Gen. 2:24]

Behold...he shows that a man leaving them that begot him, and from whom he was born, is knit to his wife; and that then the one flesh is, father, and mother, and the child, from the substance of the two commingled. For indeed by the commingling of their seeds is the child

produced, so that the three are one flesh. Thus then are we in relation to Christ; we become one flesh by participation, and we much more than the child. And why and how so? Because so it has been from the beginning.

Tell me not that such and such things are so. Do you see not that we have in our own flesh itself many defects? For one man, for instance, is lame, another has his feet distorted, another his hands withered, another some other member weak; and yet nevertheless he does not grieve at it, nor cut it off, but oftentimes prefers it even to the other. Naturally enough; for it is part of himself. As great love as each entertains towards himself, so great he would have us entertain towards a wife. Not because we partake of the same nature; no, this ground of duty towards a wife is far greater than that; it is that there are not two bodies but one; he the head, she the body...

It is, yea, a great mystery, that a man should leave him that gave him being, him that begot him, and that brought him up, and her that travailed with him and had sorrow, those that have bestowed upon him so many and great benefits, those with whom he has been in familiar intercourse, and be joined to one who has no family ties with him, and should honor her before all others... And yet parents are not distressed when these events take place, but rather, when they do not take place; they are delighted and their wealth is

spent and lavished upon it. A great mystery indeed! And one that contains some hidden wisdom. Such Moses prophetically showed it to be from the very first; such now also Paul proclaims it, where he says, concerning Christ and the Church.

He says, *A man shall leave his father and mother.* Behold, this then is from without. But he does not say, and *shall dwell with*, but *shall cleave unto*, thus showing the closeness of the union, and the fervent love. Nay, he is not content with this, but further by what he adds...that the two appear no longer two. He does not say, *one spirit*, he does not say, *one soul* (for that is possible to any one), but so as to be *one flesh*. She is a second authority, possessing indeed an authority, and a considerable equality of dignity. The word *flesh* has reference to love—and the word *shall cleave* has in like manner reference to love...

Husbands, hear the measure of love. Would you have your wife obedient unto you, as the Church is to Christ? Take then yourself the same provident care for her, as Christ takes for the Church. Yea, even if it shall be needful for you to give your life for her, yea, and to be cut into pieces ten thousand times, yea, and to endure and undergo any suffering whatever — refuse it not. Though you should undergo all this, yet will you not, no, not even then, have done anything like Christ...

What thought from John Chrysostom’s words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 2:18-25 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 2:18-25 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 2:18-25?

What was your parents' marriage like? How did it impact your view of marriage?

Certainly we live in a time of history where marriage has fallen on hard times. Many in our culture seem to be rejecting marriage or redefining it to suit their own desires. Hooking up, cohabitation, divorce, homosexuality, polyamory are some of the challenges facing marriage today. The increase in social isolation, occupational migration, and sexual freedom have also impacted marriage.

What struggles have you faced (or are facing) in your own life regarding marriage or family life?

Whether married, single, divorced, or widowed, you can play a vital part in valuing God's design for marriage and strengthening your own family and the families around you. The beauty of the body of Christ is that we are joined together with others in various stages and situations of life.



If you are married, what can you do this week to strengthen your marriage to your spouse? Be specific.

If you are single, how can you build stronger relationships with others in the body of Christ—both single and married? How can you use your gifts to be a blessing to others this week?

If you are widowed or divorced, how can you support and encourage others in the body of Christ who are married or single? Who is a specific young couple or young person that you could bless?

Ultimately marriage is a picture of the Christ-church relationship. Christ is our true bridegroom. He is the one who loves us perfectly, who will never leave us nor forsake us. Rejoice in Him!

Just like Adam in Genesis 2:23, God has gifted us, in His image, with the ability to think creatively, to write poetry, to sing songs, to give praise to Him, to give encouragement to others.

Take time to write a poem to your spouse or write a psalm of praise to God.



ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

According to the Bible, the marriage act is more than a physical act. It is an act of sharing. It is an act of communion. It is an act of total self-giving wherein the husband gives himself completely to the wife, and the wife gives herself to the husband in such a way that the two actually become one flesh.

Wayne Mack

As God by creation made two of one, so again by marriage He made one of two.

Thomas Adams (1583-1652)

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What was your parents' marriage like? How has it impacted your view of marriage today?
- If sin had not entered the world, what do you think marriage and family life would look like in our world today?
- What do you think is the biggest challenge facing marriages today? Why?
- What is the significance of God fashioning woman out of the man?
- What do you learn about God's design for marriage from Genesis 2:24?
- Why do you think Genesis 2:25 is included in this passage? What is it telling us?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of John Chrysostom? If so, what?
- Share a prayer request for your marriage or for your family. Pray together for God to strengthen your own family, to strengthen the families in your church, and to strengthen the family of believers in the body of Christ.



WORK ACCORDING TO GOD
Genesis 1:31-2:15

DAY ONE
Observation

As humans, made in the image of God, we were made for a purpose. We were given a task to do, a responsibility to perform, a job to accomplish. We were created to work. We were also created to rest.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 1:31-2:15. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

.....

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.

² And on the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which God had created in making it.

⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh God made earth and heaven.

⁵ Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet grown, for Yahweh God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. ⁶ But a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

⁷ Then Yahweh God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and so the man became a living being. ⁸ And Yahweh God planted a garden in Eden, toward the east; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground Yahweh God caused to grow every tree that is desirable in appearance and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that went around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² Now the gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. ¹³ And the name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that went around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ And the name of the third river is Tigris; it is the one that went east of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ Then Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. (LSB)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Complete the following sentences based on this passage:

And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was _____ (1:31).

God blessed the _____ day and sanctified it, because on it He _____ from all His work (2:3).

No plant of the field had yet grown, for Yahweh God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to _____ the ground (2:5).

A _____ would rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground (2:6).

Yahweh God planted a _____ in Eden, toward the east (2:8).

God set the man in the garden to _____ it and _____ it (2:15).

List the four rivers mentioned in Eden.

1. _____ (2:11-12)
2. _____ (2:13)
3. _____ (2:14a)
4. _____ (2:14b)

Trying to determine the exact location of Eden is impossible because of the impact that the world-wide flood has had on present-day geography. But the Bible emphasizes the reality of its existence and places it somewhere in the Fertile Crescent.



What things are mentioned to highlight the beauty and abundance of Eden and its region?

What was man's original "job"? _____

DAY TWO Meditation

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 2:2-3 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing;
so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.*

*Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy,
because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. (NIV)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 2" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 2:2 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the verb "he rested" and click on the Strong's number (H7673) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew verb for "he rested"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially Strong's Dictionary and Gesenius' Lexicon.)

Read the following passages that use this Hebrew word in its verb or noun forms.

*"Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may **rest**, and so that the slave born in your household and the foreigner living among you may be refreshed."* (Exodus 23:12)

*"It will be a sign between Me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He **rested** and was refreshed."* (Exodus 31:17)

*Then the land will enjoy its **sabbath** years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will **rest** and enjoy its **sabbaths**.* (Leviticus 26:34)

Read the following passages from the New Testament on the importance of Sabbath rest.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27)

Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. (Mark 6:31-32)

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience. (Hebrews 4:9-11)

Write down two or three thoughts about rest from these passages.

Next, go back to Genesis 2:15 on blueletterbible.org. Find the verb “dress it” and click on the Strong’s number (H5647) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the OT.

What is the Hebrew word for “dress it”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

Next, go back to Genesis 2:15 on blueletterbible.org. Find the verb “keep it” and click on the Strong’s number (H8104) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the OT.

What is the Hebrew word for “keep it”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

Read the following passages which also use these two Hebrew words together.

*And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may **minister** to him. They shall **keep guard** over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they **minister** at the tabernacle. They shall **guard** all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle.” (Numbers 3:5-8)*

*And you shall **keep guard** over the sanctuary and over the altar, that there may never again be wrath on the people of Israel. And behold, I have taken your brothers the Levites from among the people of Israel. They are a gift to you, given to the Lord, to **do the service** of the tent of meeting. (Numbers 18:5-6)*

What does the use of these words in Levitical service tell you about Adam’s work in the garden?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from Martin Luther's **Commentary on Genesis**. Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a German pastor and theologian who was instrumental in the start of the Reformation. Luther wrote over 600 works during his lifetime, including books, treatises, commentaries, catechisms, and songs.

V. 1 *And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.*

Moses in this passage calls the stars and other luminaries of heaven by a military term, calling them the *host* or the army of heaven. After a similar mode of expression, he calls men, beasts, and trees the host or army of the earth. Perhaps this is in anticipation of the solemn realities that were to come. For God afterwards calls himself also the God of hosts or of armies; that is, not of angels and of spirits only, but of the whole creation also, which was for him and serves him. For ever since Satan was cast off by God for sin he has been filled with such desperate hatred of God and of men that he would, if he could, in one moment empty the sea of all its fishes and the air of all its birds, strip the earth of all its fruits and utterly destroy all things. But God has created all these creatures that they may be a standing army as it were; that they might fight for us and our subsistence against the devil and against men also, and thus serve us and be to us an unceasing benefit.

V. 2 *And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day...*

Here cavilers raise a question of this nature: Moses says that God *rested on the seventh day from the work he had made* while Christ says on the other hand, John 5:17, *My Father works until now, and I work*. My simple and plain reply to the above question is, that a solution of any difficulty that may be raised is furnished by the present text itself, when it says, *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished*. The Sabbath here signifies that God so rested, as not to have any further design of

creating any other heaven and earth. It does not signify that God ceased to preserve and govern the heaven and the earth, which he had now created and finished.

Concerning the manner of the creation Moses gives us the fullest information in the preceding chapter, that God created all things by the Word! "Let the sea bring forth fishes;" "Let the earth bring forth the green herb, the beast," etc., etc. And by the same Word, God also said, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." Now all these words of God remain unto this present day. And therefore it is that we see the multiplication of all these creatures go on without cessation or end. Wherefore if the world were to last for a number of years endless and infinite, the power and efficacy of these words would never cease, but there would still be continued a multiplication of all these creatures perpetual and endless by the mere infinite power of this Word of God; this Word of the first creation and foundation of all things...

When Moses says therefore, *And God rested on the seventh day from the work which he had made*, his words are not to be considered as having reference to the general course and laws of nature nor to their continuous preservation and government, but simply to the "beginning;" that God ceased from creating, ordering and ordaining all things, as we generally speak, and from creating any new creatures or new kinds of animals, etc., etc.

With respect to Martin Luther before you. If you look at my individual person, I am a certain kind of new creature; because sixty years ago I had no existence. This is the common thought and judgment of the world.

But the thought and judgment of God are far different. For in God's sight I was begotten and commenced, being multiplied immediately *from the beginning of the world*. When God said, "Let us make man," he then created me also. For whatever God willed to create that he did create when he spoke the word. All things did not then appear indeed on a sudden before our existing eyes. For as the ball from the cannon, in which is the greatest velocity attached to the works of men is in one moment directed to its mark, and yet does not reach that mark without a certain interval and space between, so God rushes, as it were by his Word, from "the beginning" to the end of the world. For with God there is no before nor afterwards; no swift nor slow; but all things to his eyes are at once present. For God is simply absolutely independent of and alone, and separate from all time! ...

V. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it, because that in it he rested from all his work...

Christ says that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mk 2:27). But Moses says nothing here about man. He does not even say positively that any commandment concerning the Sabbath was given to man. But what Moses here says is that God blessed the Sabbath and sanctified it to himself. It is moreover to be remarked that God did this to no other creature. God did not sanctify to himself the heaven nor the earth nor any other creature. But God did sanctify to himself the seventh day. This was especially designed of God, to cause us to understand that the "seventh day" is to be especially devoted to divine worship. For that which is appropriated to God and exclusively separated from all profane uses is sanctified or holy. Hence the expression "to sanctify," "to choose for divine uses or for the worship of God," is often applied by Moses to the sacred vessels of the sanctuary...

By this sanctification of the Sabbath it is plainly shown that man was especially created for the knowledge and worship of God. For the Sabbath was not instituted on account of sheep or oxen, but for the sake of men, that the knowledge of God might be exercised and increased by them on that sacred day. Although therefore man lost the knowledge of God by sin, yet God willed that his command concerning the sanctifying of the Sabbath should remain. He willed that on the seventh day both the Word should be preached, and also those other parts of his worship performed, which he himself instituted; to the end that by these appointed means we should first of all think solemnly on our condition in the world as men; that this nature of ours was created at first expressly for the knowledge and the glorifying of God; and also that by these same sacred means we might hold fast in our minds the sure hope of a future and eternal life...

This then is the meaning of the Sabbath or the "rest" of God. It is a sanctified day of rest, on which God speaks to or talks with us, and we in turn speak to and talk with him in prayer and by faith...

But here another inquiry may arise concerning the fall of Adam itself: On what day Adam fell, whether on the seventh or on some other day? Although nothing indeed can be said as certain on this matter, my free and full opinion is that his fall was on the seventh day. It was on the sixth day that he was created. And Eve was created about the evening or close of the sixth day while Adam was asleep. On the seventh day, which by the Lord had been sanctified, God talks with Adam, gives him commandment concerning his worship, and forbids him to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. For this indeed was the appropriate work or duty of the seventh day: the preaching and the hearing of the Word of God...

On the seventh day therefore, in the morning, Adam appears to have heard the Lord giving commandment concerning his domestic and national duty, the private and public worship of God, together with the prohibition concerning the fruit of the tree. Satan therefore unable to endure this most beautiful creation of man and this holy appointment of the Sabbath, and envying him so much felicity, and moreover seeing all things so abundantly provided for him on earth... Satan seeing all this about the twelfth hour, perhaps after God's sermon to Adam and Eve, himself preaches to Eve. Just as he has always done to this day. Wherever the Word of God is, there he attempts also to sow lies and heresies. For it agonizes him that we by the Word become as Adam did in paradise, citizens of heaven. So Satan on this occasion tempts Eve to sin, and gains the victory over her... I am myself quite persuaded that all these things took place on the very day of the Sabbath, which one day only, and that not for the whole day, Adam lived in paradise, and enjoyed himself in eating its fruits...

V. 7 And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground...

Moses here returns to the work of the sixth day and shows whence this cultivator of the earth came; namely, that God formed him out of the ground, as the potter forms in his hand the vessel out of clay. Hence Moses does not represent Jehovah God as saying in this case as in that of all the other creatures, "Let the earth bring forth man;" but "Let Us make man." He describes God as thus speaking in this case in order that he might set forth the excellency of the human race, and that he might make manifest that peculiar counsel to which God had recourse in creating or making man... For he shows in this divine record that the human nature was created by a peculiarity of divine counsel and wisdom, and formed by the very finger of God...

Though all the other works of God are full of wonder and admiration and truly magnificent, yet that man is the most excellent and glorious creature of all is evident from the fact that God in creating him had recourse to deep counsel and to a mode entirely different from that which he adopted in creating all the other creatures. For God does not leave it to the earth, to form or bring forth man, as it brought forth beasts and trees. But God forms man himself, "in the image" of himself, as a participator of the divine nature and as one designed to enjoy the rest of God. Hence Adam before he is formed by Jehovah, is a mere lifeless lump of earth, lying on the ground. God takes that lump of earth into his hand and forms out of it a most beautiful creature, a partaker of immortality...

V.8 And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward in Eden...

Here rises before us a whole sea of questions concerning paradise. In the first place, the word itself, whether it be Hebrew, Chaldean or Persian...is rendered by the Latin *hortus*, "a garden." This garden was planted *in Eden*.

Hence there arises here a matter of dispute, as to where paradise is. Commentators puzzle and rack themselves on this point in an extraordinary manner. Some will have its situation to be under the equator between the two tropics. Others say it must have been a more temperate atmosphere, to cause a place to be so richly and abundantly productive. But why should I proceed? Opinions upon the subject are beyond number. My short and simple reply to them all is, that every question upon a place or thing which no longer exists, is idle and useless. For Moses is here describing things which occurred before the Flood and even before sin was in the world. Whereas, we have to deal with things as they were and are since the sin of Adam and since the Deluge. My belief is therefore that this spot

of earth was called Eden, either by Adam or in the time of Adam, on account of that astonishing productiveness and that delightful pleasure, which Adam experienced in it, and that the name of a place so delightful, remained with posterity long after the place itself was lost and gone. Just as the names of Rome, Athens and Carthage exist among us at this day, though scarcely any traces of those mighty states and kingdoms can now be discovered...

V. 9 The tree of life was in the garden...and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Moses so describes paradise that he makes God himself as it were the cultivator of it; as a cultivator, who after he has planted a garden with the greatest care according to his pleasure, selects this and that tree from the rest, which he tills and loves as particular favorites. One of these trees was "the tree of life," a tree created to the end that man by feeding on it might be preserved with a sound body, free from diseases, and not subject to fatigue.

After Adam therefore had been so created and so surrounded with every blessing that he was intoxicated as it were with joy in God and with delight in all the other creatures around him, God then creates a new tree, a tree of knowledge and of distinction between good and evil, in order that Adam by means of that tree might have a certain sign of worship and reverence of God. For after all things had been delivered into the hand of Adam that he might enjoy them according to his will or according to his pleasure, God next requires of him that by means of this "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" he should show his reverence and obedience towards God as his Creator; and that he should hold fast, as a sign of this exercise of his obedient worship of God, that he would not taste any of the fruit of this tree; thus refraining, as in obedience to God's prohibition...

Let us therefore learn from this passage of Scripture that it was necessary for man, being so created and constituted as to have all the rest of the living creatures in his hand and under his dominion, that he should not only privately, but publicly also, acknowledge his Creator, should give thanks unto him, should offer him public and external worship, and have a certain form and work of obedience...

Vs. 10-14 Now a river went out of Eden and from there it parted and become four rivers...

This is one of the most difficult passages in the writings of Moses, and one which has given rise to the greatest offense in unholy minds. For the real state of the facts recorded, as they are now before our eyes, cannot be denied. The description here given by the sacred historian applies properly to India, which he here calls "Havilah," through which the river Pishon, or the Ganges, flows. The other three rivers Gihon, Hiddekel and Phrath; that is, the Nile, the Tigris and the Euphrates are also well known; and it is equally well known that the Nile and the last two rivers have their sources very distant from each other. The great question therefore that naturally arises is, since the whole world well knows how far distant these rivers are from each other, how can the account of Moses be reconciled with the facts, when he says that all these rivers issued from one fountain; that is, that they flowed from one source in the garden of Eden toward the east?

My opinion on the matter is that paradise, which was very soon closed against man on account of sin, and afterwards totally destroyed and swept from the earth by the Flood, left not one trace or vestige of its original state remaining, which can now be discovered... As it is written, "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up," Gen. 7:11. For the whole face of nature was changed by that mighty convulsion...

V. 15 *And Jehovah God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it.*

After God had created and variously adorned the universe of heaven and earth, he next prepared the garden of Eden, which he willed to be the habitation and royal seat of man, to whom he had committed the government over all other living creatures of the earth, the heaven and the sea. And now God places man in that garden as in a citadel and a temple, from which he had liberty to go out and to walk abroad in any other part of the earth, which also was most fruitful and most delightful; and there to amuse and delight himself with the beasts and other animals when and as he wished.

And God gives to Adam a two-fold charge that he should work or till this garden, and also that he should guard and defend it... If Adam had remained in his innocence he would have cultivated the earth and planted his beds of spices, not only without toil or trouble but as an amusement, attended with exquisite pleasure. His children when born would not long have needed the breast of their mother, but in all probability would have started on their feet, as we now see chickens do by nature, and would have sought their own food from the fruits of the earth, without the helplessness or weakness and without any labor or sorrow of their parents! But now how great do we behold to

be the pain and misery of our birth, our infancy and our growth!

In all these respects therefore we can form an idea of the mighty evil of sin; when we behold the thorns, the briars, the sweat of the brow, etc., which are before us...

And here also we may reflect with profit that man was not created to idleness, but to labor; no, not even in the state of primitive innocence. Wherefore every state of an idle or indolent life is condemnable; such for instance as the life of monks and nuns.

As the original labor and employment of man were unattended with sorrow or distress, as we have shown, so also this guarding and protecting of that which he possessed was full of pleasure and delight; whereas now all such protection is full of labor and peril. Adam could have stopped or driven away even bears and lions by one single word. We have now indeed our means of defense, but they are truly horrible; for we cannot do without swords and spears, and cannon, and walls, and ramparts, and castle-fosses, etc.; and even with all these we and our loved ones scarcely abide in safety. Hence we have scarcely the feeblest traces remaining either of the original work or the original protection... Labor and protection are now hard and difficult terms...but originally they were terms denoting a certain delightful employment and exquisite pleasure.

What thought from Martin Luther's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 1:31-2:15 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of this passage to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 1:31-2:15?

Adam’s first “job” was not “spiritual” as we would normally describe it. He was created and called to plant, cultivate, harvest, and keep the garden of Eden. This was his “sacred task,” just as vital as the later work of the priests in the tabernacle. Thus, there is no real sacred-secular divide in our work, as long as we are using our gifts and abilities for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. (Colossians 3:23-24)

What responsibilities, tasks, or vocations has God given you during this season in your life?

How can you do these things unto His glory?

Just as God calls us to work, He also calls us to rest.

Commit one day this week to a Sabbath rest. Turn off your phone and avoid media for a full day. Try not to accomplish anything on this day except delighting in God, enjoying your family and friends, enjoying creation, and revitalizing your body and soul. Read through one of the psalms. Go on a prayer walk. Play a game with family or friends. Enjoy lunch or coffee with someone.

Write out your thoughts after taking a day of rest.

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Wherever man may stand, whatever he may do, to wherever he may apply his hand, in agriculture, in commerce, and in industry, or his mind, in the world of art, and science, he is in whatsoever it may be, constantly standing before the face of God, he is employed in the service of God, he has strictly to obey his God and above all, he has to aim at the glory of his God.

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920)

The works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone.

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What was your dad's job? If your mom worked, what was her job? What was your grandparents' occupations? Do you think they enjoyed their work? Why or why not?
- What did you want to be when you grew up? Why?
- What tasks and responsibilities did God give to Adam? What do you think his work would have been like if he had not fallen into sin?
- Why did God rest on the seventh day?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Martin Luther? If so, what?
- How hard is it for you to rest one day a week? How hard is it for you to take a break from media and spend a day delighting in your relationships with God and with others? Why?
- What tasks, responsibilities, or vocations has God given you during this season in your life? What is one of your current struggles in your work?
- Pray for one another. Ask God to strengthen you to do your work for His glory.

SIN ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 3:1-13

DAY ONE **Observation**

Something has happened to the human race...to each one of us. We have a sense of right and wrong. We have a sense of how we should act, how we should love. But we struggle to do the things that we ought to do. We battle our own thoughts, our own desires, our own emotions. Why? What's wrong with us?

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 3:1-13. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,³ but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.⁹ But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"¹⁰ And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"¹² The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."

¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (ESV)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Compare God’s command to Adam with Eve’s statement in 3:2-3. Mark the differences.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 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.”

And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

What are the main differences between these two statements? _____

What was the serpent’s strategy in deceiving Eve? _____

Complete the following sentences from this passage:

When the woman saw that the tree was _____ for food, and that it was a _____ to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one _____, she took of its fruit and ate.

She also gave some to her husband who was _____, and he ate.

The eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were _____.

Write down one consequence or result from their choice as seen in the following verses:

3:7 _____

3:8 _____

3:10 _____

3:12 _____

3:13 _____

What title would you give this passage? _____

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 3:6-7 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*When the woman saw that the tree produced fruit
that was good for food,
was attractive to the eye,
and was desirable for making one wise,
she took some of its fruit and ate it.
She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.*

*Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked;
so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (NET)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 3" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 3:1 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word "serpent" and click on the Strong's number (H5175) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for "serpent"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

To better understand this word, click on the Root Word (Etymology) — Strong's #H5172.

What is the definition of this root word? (Note especially Strong's and Gesenius' Lexicon)

Who is this serpent? And where did he come from? Genesis 3 does not provide any background to him but the rest of Scripture helps us to know who he is. **Read the following passages.**

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. (Revelation 12:9)

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... For Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:3, 14b)

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44)

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:11-12)

What do you learn about the serpent from these passages?

Though the timeline is unclear, it appears that Satan rebelled against God at some point right before or right after the creation of man. In his fall, he persuaded some of the angels to join him. They became part of his demonic forces. **Isaiah 14 details the reason for Satan’s fall.** This passage is specifically directed to the “king of Babylon” (14:4) who is empowered by Satan himself.

*How you are fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground,
You who weakened the nations!
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.”
Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol,
To the lowest depths of the Pit. (Isaiah 14:11-15)*

Based on Isaiah 14, what would you say was Satan’s original sin? Why did he fall?

How does this fact impact how you read the serpent’s temptation of Eve in Genesis 3?

Satan’s “schemes” are mentioned throughout Scripture. He tends to utilize similar strategies in tempting humanity to disobey and rebel against God. These strategies are manifest in the world.

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. (1 John 2:16)

According to 1 John 2:16, what three strategies does Satan tend to use in his temptations?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How do you see these strategies used in Satan’s temptation of Eve in Genesis 3?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from Martin Luther's **Commentary on Genesis**. Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a German pastor and theologian who was instrumental in the start of the Reformation. Luther wrote over 600 works during his lifetime, including books, treatises, commentaries, catechisms, and songs.

V. 1 *Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field...*

In the preceding chapter, we were taught the manner in which man was created on the sixth day; that he was created in the image and after the likeness of God, that his will was good and perfect, and that his reason or intellect was also perfect, so that whatsoever God willed or said, that man also willed, believed and understood...

This original state of things shows how horrible the fall of Adam and Eve was, by which we have lost all that most beautifully and gloriously illumined reason, and all that will which was wholly conformed to the Word and will of God... There has followed in its place a certain absolute aversion to the will of God. So that man neither wills nor does any one of those things which God wills and commands.

These are indeed horrible defects in our fallen nature, to which they, who see not and understand not, are more blind than moles. Universal experience indeed shows us all these calamities; but we never feel the real magnitude of them until we look back to that real state of innocence, in which there existed the perfection of will, the perfection of reason and that glorious dignity of the nakedness of the human body. When we truly contemplate our loss of all these gifts and contrast that privation with the original possession of them, then do we, in some measure, estimate the mighty evil of original sin...

Here again is poured forth a whole sea of questions. For curious men inquire, why God permitted so much to Satan as to tempt Eve?

They ask also, why Satan employed the serpent in his temptation of Eve, rather than any other beast of the creation. But who shall render a reason for those things, which he sees the Divine Majesty to have permitted to be done? ...All these things depend wholly on the will and power of God. This is enough for us to know. To inquire into these things farther than this is impious curiosity. Wherefore let us, the clay of his hands, cease to inquire into and dispute about such things as these, which belong alone to the will of our Potter! Let us not judge our God, but rather leave ourselves to be judged by him...

Human reasoners dispute also concerning the nature of this temptation, as to what it really was; whether our first parents sinned by idolatry or by pride or by self-security or simply by eating the fruit. But if we consider these things a little more carefully, as we ought to do, we shall find that this temptation was the most awful and the most bitter of all temptations. Because the serpent attacked the good will of God itself, and endeavored to prove by this very prohibition from the tree of life that the will of God toward man was not good. He aims at overturning that highest worship of God, which God himself had just ordained. In vain therefore do we dispute about this sin or that. For Eve is enticed unto all sins at once, when she is thus enticed to act contrary to the Word and the will of God.

It was in this manner therefore that Satan attacked Adam and Eve on this solemn occasion. His aim was to tear away from them the Word, in order that giving up the Word and their confidence in God, they might believe a lie. When this takes place what wonder is it if a man afterwards becomes

proud, a despiser of God, an adulterer or anything else? This temptation therefore is the head and chief of all temptations. It brings with it the breach and the violation of the whole ten commandments. For unbelief is the fountain-source of all sins. When Satan has brought a man under this temptation and has wrested from him or corrupted in his heart the Word, he may do anything with him...

This very same craft and malice all heretics imitate. Under the show of doing good, they wrest from men God and his Word. They take the Word away from before their eyes and set before them another, and a new word and a new god; a god which is nowhere, and no god at all. For if you examine the words of these men, nothing can be more holy, nothing more religious. They call God to witness that they seek with their whole heart the salvation of the Church. They express their utter detestation of all who teach wicked things. They profess their great desire to spread the name and the glory of God. But why should I enlarge? They wish to appear to be anything but the devil's teachers or heretics. And yet, their one whole aim is to suppress the true doctrine and to obscure the knowledge of God. And when they have done this, the fall of their listeners is easily enough effected...

Vs. 2-3 And the woman said unto the serpent: Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest perchance ye die.

Eve's beginnings are successful enough. She makes a distinction between all the other trees of the garden and this tree. She rehearses the commandment of God. But when she comes to relate also the punishment, she fails. She does not relate the punishment, as it had been declared by the Lord. The Lord had said, absolutely, "For in the day that thou

eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," Gen. 2:17. Out of this absolute declaration, Eve makes an expression, not absolute, "Lest perchance ye should die."

This defect in the statement of Eve is very remarkable, and demands particular observation; for it proves that she had turned aside from faith to unbelief. For as the promise of God demands faith, so the threatening of God demands faith also. Eve ought to have made her statement as a fact, and a certainty. *If I eat, I shall surely die.* This faith however Satan so assails, with his insidious speech, as to induce Eve to add the expression, "perchance." For the devil had effectually persuaded her to think that God surely was not so cruel as to kill her for merely tasting a fruit. Hence the heart of Eve was now filled with the poison of Satan...

Vs. 4-5 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die...

This is the satanic rhetoric adopted by the tempter...when he sees her turning away from God and inclined to listen to another teacher. Before, when he said in his satanic insidiousness, "Hath God, indeed, thus commanded you?" he did not positively deny the Word. He only attempted by speaking in the form of a question to draw Eve aside into doubting. But now, having fully accomplished his first point, he begins with daring presumption to deny the Word of God altogether and to charge God himself with falsehood and cruelty. He is not now content with having caused Eve to add her expression, "perchance." Out of the "perchance," he now makes a plain and positive denial: "Ye shall not surely die!"

We here witness therefore what a horrible thing it is when Satan once begins to tempt a man. For then ruin causes ruin and that which was at first apparently a trifling offense

against God, ends eventually in a mighty destruction. It was an awful step into sin for Eve to turn from God and his Word and to lend her ears to Satan. But this her next step is more awful; for she now agrees with Satan, while he charges God with falsehood, and as it were smites him in the face. Eve therefore now is no longer the woman merely turned away from God, as in the first stage of her temptation. She now begins to join Satan in his contempt of God and in his denial of the truth of his Word. She now believes the father of lies, directly contrary to the Word of God.

Wherefore our duty is to stand by and persevere in this principle: that, when we hear God say anything, we believe it, and not dispute about it; but that on the contrary we bring our intellect and every thought into captivity unto Christ...

V. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

Mark here the very essence of Satan's poison; her desire to be wise above that which God had spoken to her as his command. For such wisdom was death and the very enemy of that wisdom of God, which had been delivered to her in his Word. For this wisdom caused her to consider that to be righteousness, which was really sin, and to look upon that as most desirable wisdom which was utter madness...

Just as Satan acted in the garden of Eden, so he acts now. God commands us to believe the Gospel of his Son, that we may thus be saved. This is true wisdom, as Christ himself also affirms: *This is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ*, John 17:3. This wisdom the monk utterly disregards, and

turns aside to other things. He puts on a cowl, girds himself with a rope and takes upon him the vow of celibacy; and he thinks that by such means he shall please God and be saved... Just like Eve. She was created the wisest of all women that ever existed; but she longed for another wisdom contrary to and above the Word; and on account of this newly desired wisdom she fell and sinned, in a multiplicity of forms, with all her senses, with her thoughts, with her sight, with her desire, with her touch, with her taste, with her whole act...

That Satan knew all this, his subtlety proves. For he does not immediately entice Eve with the sweetness of the fruit; he attacks at once the chief strength of man, faith in the Word! The root and source of all sin therefore is disbelief, and turning aside from God. Even as, on the contrary, the root and source of all righteousness is faith. Satan therefore first of all draws Eve aside from faith to unbelief. When he had accomplished this and had brought Eve not to believe the Word of God's commandment spoken unto her, he had no trouble in accomplishing the rest, in causing her to rush up to the tree, to pluck the fruit and eat it. For when sin is ripened in the heart by unbelief, the external act of disobedience soon follows.

V. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked...

I have remarked above that the form of all Satan's temptations is the same. He first plies his temptation upon a man's faith, and then draws him away from the Word. Upon this follow various sins against the second table. After Eve had drunk in this poison of Satan through her ears, she stretched forth her hand to the forbidden fruit, plucked it and ate it with her mouth; and thus she sinned with all the senses of her mind and of her body. And yet she did not even then feel her sin. She ate

the fruit with pleasure and entreated her husband also to do the same.

The essential principles are the same in all temptations and in all sins, whether of lust, of anger, or avarice, etc. While the sin is in the act, it is not felt; it terrifies not, it stings not, but it rather flatters the passions and delights. And no marvel that the case should be so with us when we are infected with this poison of original sin, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, and especially when we reflect that the sins of paradise took place in nature while it was yet sound and perfect. Hence it is that we see in the cases of profane men, of fanatical spirits and of those who have no faith, or who have fallen from the faith, how secure and unconcerned they are, how vehement and pertinacious in defending their errors; so much so that they will not hesitate even to die in the defense of them. Such is the nature of sin, while it remains unfelt. But afterwards when the sin is made manifest by the law, then it comes down upon the man with all its intolerable weight...

From this corruption, which immediately followed sin, arose another evil. Adam and Eve were not only ashamed on account of their nakedness, which before their sin was most honorable, and a most glorious adornment; but they even make for themselves coverings to hide from sight those parts of their body which, in their original nature, were thus so honorable and so glorious. For what in all nature is so wonderful, so noble, so glorious, as the fact of procreation! And this fact, so noble, so glorious, is not assigned of God to the eyes or to the face, which we consider to be the more honorable and dignified parts of our body, but to those parts which thus, taught by our awful state of sin, we cover from sight with all possible carefulness lest they should be seen. And thus as the fact of generation in the innocent state of nature, had it continued, would have been

most pure and most holy; so since the entrance of sin, even this fact is filled with the leprosy of lust, as are also all the parts of the body connected with it. Those therefore who live without marriage, “burn” in lust, most impurely. And those also who live in marriage, unless they rightly moderate their feelings and affections, and carefully guard their “due benevolence,” 1 Cor. 7:3, are variously tempted and afflicted...

V. 8 And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool (breeze) of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden.

After the conscience of Adam and Eve were convicted by the divine law, they were terrified at the sound of a leaf. Just as we see to be the case with all fear-stricken men, when they hear the creak of a beam, they dread the fall of the whole house... For by nature we are so wholly filled with alarm, that we really fear even those things which are perfectly safe...

With what complete confidence did Eve listen to the serpent? We do not talk to a little house-dog brought up in our family circle and to whom we have been accustomed for years, nor with a favorite chicken, more familiarly than Eve did with that then beautiful creature. Before their sin therefore Adam and Eve sought no hiding-places; but stood upright in all their created wisdom and righteousness, praising God with uplifted eyes. But now they are terrified at the sound of a shaking leaf. O! How awful a fall! To fall from the safest security and delight in God into fear and dread so horrible, that man can no longer endure the sight of his God, but flees from his presence... They are rushing from the sight of God their Creator, whose presence is now more dreadful and intolerable to them than that of Satan; Satan is now more congenial to

their feelings than the adorable God; for from Satan they flee not, nor are filled with his dread. This dread therefore, is actually a flight from and a hatred of God himself..

V. 9 And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou?

Here we have a description of the judgment of God. When Adam, terrified by the consciousness of his sin, fled from the presence and sight of God he found not only paradise, but the whole world too narrow in which to find a corner where to hide himself from God in safety. But all his anxiety makes manifest the folly of his mind in seeking a remedy for his sin by fleeing from his God... But so it is. That is the very nature of sin, the farther a man departs from God, the farther he wants to depart. And thus the man who has once departed and apostatized from God, goes on departing and departing to all eternity. Hence it is truly said concerning the punishments of hell, that its greatest punishment is that the wicked there are always wishing to flee from God, but feel that flee they cannot. Just in the same manner Adam, though found out and apprehended of God, yet continues to attempt to flee out of his hands...

The words, "Where art thou?" are the words of the law, spoken by God and reaching unto the conscience of Adam. For although all things are naked and open unto the eyes of God, as it is written, Heb. 4:13, yet he speaks unto our sense, feeling and understanding; for he sees us aiming at the one thing of fleeing away from him and attempting our escape from his sight and presence. When therefore God says, "Where art thou?" it is as if he had said, "Thinkest thou that I see thee not?" For he will have Adam to see and feel that though hidden he is not hidden from God! And that though he flees from God, from God he cannot flee. For this is the very nature of all sin; it causes us to attempt to flee from the

wrath of God, from which wrath we find it impossible to flee. It is indeed the utmost folly to think that we shall find a remedy in fleeing from God, rather than in returning to him; yet it is the very nature of sin that the sinner cannot return to God. What then can we possibly conceive to have been the exceeding folly and state of mind in Adam? He had heard the voice of Jehovah, and yet he hoped that he could conceal himself from his presence...

V. 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

As it was the utmost folly that Adam fled from God, so in the utmost folly he answers him, so utterly deprived by sin is he of all wisdom and counsel. He now really wishes to teach God that he is naked, who had himself created him naked. Thus does he wholly confound himself, and betray and condemn himself out of his mouth. He confesses that he heard the voice of Jehovah and was afraid. And had he not also heard the voice of Jehovah before, when Jehovah forbade him to eat the fruit of that tree? Why did he not then fear also? Why did he not then also hide himself? How was it that then he stood with uplifted countenance and with joy before him, rejoicing in his presence and delighting to hear him speak? Now he trembles at the sound of a shaking leaf! It is at least evident that he is no longer the same Adam he then was; he is totally changed, and become quite another man; he now looks about for a lie and a false cause for his defense. For how can it be true, that "the voice of Jehovah is the real cause of his fear," when before he feared not that divine voice, but heard it as the voice of his God with happiness and joy?

Learn then from this solemn history that perverseness and folly ever accompany sin, that transgressors by all their excuses only

accuse themselves, and that the more they defend the more they betray themselves, especially before God! ...

V. 11 *And he said, Who told thee that thou were naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou should not eat?*

Here the conscience of Adam is pierced with the true sting of the law... It is not thy nakedness that hath confounded thee, nor is it my voice that hath terrified thee. It is thy conscience that accuses thee of sin, because thou hast eaten the fruit of the forbidden tree.

Adam was thinking thus: I have eaten the fruit, but I will not say that I have fled from God on that account. I will say nothing about my sin. I will say that I was afraid, because I was naked, and that I was terrified into flight by his voice. But while he is saying these things to himself he is compelled to condemn himself, and he hears his conscience within convicting him of a lie and condemning his sin. In addition to this accusation of his own conscience, the Lord himself now accuses him of his sin openly, and in the plainest words. But not even now can Adam be brought to the honest acknowledgment of his sin...

V. 12 *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat...*

Only mark the true colors, the essential evil and real nature of sin. It is depicted in this excuse of Adam. It shows that a man can in no way be brought to an open confession of his sin, but that he will deny his sin or excuse it as long as he can find that there is any hope or any probable ground of excuse left him. For it was not so wonderful that Adam should at first hope that his sin could be covered, and that he should rather accuse God than

acknowledge the sin he had committed. The great wonder was that after he was convicted in his own conscience, and after he had heard his sin declared from the mouth of God himself, he should still persist in excusing that sin. For he does not say, "Lord, I have sinned; forgive me the debt of my sin; be merciful unto me;" for the very nature of sin is, that it will not suffer the mind to flee unto God, but instead compels it to flee from God. But he transfers all the fault from himself to the woman...

Wherefore there is no end to a man's sinning, when he has once turned aside from the Word. Adam at first sinned by unbelief and disobedience, and now he heaps upon that sin reproaches of God and positive blasphemy, saying in effect, "It was not I who listened to the serpent; it was not I who was captivated by looking on the fruit of that tree; it was not I who stretched forth my hand to pluck the forbidden fruit. The woman whom *thou* gave me did all this." In a word Adam has no desire to acknowledge his sin. On the contrary he wishes to be considered pure and clean...

It is an utterance full of pain and of wrath against God, when Adam says, "The woman whom *thou* gave me." It is as if he had said, "Thou thyself has laid upon me the burden of this evil; if thou had given to the woman some separate garden to herself and had not burdened me with thy command that I should live with her, I might have continued without sin. As therefore I have sinned, the fault is thine in adding to me a wife." In the case of Adam therefore is set before us an exact example of all those who sin and who despair under their sin. They cannot do otherwise than accuse God and excuse themselves, for seeing as they do that God is omnipotent they consider that he could have prevented these their sins. So horrible is sin, whenever the minds of sinners are not soon relieved and lifted up with the promise of the forgiveness

of sins. And this is the true effect of the law, whenever the law is alone, without the gospel and the knowledge of its grace, it always leads to despair and to final impenitence...

V.13 *And Yahweh God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? (Why hast thou done this?) And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me and I did eat.*

Here the example of Eve is also set before us, who being corrupted by sin is seen to be in no degree better than Adam.

Adam wished to appear innocent, and laid the blame on God, because he had given him a wife. Eve also attempts to excuse herself and accuses the serpent, which also was a creature of God. She confesses indeed that she had eaten the fruit, but she says, "The serpent, which thou created and which thou permitted to go about in paradise, imposed upon me."

Now is not this actually accusing her Creator and removing the fault from herself? Hence we see that sin is always and everywhere the same and works in the same way. It is never willing to be punished as sin, but ever wishes to appear to be righteousness. And as it cannot accomplish this it turns the blame from itself upon God; so that when God accuses a man of sin the man actually charges God with falsehood in that accusation. So

that sin, from being a human sin, becomes positively a devilish sin; and the unbelief of the man is turned into blasphemy, and his disobedience into reproach against his Creator!

I term this a devilish and not a human sin; because the devil hates and accuses and condemns God, and justifies himself to all eternity; nor can he possibly from his heart say, "Lord, I have sinned; pardon my sin." Were it not so the devil would not eternally despair of pardon. But that pardon is impossible, as long as he acknowledges not his sin, but blasphemes God as exercising unjust cruelty against him as a creature without just cause.

Hence we see Adam and Eve so deeply fallen and sunk under sin, that they could not sink any lower. For upon their unbelief followed the disobedience of all the powers and all the members in man. Upon this disobedience, immediately afterwards, followed the excuse and defense of their sin. This defense was next followed by an accusation and condemnation of their God. This is sin's last step, to reproach God himself and to make him the author of sin. This nature of ours can ascend no higher than this in its sin against God. And these are the onward steps of sin, unless the minds of fallen sinners are lifted up by a confidence in God's mercy.

What thought from Martin Luther's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 3:1-13 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 3:1-13 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 3:1-13?

Which subtle lies of the serpent have you been most tempted to believe?

- I can't trust God's Word.
- God does not have my best interest in mind.
- Sin is not that bad.
- My sin does not harm anyone.
- God's rules keep me from having fun.
- It's God's fault. He made me like this.
- Other people are to blame for my sin.
- I am more spiritual than other people.
- Other: _____



Read and meditate on Proverbs 28:12.

*He who covers his sins will not prosper,
But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.*

What are the three possible actions with our sin according to Proverbs 28:12?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why do you think the second and third actions must go together? _____

Spend some time in quietness before the Lord, allowing Him to expose the sins, idols, and self-justifications of your heart. Acknowledge these things before the Lord and seek to forsake them.

To forsake and overcome sin in our lives, we not only have to confess it but also replace it. We have to “put off” the sins of the flesh and, at the same time, “put on” the fruit of the Spirit.

An old identity or behavior I want to put off...

For example: I tend to talk too much.

The new identity or behavior I want to put on...

For example: I will intentionally listen more.

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

*Confess your faults one to another,
and pray one for another,
that you may be healed.
The effectual fervent prayer of a
righteous man avails much.*

James 5:16

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- Talk about one of the first times in your life that you can remember feeling guilt or shame over something that you did. What did you do? How did you respond to your feeling of guilt or shame? Did you blame someone else? Justify your behavior? Give an excuse? Confess?
- How did Satan tempt Eve? List all the strategies that he used.
- If Eve partook of the forbidden fruit first, why do you think Scripture puts the ultimate guilt on Adam? *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world...* (Romans 5:8a)
- What were the results and consequences of Adam and Eve’s disobedience to God?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Martin Luther? If so, what?
- Break into groups of two or three. Share one of the struggles in your life right now. In what area(s) of your life, are you being tempted to doubt God’s Word or His goodness? What thought, sin, or habit do you need to “put off” from your life? Pray for one another.

THE FALL ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 3:14-24

DAY ONE Observation

Our world is messed up. Pain. Suffering. Conflict. Frustration. Disorder. Despair. Disaster. Disease. Death. If God is good and He created a world that is “very good,” then what happened?

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 3:14-24. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

¹⁴ 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.

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

¹⁶ 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.”

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,
And you shall eat the herb of the field.

¹⁹ 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.”

²⁰ And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

²¹ Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

²² 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”— ²³ therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ 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. (NKJV)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

What are the consequences of the Fall for the serpent, the woman, and the man (3:14-19)?

SERPENT	WOMAN	MAN

Highlight the actions of the Lord God in 3:21-24. What does God do in response to their sin?

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 3:15 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

So the Lord God said to the serpent...

*I will put animosity between you and the woman—
between your seed and her seed.
He will crush your head,
and you will crush his heel. (TLV)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type “Genesis 3” into the “Search the Bible” box. Click on Genesis 3:15 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word “bruise” and click on the Strong’s number (H7779) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for “bruise”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially Strong’s Definitions and Gesenius’ Lexicon)

This rare Hebrew word is only used twice outside of Genesis 3:15. **Read these two passages and write down any additional insight that you can gain about the meaning of this Hebrew word.**

*For He **crushes** me with a tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause. (Job 9:17)*

*If I say, “Surely the darkness will **overwhelm** me,
And the light around me will be night.” (Psalm 139:11)*

Additional thoughts on the meaning of this Hebrew word: _____

Genesis 3:15 is often called the **protoevangelium**—the first gospel. Though there is a natural enmity between humans and snakes, with snakes biting at one’s heel and humans seeking to crush their heads, there seems to be much more at play in these divine words. The “woman’s seed” is described by a singular pronoun, “he.” The serpent’s seed is also described with a singular pronoun, “you.” Thus, a spiritual conflict is set up between the serpent himself (Satan) and the woman’s seed, pointing to a coming Messiah. The oldest Jewish interpretation of Genesis 3:15 that we have (from the 3rd century BC) sees this verse as messianic.

Read the following excerpt from Irenaneus’ *Against Heresies* written in AD 180.

For from that time, He who should be born of a woman, [namely] from the Virgin, after the likeness of Adam, was preached as keeping watch for the head of the serpent... “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman.” (Gal. 4:4) For indeed the enemy would not have been fairly vanquished, unless it had been a man [born] of a woman who conquered him. For it was by means of a woman that he got the advantage over man at first, setting himself up as man’s opponent. And therefore does the Lord profess Himself to be the Son of man, comprising in Himself that original man out of whom the woman was fashioned, in order that, as our species went down to death through a vanquished man, so we may ascend to life again through a victorious one.

Go back to blueletterbible.org and find the word “desire” in Genesis 3:16. Click on the Strong’s number (H8669) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for “desire”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

This is another rare Hebrew word. However, it is used again in Genesis 4:7, providing a near context to understand its full meaning. **Read Genesis 4:7 in the following different translations.**

*“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.” (NKJV)*

*“Is it not true that if you do what is right, you will be fine? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. It **desires** to dominate you, but you must subdue it.” (NET)*

*If you do well [believing Me and doing what is acceptable and pleasing to Me], will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well [but ignore My instruction], sin crouches at your door; its **desire** is for you [to overpower you], but you must master it.” (Amplified)*

What additional insight do you gain from this Hebrew word in Genesis 4:7? What does it mean?

In Romans 8:18-23, the apostle Paul gives his interpretation of Genesis 3:17-19.

For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

What does Paul say were some of the consequences of humanity’s fall into sin?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from Martin Luther's **Commentary on Genesis**. Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a German pastor and theologian who was instrumental in the start of the Reformation. Luther wrote over 600 works during his lifetime, including books, treatises, commentaries, catechisms, and songs.

V. 14 *And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou...*

I would that I could handle the text now before us in a manner becoming its depth and dignity, for it embraces all that is glorious in the whole Scripture, containing in it the curse of God on Satan and the destruction of the seed of the serpent by the seed of the woman.

God does indeed address the "serpent" by name, but he is all the while especially speaking to Satan, who ruled in the serpent, and by the serpent deceived the first parents of mankind. Nevertheless as, on account of the sin of man, the lord of the whole creation, all animals and all trees perished in the flood, just as the subjects of a nation are often punished on account of the misdeeds of their prince, so it befell the serpent. That animal also was punished because of the sin of the devil, who had abused the serpent in making use of it to work so mighty an evil as the sin of the fall. God however intends, figuratively, to be represented under this punishment of the serpent, the deluging punishment of Satan.

First of all then let us settle it as a fact that the serpent here spoken of by God was a natural and real serpent, but a serpent besieged and occupied by Satan, who spoke through and by that serpent. Let us next consider it to be a truth, that those things which God spoke to the serpent are not to be understood as having been spoken to the serpent abstractedly as a brute animal, but that the person immediately spoken to was Satan, to whom God was all the while more expressly speaking. By this manner of interpretation, I am sure that I retain the plain and simple historical and

literal meaning, and a meaning in accordance with the whole passage; by which meaning, as divinely intended, the serpent remains a serpent though occupied and possessed by Satan, the woman remains a woman, and Adam remains Adam, all which is proved by what follows in the sacred narrative. For it is not an inferior power of reason and a superior power of reason, who begat Cain and Abel, as recorded in the following chapter, but Adam and Eve, that is, the first parents of mankind, who fell by sin into death and became subject to the dominion of Satan...

God here speaks to the serpent in far different language from that which he used toward Adam and Eve, when he called them back in love from their sin. His language then was, "Where art thou?" "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" All these particulars indicate the love of God towards the whole human race; showing forth that God will seek after man and will call him back after he has sinned, that he may reason with him and hear what he has to say. All this was a sure announcement of grace. For although these words of God, spoken to Adam and Eve, were legal and judicial words; yet they set before them a hope by no means obscure, that they should not be condemned for ever.

But with the serpent and Satan, God by no means dealt so mercifully. He did not call Satan to him and say, "Why hast thou done this?" He pronounced upon him at once the sentence of judgment; and that too, in the most awful words... In the first place the serpent shall bear this punishment; that whereas before it partook of that blessing which all other beasts also enjoyed; now it alone shall remain under my curse.

From all these circumstances it must follow as a manifest consequence, that the serpent before the sin of the fall was the most beautiful creature among the beasts which God had made, and most delightful to man; as are at this day kids, and lambs, and kittens to us, and also that it moved with its head erect; and moreover that it now creeps upon the ground is not a property of its original nature, but the consequence of the divine curse. Just in the same manner as they are the consequences of the curse, that the woman conceives in uncleanness, brings forth in sorrow, and nurses and trains her offspring with toils and griefs. Were there no curse the whole process of creation would be most pure and holy; the giving birth to children most easy and delightful, and the training up of children the highest pleasure. Sin therefore has not only utterly corrupted nature itself, but most basely defiled it.

V. 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman...

These are the things which are spoken expressly and properly to Satan. And they contain his judgment. While in these same words of his judgment, there is set before the godly their strong consolation... These things are not spoken by God for the devil's sake. For God does not deign to condemn Satan on his own account, by these his words; but he deems it sufficient to leave Satan to be condemned by his own conscience. All that God speaks to Satan, he speaks for the sake of Adam and Eve; that they may hear this judgment of God upon him and may comfort themselves, by thus hearing and seeing that God is the adversary to the nature of him, who had inflicted such a wound on man.

For out of these very words of God to Satan, there begin to shine forth grace and mercy; yea, out of the very midst of that anger, which sin and disobedience had so righteously

kindled. It is here in the very midst of the heaviest threatenings, that the mind of the Father discloses itself; of a Father, not so angry as to cast away his Son, but holding out salvation, yea, promising victory over that enemy, who had thus deceived and conquered human nature...

The chief part of the great consolation here vouchsafed was, that although this enemy should ever war by subtlety and snares, yet that a Seed should be born, which should bruise the serpent's head. For hereby is set forth the final destruction of the tyranny of Satan; although that tyranny will never come to its end without a most terrible conflict; a conflict which must be fought out by man. But only reflect how unequal the conflict is; it is the "heel" only of the man that is in danger; his head is safe and invincible. On the other hand, it is not the tail nor the belly, but the "head" itself of the serpent that is to be bruised and crushed under foot by the Seed of the woman. And this victory is given also to us all... For the Christian is by faith at once made conqueror over sin, the law, and death; so that the very gates of hell cannot prevail against him...

It was in this manner therefore that Adam and Eve understood this text and comforted themselves against sin and despair by the revealed hope of this future crushing of the serpent's head, by Christ, the Seed of the woman. And through this, their hope in the promise thus given unto them, they shall also rise again at the last day unto life eternal...

V. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception...

This punishment of the woman, if we truly and rightly consider the whole matter, is in its holy reality a glad and joyful punishment. For although the righteous burdens imposed are painful to the flesh to bear, yet by means of

these very burdens and punishment, her hope of a better and eternal life is actually strengthened. For Eve on the present critical occasion hears in the first place that she was not cast off of God for her sin. And in the next place she is not by her punishment deprived of that blessing of generation and fruitfulness which was promised to her and freely given to her of God before her sin. She sees that she still retains her sex; that she is still a woman! She sees that she is not separated from her Adam, to remain and live alone, separated from her husband. She sees that the glory of maternity is still left her; she may still be a mother! And all these blessings of this present natural life are left to her, in addition to that promised hope of life eternal.

This multitude of mercies, which was still reserved for her, no doubt wonderfully revived and gladdened the mind of Eve. Nay, a greater and more real glory still awaited her; she not only retained the blessing of fruitfulness and of continuing in marriage union with her husband, but she possessed also the sure promise that from her should come that Seed which should “bruise the head” of Satan...

Eve therefore, without doubt, in this her most sad experience, for sad it must have appeared to her, had yet her bosom filled with joy. And it is very likely that she consoled her Adam with words like these: “I have sinned. But only see how merciful a God we have!” ...

It is worthy of observation, that the Hebrew expression here...conveys to us the thought that these great and many and various sorrows, thus righteously inflicted on Eve, were such as she would not have had to endure, if she had not fallen by sin; and the expression also implies the sorrows and punishments inflicted particularly on conception and childbirth...

The punishments, to which women are subject on account of the sin of the fall, are indeed great. But is there not in marriage a blessing which infinitely surpasses all the punishments of original sin with which it is afflicted? Have not those who are married in the midst of their great troubles held on to that sure hope of immortality and eternal life which comes to them through the Seed of the woman! Nay, the troubles and trials themselves of marriage are not without their benefit. They all tend to break down and humble our nature, which cannot be humbled without the cross...

And there is left to be enjoyed in these great bodily afflictions the peculiar glory of motherhood: that high blessing of the womb! This was a blessing which even the wise among the heathen so greatly admired and so loudly lauded. And other good gifts of marriage also remain to us and are enjoyed by us...

To view the great and solemn matter of marriage thus, is “to set our blessings in their fairest light.” This is not to look at our evils only, but to delight ourselves in the benefits and the great blessing of God in his holy ordinance of marriage; and under those benefits and that blessing, to sink out of sight the various punishments, corruptions, pains and afflictions by which it is compassed...

But the godly alone understand these things and do them. They alone view marriage aright. They alone give honor unto women, as unto the weaker vessel; because they see them to be their companions of immortality as well as of mortality, and as being heirs together with them of the inheritance in heaven. The godly moreover behold them highly honored of the Lord by the blessing and the glory of motherhood. By them we are conceived, from them we are born, by them we are nursed in infancy.

And for myself I have often contemplated with wonder and delight the peculiar adaptation of the female body for nursing infants. How aptly, becomingly and gracefully, do women carry infants in their bosom? And with what appropriate gestures do mothers dandle their infants, especially when the crying babe is to be pacified or quieted so as to be laid in the cradle? Only tell a man to do these same things and he will set about it as an elephant would attempt to dance; so awkward are his motions, if he has only to touch a babe with his finger, to say nothing about all those other offices and attentions which a mother only can perform. Whoever therefore rightly views and estimates the sacred matter of marriage will receive all these offices and services of the woman as signs and proofs of the blessing of the Lord, by which God testifies that the female sex, though thus severely punished on account of their original sin, are very dear to him and his peculiar care. Wherefore let these meditations suffice concerning the first part of the divine curse on the original sin of Eve...

V. 17 *And unto Adam he said...*

The husband was last in the transgression, 1 Tim. 2:14, and therefore the punishment is inflicted on him last. But the Lord threatens no punishment to the man here in generation. His duties as husband however are laden with punishment. For, as it belongs to the man to feed, to rule, to guide and to educate his family, those duties cannot be performed by him without great trouble and distress nor without the hardest labors. The duty laid of God upon the woman is to obey her husband; but with what difficulty is this very performance of her duty obtained! I say nothing about the rule of the man over others, who are not of his immediate family and household...

The duties of a husband indeed are great and noble, which are to cultivate the earth and to

perform any other work by which his wife and children may be supported to rule his house and family; to govern states and kingdoms; and to teach and instruct those of his own house and others also unto godliness and moral duties. All these noble duties however are always attended with their punishment of original sin. They cannot be performed without the greatest distress, of which we have examples before our eyes daily...

How awful the calamity of sin is, seeing that even the earth, which is innocent in itself and committed no sin, is nevertheless compelled to bear sin's curse; and as the Apostle Paul expresses it, Rom. 8:20, 21, is "made subject to vanity," from which however it shall be delivered in the last day and for which also it waits in earnest expectation, verse 19...

For my own part I entertain no doubt that before the sin of the fall the air was more pure and healthful, the water more wholesome and fructifying, and the light of the sun more bright and beautiful. So that the whole creation, as it now is, reminds us in every part of the curse inflicted on it, on account of the sin of the fall. Yet some remnants of the original blessing of God still rest upon it; in that being compelled as it were to do so by the hard labor of man, it still continues to produce things necessary for our use, although those very things are impeded and deformed by briars and thorns; that is, by useless and noxious trees, bushes and weeds, which the divine anger ceases not to sow among them...

V. 18 *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ...*

Wherefore as often as we see thorns and thistles; as often as we behold tares and other noxious weeds growing in our fields and in our garden, so often are we reminded as by certain signs of sin and the wrath of God. Wherefore it is not only in churches that we

hear ourselves accused of sin; every garden, every field and almost the whole creation is filled with such preachers and such monitors of our sin and of the wrath of God, which is brought down upon us on account of that sin. Wherefore all prayer to the Lord is necessary that he would take away from our eyes and from our hearts this marvelous insensibility; that being thus perpetually reminded of our sin, we may at length put off our self-security and walk in the fear of God...

V. 19 *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till you return to the ground...*

These and like passages of Scripture show that the “sweat of the face” is the common curse on all men. The first “sweat” is, that of husbandmen and householders; the second, the “sweat” of magistrates; the third, of teachers in the Church. Of all these orders of men the condition of husbandmen is the happiest... For though they do “sweat” under great labor, yet that labor is seasoned with a peculiar pleasure, while the new and marvelous faces of all creatures directly meet their eyes daily. Whereas in the political world and in the Church infinite troubles and molestations present themselves, in addition to the daily perils which are incurred, if a minister of Christ performs his duty faithfully... We are here speaking of those who do perform

seriously what they undertake to do, whether in the State or in the Church. Such men labor and sweat more in one day than a husbandman does in a whole month, if the magnitude and the various perils of their works be considered. It is for this very reason also that tributes and revenues, and other dues of the same description, are paid unto kings and princes. And who does not see that this is but a small return or reward after all to our rulers for the immense labor they undergo, where they really do their duty faithfully. And even if there be some who neglect their duty, this legitimate ordinance of God is not on their account to be disregarded...

Let all of us who endure this sweat, each one in his station, always think that, although we may have a bitter burden to bear, these afflictions will have their certain end...

We are not destined to live here forever. Just as men, who when traveling happen to find a miserable lodging and a covetous host, console themselves with the thought that though their food be bad and their bed hard, their misery will last for one night only. Such ought our thoughts to be in the midst of our calamities on account of the sin of the fall. For what are our two or three years of life, almost the half of which we pass in insensible sleep, when compared with eternity!

What thought from Martin Luther’s words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE Application

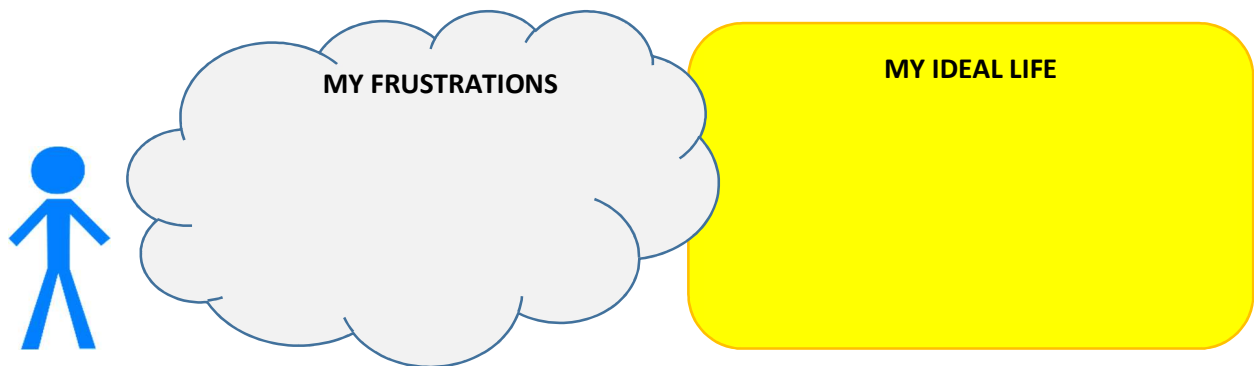
Re-read Genesis 3:14-24 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 3:14-24 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 3:14-24?

Sin brought consequences into our world. We no longer live in the garden of Eden. We live in a world filled with thorns, thistles, sweat, suffering, pain, difficulty, and death.

Paul says that the creation has been “subjected to frustration” and is in the “bondage of decay” (Romans 8:20-21). Nothing works like it is supposed to work. Childbirth is difficult. Marriage is difficult. Family life is difficult. Relationships are difficult. Work is difficult. Life is difficult.

What is causing you frustration right now in your life? What would you change if you could?



Fill in the illustration above. Describe your ideal life— the way you want your life to be. Then fill in the cloud with the things that frustrate you, that block or hinder your ideal life. Some of our frustrations are legitimate, but many of them are based on false expectations of others or of life in this sin-cursed world. We try to control things that we simply cannot control.

What unrealistic expectation or frustration do you need to hand over to the Lord today?

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

*All the trouble in the world began
with one lie.*

Unknown

*If the story of the fall reveals our
own sin and guilt, it surely also
reveals the amazing depths of God's
love and mercy. It was the Son of
God who placed a sword at the
entrance to the Garden of Eden.
He did it not just to keep Adam out.
He did it so that, at just the right
time, he could walk through in our
place, to satisfy God's just wrath and
make a way for us to enter back in,
through the gate, to eat from the
Tree of Life and live forever in the
glorious presence of God.*

Michael Lawrence

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What has been one of the most frustrating things that you have encountered this past week? Why was it so frustrating? What expectation did you have that was not met?
- What was the consequence or result of the fall for the serpent? For the woman? For the man? For creation in general?
- What encourages you about Genesis 3:15?
- In what area(s) of life would the woman feel the frustrations and pains of this world? In what area(s) of life would the man feel the frustrations and pains of this world? Do you find anything significant about the difference between the woman and the man's frustrations?
- What are God's actions in response to Adam & Eve's sin? What do you learn from this?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Martin Luther? If so, what?
- Share one of the frustrations that you are dealing with in your life. What do you think God wants to teach you through this frustration? Pray for one another.

ANGER ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 4:1-26

DAY ONE Observation

With Adam & Eve's disobedience, the seed of sin was planted into the human heart. That seed soon sprouted like a weed and spread, affecting every part of humanity. The first victim was Adam and Eve's son, Abel.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 4:1-26 (ESV). Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord."² And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground.³ In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground,⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering,⁵ but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.

⁶ The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."

⁸ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.⁹ Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?"¹⁰ And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.¹¹ And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.¹² When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."¹³ Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear.¹⁴ Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."¹⁵ Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him.¹⁶ Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

¹⁷ Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch.¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech.¹⁹ And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.²⁰ Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.²² Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives:

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say:
I have killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.

²⁴ If Cain’s revenge is sevenfold,
then Lamech’s is seventy-sevenfold.”

²⁵ And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, “God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.” ²⁶ To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord.

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Why was Cain angry? _____

What differences do you see between Abel’s offering and Cain’s offering? _____

What were God’s words to Cain about his anger? _____

Instead of listening to God, what did Cain do? _____

What were the consequences of Cain’s sin? _____

In what way did God still show Cain mercy? _____

What sins do you see in Lamech’s life—Cain’s descendant? _____

What is significant about Seth? _____

DAY TWO Meditation

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 4:3-7 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

At the designated time Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground for an offering to the Lord.

But Abel brought some of the firstborn of his flock—even the fattest of them.

And the Lord was pleased with Abel and his offering,

but with Cain and his offering he was not pleased.

So Cain became very angry, and his expression was downcast.

Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why is your expression downcast?

Is it not true that if you do what is right, you will be fine?

But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door.

It desires to dominate you, but you must subdue it.” (NET)

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 4" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 4:5 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word "wroth" and click on the Strong's number (H2734) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for "wroth"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially the Outline of Biblical Usage and Gesenius' Lexicon)

Read the following verses which also use this Hebrew word. Mark key phrases as you read.

*Jacob's sons returned from the field when they heard about the incident. They were deeply grieved and **very angry**, for Shechem had committed an outrage against Israel by raping Jacob's daughter and such a thing should not be done. (Genesis 34:7)*

As the troops were coming back, when David was returning from killing the Philistine, the women came out from all the cities of Israel to meet King Saul, singing and dancing with tambourines, with shouts of joy, and with three-stringed instruments. As they danced, the women sang:

*Saul has killed his thousands,
but David his tens of thousands.*

*Saul **was furious** and resented this song. "They credited tens of thousands to David," he complained, "but they only credited me with thousands. What more can he have but the kingdom?" So Saul watched David jealously from that day forward. (1 Samuel 18:6-9)*

*Be silent before the Lord and wait expectantly for him;
Do not be **agitated** by one who prospers in his way,
By the person who carries out evil plans.
Refrain from anger and give up your rage;
Do not be **agitated**—it can only bring harm. (Psalm 37:7-8)*

*Jonah was greatly displeased and **became furious**. He prayed to the Lord, "Please, Lord, isn't this what I said while I was still in my own country? That's why I fled toward Tarshish in the first place. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and one who relents from sending disaster. And now, Lord, take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."*

... As the sun was rising, God appointed a scorching east wind. The sun beat down on Jonah's head so much that he almost fainted, and he wanted to die. He said, "It's better for me to die than to live."

Then God asked Jonah, “Is it right for you to be **angry** about the plant?” “Yes, it’s right!” he replied. “I’m **angry** enough to die!” (Jonah 4:1-3, 8-9)

What additional insights do you learn about this Hebrew word from these verses?

Read the following New Testament verses that give a commentary on Cain and Abel.

So all the righteous blood shed on the earth will be charged to you, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. (Matthew 23:35)

By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was approved as a righteous man, because God approved his gifts, and even though he is dead, he still speaks through his faith. (Hebrews 11:4)

Instead, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God (the heavenly Jerusalem), to myriads of angels, a festive gathering, to the assembly of the firstborn whose names have been written in heaven, to a Judge, who is God of all, to the spirits of righteous people made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which says better things than the blood of Abel. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another, unlike Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous. (1 John 3:11-12)

But these people blaspheme anything they do not understand. And what they do understand by instinct—like irrational animals—by these things they are destroyed. Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, have plunged into Balaam’s error for profit, and have perished in Korah’s rebellion. (Jude 10-11)

What additional things do you learn about the story of Cain and Abel from these verses?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from John Calvin's *Commentary on the Bible*. **John Calvin** (1509-64) was a key figure in the Protestant Reformation. He was a pastor in Geneva, Switzerland and a theologian who shaped much of the theology of the Protestant church. Though "Calvinism" can be controversial in the church today, there is no question that Calvin was a man who loved Christ and taught the Word of God.

V.1 *And Adam knew his wife Eve.* Moses now begins to describe the propagation of mankind; in which history it is important to notice that this benediction of God, "Increase and multiply," was not abolished by sin...

Although Moses does not state that Cain and Abel were twins it yet seems to me probable that they were so; for, after he has said that Eve, by her first conception, brought forth her firstborn, he soon after subjoins that she also bore another; and thus, while commemorating a double birth, he speaks only of one conception. Let those who think differently enjoy their own opinion; to me, however it appears accordant with reason, when the world had to be replenished with inhabitants, that not only Cain and Abel should have been brought forth at one births but many also afterwards, both males and females.

I have gotten a man. The word which Moses uses signifies both to acquire and to possess. 'I have possessed a man from the Lord;' and the version of Jerome is of equal force, 'Through the Lord.' ...Eve gives thanks to God for having begun to raise up a posterity through her, though she was deserving of perpetual barrenness, as well as of utter destruction. Others, with greater subtlety, expound the words, 'I have gotten the man of the Lord;' as if Eve understood that she already possessed that conqueror of the serpent, who had been divinely promised to her. Hence they celebrate the faith of Eve, because she embraced, by faith, the promise concerning the bruising of the head of the devil through her seed; only they think that she was mistaken in the person or the individual, seeing that she would restrict to Cain what

had been promised concerning Christ. To me, however, this seems to be the genuine sense, that while Eve congratulates herself on the birth of a son, she offers him to God, as the first-fruits of his race. Therefore, I think it ought to be translated, 'I have obtained a man from the Lord', which approaches more nearly the Hebrew phrase. Moreover, she calls a newborn infant a man, because she saw the human race renewed, which both she and her husband had ruined by their own fault.

V.2 *And she again bare his brother Abel.* It is known where the name of Cain came from, and for what reason it was given to him. For his mother said, *I have gotten a man*; and therefore she called his name Cain. The same explanation is not given with respect to Abel.

And Abel was a keeper of sheep. Whether both the brothers had married wives, and each had a separate home, Moses does not relate. This therefore, remains to us in uncertainty, although it is probable that Cain was married before he slew his brother; since Moses soon after adds, that he knew his wife, and begot children: and no mention is there made of his marriage. Both followed a kind of life in itself holy and laudable. For the cultivation of the earth was commanded by God; and the labor of feeding sheep was not less honorable than useful; in short, the whole of rustic life was innocent and simple, and most of all accommodated to the true order of nature. This, therefore, is to be maintained in the first place, that both exercised themselves in labors approved by God, and necessary to the common use of human life. Whence it is inferred, that they had been well instructed by their father. The rite of sacrificing more fully

confirms this; because it proves that they had been accustomed to the worship of God. The life of Cain, therefore, was, in appearance, very well regulated; inasmuch as he cultivated the duties of piety towards God, and sought a maintenance for himself and his, by honest and just labor, as became a provident and sober father of a family.

V.3-4 *And the Lord had respect unto Abel.* God is said to have respect unto the man to whom he vouchsafes his favor. We must, however, notice the order here observed by Moses; for he does not simply state that the *worship* which Abel had paid was pleasing to God, but he begins with the *person* of the offerer; by which he signifies, that God will regard no works with favor except those the doer of which is already previously accepted and approved by him. And no wonder; for man sees things which are external, but God looks into the heart (1 Sam. 16:7;) therefore, he estimates works no otherwise than as they proceed from the fountain of the heart.

Whence also it happens, that he not only rejects but abhors the sacrifices of the wicked, however splendid they may appear in the eyes of men. For if he, who is polluted in his soul, by his mere touch contaminates, with his own impurities, things otherwise pure and clean, how can that but be impure which proceeds from himself? When God repudiates the feigned righteousness in which the Jews were glorying, he objects, through his Prophet, that their hands were “full of blood” (Isaiah 1:15) ...

Certainly, no controversy would then remain on the question, whether God justifies men gratuitously, and that by faith? For this must be received as a settled point, that, in the judgment of God, no respect is had to works until man is received into favor. Another point appears equally certain; since the whole human race is hateful to God, there is no other

way of reconciliation to divine favor than through faith...

V.5 *But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.* It is not to be doubted, that Cain conducted himself as hypocrites are accustomed to do; namely, that he wished to appease God, as one discharging a debt, by external sacrifices, without the least intention of dedicating himself to God. But this is true worship, to offer ourselves as spiritual sacrifices to God. When God sees such hypocrisy, combined with gross and manifest mockery of himself; it is not surprising that he hates it, and is unable to bear it; whence also it follows, that he rejects with contempt the works of those who withdraw *themselves* from him. For it is his will, first to have us devoted to himself; he then seeks our works in testimony of our obedience to him, but only in the second place...

And Cain was very wroth. In this place it is asked, whence Cain understood that his brother’s oblations were preferred to his? The Hebrews, according to their manner, imagine that the sacrifice of Abel was consumed by celestial fire; but we ought not to allow ourselves so great a license as to invent miracles, for which we have no testimony of Scripture. It is, indeed, more probable, that Cain formed the judgment which Moses records, from the events which followed. He saw that it was better with his brother than with himself; thence he inferred, that God was pleased with his brother, and displeased with himself. We know also, that to hypocrites nothing seems of greater value, nothing is more to their heart’s content, than earthly blessing. In the person of Cain is portrayed to us the likeness of a wicked man, who yet desires to be esteemed just, and even arrogates to himself the first place among saints. Such persons truly, by external works, strenuously labor to deserve well at the hands of God; but, retaining a heart enwrapped in deceit, they present to

him nothing but a mask; so that, in their laborious and anxious religious worship, there is nothing sincere, nothing but mere pretense. When they afterwards see that they gain no advantage, they betray the venom of their minds; for they not only complain against God, but break forth in manifest fury, so that, if they were able, they would gladly tear him down from his heavenly throne. Such is the innate pride of all hypocrites, that, by the very appearance of obedience, they would hold God as under obligation to them; because they cannot escape from his authority, they try to sooth him with blandishments, as they would a child; in the meantime, while they count much of their fictitious trifles, they think that God does them great wrong if he does not applaud them...

They wish to bargain with God on their own terms. When this is denied, they burn with furious indignation, which, though conceived against God, they cast forth upon his children. Thus, when Cain was angry with God, his fury was poured forth on his unoffending brother. When Moses says, "his countenance fell," he means, that not only was he seized with a sudden vehement anger, but that, from a lingering sadness, he cherished a feeling so malignant that he was wasting with envy.

V.6 *And the Lord said unto Cain.* God now proceeds against Cain himself, and cites him to His tribunal, that the wretched man may understand that his rage can profit him nothing. Cain does not consider that through his own fault he had failed to gain his wish; for had he but been conscious of his inward evil, he would have ceased to expostulate with God, and to rage against his guiltless brother.

V.7 *If thou does well.* In these words, God reproves Cain for having been unjustly angry, inasmuch as the blame of the whole evil lay with himself. For foolish indeed was his complaint and indignation at the rejection of

sacrifices, the defects of which he had taken no care to amend. Thus all wicked men, after they have been long and vehemently enraged against God, are at length so convicted by the Divine judgment, that they vainly desire to transfer to others the cause of the evil...

And if thou does not well... God not only repels his unjust complaint, but shows that Cain could have no greater adversary than that sin of his which he inwardly cherished. *Sin lies at the door*, the expression of Moses has peculiar energy. Sin is said to *lie*, but it is at the *door*; for the sinner is not immediately tormented with the fear of judgment; but, gathering around him whatever delights he is able, in order to deceive himself; he walks as in free space, and even revels as in pleasant meadows; when, however, he comes to the door, there he meets with sin, keeping constant guard; and then conscience, which before thought itself at liberty, is arrested, and receives, double punishment for the delay...

V.8 *And Cain talked with Abel his brother.* Some understand this conversation to have been general; as if Cain, concealing his anger, spoke in a fraternal manner. Jerome relates the language used, 'Come, let us go without.' Hypocrites are never to be more dreaded than when they stoop to converse under the pretext of friendship; because when they are not permitted to injure by open violence as much as they please, suddenly they assume a feigned appearance of peace. But it is by no means to be expected that they who are as savage beasts towards God, should sincerely cultivate the confidence of friendship with men...

V.9 *Where is Abel?* ...Prodigious was the stupor of Cain, who, having committed a crime so great, ferociously rejected the reproof of God, from whose hand he was nevertheless unable to escape. But the same thing daily happens to all the wicked; every one of whom desires to be deemed ingenious

in catching at excuses. For the human heart is so entangled in winding labyrinths, that it is easy for the wicked to add obstinate contempt of God to their crimes; not because their stubbornness is sufficiently firm to withstand the judgment of God, (for, although they hide themselves in the deep recesses of which I have spoken, they are, nevertheless, always secretly burned, as with a hot iron) but because, by a blind obstinacy they render themselves callous... Cain, in denying that he was the keeper of his brother's life, thinks to escape by this cavil, that he was not required to give an account of his murdered brother, because he had received no express command to take care of him...

V.10 *What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood...* We learn in the person of one man, what an unhappy issue of their cause awaits those, who desire to extricate themselves by contending against God. For He, the Searcher of hearts, has no need of a long, circuitous course of investigation; but, with one word, so fulminates against those whom he accuses, as to be sufficient, and more than sufficient, for their condemnation. Man's first defense is in the denial of the fact. Where the fact cannot be denied, they have recourse to the qualifying circumstances of the case. Cain is driven from both these defenses; for God both pronounces him guilty of the slaughter, and, at the same time, declares the heinousness of the crime. And we are warned by his example, that pretexts and subterfuges are heaped together in vain, when sinners are cited to the tribunal of God...

The voice of thy brother's blood crieth. God first shows that he is cognizant of the deeds of men, though no one should complain of or accuse them; secondly that he holds the life of man too dear, to allow innocent blood to be shed with impunity; thirdly, that he cares for the pious not only while they live, but even after death. Earthly judges may sleep,

unless an accuser appeals to them; yet even when he who is injured is silent the injuries themselves are alone sufficient to arouse God to inflict punishment...

Abel was speechless when his throat was being cut, or in whatever other manner he was losing his life; but after death the voice of his blood was more vehement than any eloquence of the orator. Thus oppression and silence do not hinder God from judging, or the cause which the world supposes to be buried. This consolation affords us most abundant reason for patience when we learn that we shall lose nothing of our right, if we bear injuries with moderation and equanimity; and that God will be so much the more ready to vindicate us, the more modestly we submit ourselves to endure all things...

V.11 *And now art thou cursed from the earth.* Cain, having been convicted of the crime, judgment is now pronounced against him... Most detestable is the cruelty of this man, who does not shrink from pouring forth his neighbor's blood, of which the bosom of the earth becomes the receptacle... Cain is now cursed in stronger words than Adam had previously been... Adam heard the words, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake:" but now the shaft of divine vengeance vibrates against and transfixes on the person of Cain...

A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be. Another punishment is now also inflicted; namely, that he never could be safe, to whatever place he might come... Wherever Cain might come, he should be *unsettled* and a *fugitive*; as robbers are wont to be, who have no quiet and secure resting-place; for the face of every man strikes terror into them; and, on the other hand, they have a horror of solitude. But this seems to some by no means a suitable punishment for a murderer. To which I answer, that Cain was not only condemned to personal exile, but was also

subjected to still more severe punishment; namely, that he should find no region of the earth where he would not be of a restless and fearful mind; for as a good conscience is properly called ‘a brazen walls’ so neither a hundred walls, nor as many fortresses, can free the wicked from disquietude...

Cain, even if he had not changed his place, could not have shaken off the trepidation which God had fixed in his mind; nor did the fact, that he was the first man who built a city, prevent him from being always restless even in his own nest...

V.13 *My punishment is greater.* This is the language of desperation; because Cain, confounded by the judgment of God, had no remaining hope of pardon. And this, indeed, is true, that the reprobate are never conscious of their evils, till a ruin, from which they cannot escape, overtakes them; yea, truly, when the sinner, obstinate to the last, mocks the patience of God, this is the due reward of his late repentance that he feels a horrible torment for which there is no remedy—if, truly, that blind and astonished dread of punishments which is without any hatred of sin, or any desire to return to God, can be called repentance — so even Judas confesses his sin, but, overwhelmed with fear, flies as far as possible from the presence of God...

V. 15 *Therefore, whosoever slayeth Cain.* The Lord declares, if any will imitate Cain, not only shall they have no excuse in his example, but shall be more grievously tor-

mented; because they ought, in his person, to perceive how detestable is their wickedness in the sight of God. Wherefore, they are greatly deceived who suppose that the anger of God is mitigated when men can plead custom as an excuse for sinning; whereas it is from that cause the more inflamed.

And the Lord set a mark. Nothing was granted to Cain for the sake of favoring him; but for the sake of opposing future cruelty and unjust violence. Therefore, Moses now says, that a mark was set upon Cain, which should strike terror into all; because they might see, as in a mirror the tremendous judgment of God against bloody men. As Scripture does not describe what kind of mark it was, commentators have conjectured, that his body became tremulous. It may suffice for us, that there was some visible token which should repress in the spectators the desire and the audacity to inflict injury...

V.26 *Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord...* Yea, this is the spiritual worship of God which faith produces... We may readily conclude that Seth was an upright and faithful servant of God. And after he begat a son, like himself, and had a rightly constituted family...worship of God was set up which might continue to posterity... How great is the propensity of men, either to gross contempt of God, or to superstition; since both evils must have everywhere prevailed, when Moses relates it as a miracle that there was at that time a single family in which the worship of God arose.

What thought from John Calvin’s words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 4:1-26 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 4:1-26 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 4:1-26?

*If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, **sin is crouching at your door**; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it. (Genesis 4:7)*



Genesis 4:7 uses picturesque language to describe the nature of sin. It sits just outside the door, waiting to devour us. The “door” is the choice that looks like the best or the easiest one to us, but is actually sinful and against God’s will. We make certain choices because we think that they will do us well...but whenever we choose sin, we always choose the consequences that come with that sin. And the consequences will not only harm others but they will ultimately destroy us.

What sin is crouching at your door? What temptation are you currently struggling with?

Why does this sin seem so inviting to you? What is it promising you? _____

Are you willing to trust God and not open the door to sin? _____

The sins that Cain gave into were envy, anger, and resentment. He felt like he had a “right” to be angry...against God and against his brother. Yet Scripture is clear when it comes to anger.

“In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

Read the following verses which also deal with the danger of simmering anger and resentment:

*Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
Do not fret—it leads only to evil. (Psalm 37:8)*

*Whoever is patient has great understanding,
But one who is quick-tempered displays folly. (Proverbs 14:29)*

*A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict,
But the one who is patient calms a quarrel. (Proverbs 15:18)*

*Fools give full vent to their rage,
But the wise bring calm in the end. (Proverbs 29:11)*

*Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit,
For anger resides in the lap of fools. (Ecclesiastes 7:9)*

But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, “Raca,” is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, “You fool!” will be in danger of the fire of hell. (Matthew 5:22)

See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. (Hebrews 12:15)

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. (James 1:19-20)

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. (James 4:1-2)

Honestly let the Lord search your heart today. What are you angry about? Why?

Even if this is “righteous anger” in your mind, Scripture says that allowing that anger to simmer will eventually give the devil a foothold in your heart and lead you into bitterness, resentment, and foolish choices that will harm you, others, and your relationship with God.

Hand your anger over to the Lord. He is the righteous Judge who sees the situation perfectly and will handle it with true justice. You can trust Him...and you can live in the freedom of forgiveness!

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

No matter how just your words may be, you ruin everything when you speak with anger.

John Chrysostom (347-407)

Pride is one chief cause of undue anger. It is because men are proud, and exalt themselves in their own hearts, that they are revengeful, and are apt to be excited, and to make great things out of little ones that may be against themselves. Yea, they even treat as vices things that are in themselves virtues, when they think their honor is touched, or when their will is crossed.

Jonathan Edwards (1703-58)

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- If you had siblings growing up, what were the biggest challenges you faced in your relationship with them? Whom did you get along with best? Whom did you struggle with?
- Why do you think God accepted Abel's sacrifice but not Cain's?
- What was Cain's response? What do you think was going through Cain's mind?
- What do you learn from Genesis 4:6-7?
- How do you think the murder of Abel by his brother, Cain, impacted Adam and Eve?
- What can you learn from the life of Cain? From the life of Lamech? From the life of Seth?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of John Calvin? If so, what?
- Read the passages on anger again. Discuss what stands out to you in these verses. Spend some time in prayer together, praying for God to replace our anger with His peace and joy.

DEATH ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 5:1-6:8

DAY ONE Observation

When sin entered the world, it brought death along with it. Thus, death spread to all humanity (Romans 5:12). Genesis 5 shows us the reality of physical death and Genesis 6 shows us the reality of spiritual death.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 5:1-6:8. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

⁵ This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. ² He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.

³ And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. ⁴ After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. ⁵ So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

⁶ Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. ⁷ After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. ⁸ So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

⁹ Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan. ¹⁰ After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. ¹¹ So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.

¹² Cainan lived seventy years, and begot Mahalalel. ¹³ After he begot Mahalalel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty years, and had sons and daughters. ¹⁴ So all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

¹⁵ Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and begot Jared. ¹⁶ After he begot Jared, Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had sons and daughters. ¹⁷ So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

¹⁸ Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot Enoch. ¹⁹ After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²⁰ So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

²¹ Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. ²² After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²³ So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

²⁵ Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech. ²⁶ After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters. ²⁷ So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.

²⁸ Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. ²⁹ 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.”

³⁰ After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. ³¹ So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

³² And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, ² 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.

³ 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.” ⁴ 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.

⁵ Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ 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.”

⁸ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. (NKJV)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Genesis 5:1-2 gives us a summary of “the day that God created man” (cf. Genesis 1-2).

What three statements are made about God’s creation of humanity in these verses?

He made _____

He created _____

He blessed _____

Complete the following chart from Genesis 5.

	The Highlighted Son	Age When He Had This Son	Total Age He Lived
<i>Adam</i>			
<i>Seth</i>			
<i>Enosh</i>			
<i>Cainan</i>			
<i>Mahalaleel</i>			
<i>Jared</i>			
<i>Enoch</i>			
<i>Methuselah</i>			
<i>Lamech</i>			

There is a repeated pattern, over and over, in Genesis 5. *He lived...he begot...he died.* However, there are two “interruptions” to this pattern. **What do we learn in these two interruptions?**

5:24 _____

5:29 _____

Complete the following sentences from Genesis 6.

The sons of God saw the _____ that they were beautiful.

They chose wives for themselves of _____.

There were _____ on the earth in those days.

The Lord was sorry that He had made man and He was _____ in His heart.

But Noah found _____ in the eyes of the Lord.

What is God’s diagnosis of man’s heart in 6:5? _____

What does God say that He is going to do because of the evil condition of man’s heart?

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 6:5-6 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*Then Adonai saw that the wickedness of humankind was great on the earth,
and that every inclination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil all the time.*

*So Adonai regretted that He made humankind on the earth,
and His heart was deeply pained. (TLV)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 6" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 6:4 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word "giants" and click on the Strong's number (H5303) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for "giants"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially Strong's Definition and Gesenius' Lexicon)

The "giants" (Nephilim) in Genesis 6:4 and the identification of the "sons of God" in Genesis 6:2 are some of the most difficult interpretive challenges in the Bible. *Who are these people?*

Read the following excerpt from the NET Bible regarding the Hebrew word, *Nephilim*.

The Hebrew word נְפִילִים (nephilim) is simply transliterated here because the meaning of the term is uncertain. According to the text, the Nephilim became mighty warriors and gained great fame in the pre-flood world. The text may imply they were the offspring of the sexual union of the *sons of God* and the *daughters of humankind* (v. 2), but it stops short of saying this in a direct manner. The Nephilim are mentioned in the OT only here and in Num. 13:33, where it is stated that they were giants (thus KJV, TEV, NLT "giants" here). The narrator observes that the Anakites of Canaan were descendants of the Nephilim. Certainly these later Anakite Nephilim could not be descendants of the pre-flood Nephilim.

Genesis 6:4 is parenthetical, explaining that there were Nephilim even after the flood. If all humankind, with the exception of Noah and his family, died in the flood, it is difficult to understand how the post-flood Nephilim could be related to the pre-flood Nephilim or how the Anakites of Canaan could be their descendants (see Num. 13:33). It is likely that the term Nephilim refers generally to "giants" without implying any ethnic connection between the pre-flood and post-flood varieties. (netbible.org/bible/Genesis+6)

What do you learn about the Hebrew word, *Nephilim*, from this excerpt?

Read the following summary of the two major views of the “sons of God” in Genesis 6:2. This summary is based on Thomas Constable’s *Expository Notes* (netbible.org/bible/Genesis+6).

1. They were fallen angels who married women.

- The term “sons of God” as it occurs here in Hebrew refers only to angels in the OT (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; et al.). Response: Angels do not reproduce (Matt. 22:30).
- 2 Peter 2:4-5 and Jude 6-7 appear to identify angels with this incident. Response: There are no other references to angels in the context here in Genesis. These New Testament passages could refer to the fall of Satan.
- If God could impregnate Mary, spirit beings may be able to do the same thing to human women. Response: Spirit beings cannot do everything that God can do.
- This view has been held by many ancient Jewish and Christian interpreters. Response: A “common interpretation” is not always a “correct interpretation.”

2. They were godly Sethites who married ungodly women.

- The OT often refers to the godly as God’s sons (e.g., Exod. 4:22). Response: This would have to be an exception to the technical use of “sons of God” as a reference to angels in the OT.
- Moses had already established the concept of a godly line in Genesis (4:26). Response: The concept of a spiritual battle has also been brought up in Genesis 3.
- Sonship based on election is common in the OT. Response: That does not mean that the concept of sonship is used for the “elect” line of Seth here.
- Warnings against marriages between believers and unbelievers are common in the Pentateuch. Response: There are also warnings against spiritual warfare in the Bible.

Genesis 6 is an example of an interpretation that is fairly evenly split between Bible-believing Christians. Both interpretations can be defended biblically and contextually. If the “sons of God” were fallen angels then the situation on earth before the Flood had become so demonically degenerate and deformed that God would have had to act in extreme judgment on the earth. If the “sons of God” are the godly line of Seth then the situation on earth had become so bad that even the godliest of men, from the godliest of families, were becoming sexually perverse and unable to control themselves. Either way, it is clear that God’s judgment on the earth was just. (For further study: equip.sbts.edu/article/who-are-the-sons-of-god-daughters-of-man-and-nephilim)

Go back to Genesis 6:8 in blueletterbible.org. Find the word “grace” and click on the Strong’s number (H2580) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for “grace”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

This is the first use of the word “grace” in Scripture, but—praise be to God—it is not the last!

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from Alexander MacLaren's *Expositions of Holy Scriptures*. **Alexander MacLaren** (1826-1910) was a Baptist pastor in Manchester, England whose sermons were known for their "profundity of thought, logical arrangement, eloquence of appeal, and power over the human heart."

THE CROWN OF A DEVOUT LIFE (GEN 5:24)

This notice of Enoch occurs in the course of a catalogue of the descendants of Adam, from the Creation to the Deluge. It is evidently a very ancient document, and is constructed on a remarkable plan. The formula for each man is the same. So-and-so lived, begat his heir, the next in the series, lived on after that so many years, having anonymous children, lived altogether so long, and then died. The chief thing about each life is the birth of the successor, and each man's career is in broad outline the same. A dreary monotony runs through the ages. How brief and uniform may be the records of lives of striving and tears and smiles and love that stretched through centuries! Nine hundred years shrink into less than as many lines.

The solemn monotony is broken in the case of Enoch. This paragraph begins as usual, but afterwards we read that he *walked with God*. Happy they for whom such a phrase is equivalent to "live"! And, instead of "died," it is said of him that *he was not*. That seems to imply that he, as it were, slipped out of sight or suddenly disappeared; as one of the psalms says, "I looked, and lo! he was not." He was there a moment ago—now he is gone; and my text tells how that sudden withdrawal came about. God, with whom he walked, put out His hand and took him to Himself. Of course, what other end could there be to a life that was all passed in communion with God except that crown of it all, the lifting of the man into closer communion with his Father and his Friend?

So, then, there are just these two things here—the noblest life and its crown.

1. The noblest life.

He walked with God. That is all. There is no need to tell what he did or tried to do, how he sorrowed or joyed, what were his circumstances. These may all fade from men's knowledge as they have somewhat faded from his memory up yonder. It is enough that he walked with God.

Of course, we have here, underlying the phrase, the familiar comparison of life to a journey, with all its suggestions of constant change and constant effort, and with the suggestion, too, that each life should be a progress directly tending to one clearly recognized goal. But passing from that, let us just think for a moment of the characteristics which must go to make up a life of which we can say that it is walking with God.

The first of these clearly is the one that the writer of Hebrews puts his finger upon, when he makes faith the spring of Enoch's career.

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. (Hebrews 11:5)

The first requisite to true communion with God is vigorous exercise of that faculty by which we realize the fact of His presence with us; and that not as a jealous-eyed inspector, from whose scrutiny we cannot escape, but as a companion and friend to whom we can cleave. 'He that cometh to God,' and walks with God, must first of all 'believe that He is'; and passing by all the fascinations of things seen, and rising above all the temptations of things temporal, his realizing eye must fix upon the divine Father and see Him

nearer and more clearly than these. You cannot walk with God unless you are emancipated from the dominion of sense and time, and are living by the power of that great faculty, which lays hold of the things that are unseen as the realities, and smiles at the false and forged pretensions of material things to be the real.

We have to invert the teaching of the world and of our senses. My fingers and my eyes and my ears tell me that this gross, material universe about me is the real, and that all beyond it is shadowy and sometimes we think doubtful, or, at any rate, dim and far off. But that is false, and the truth is precisely the other way. The Unseen is the Real, and the Material is the merely Apparent. Behind all visible objects, and giving them all their reality, lies the unchangeable God.

Cultivate the faculty and habit of vigorous faith, if you would walk with God. For the world will put its bandages over your eyes, and try to tempt you to believe that these poor, shabby illusions are the precious things; and we have to shake ourselves free from its harlot kisses and its fawning lies, by very vigorous and continual efforts of the will and of the understanding, if we are to make real to ourselves that which is real, the presence of our God.

Besides this vigorous exercise of the faculty of faith, there is another requisite for a walk with God, closely connected with it, and yet capable of being looked at separately, and that is, that we shall keep up the habit of continual occupation of thought with Him. That is very much an affair of habit with Christian people, and I am afraid that the neglect of it is the habitual practice of the bulk of professing Christians nowadays. It is hard, amidst all our work and thought and joys and sorrows, to keep fresh our consciousness of His presence, and to talk with Him in the midst of the rush of business.

But what do we do about our dear ones when we are away from them? The measure of our love of them is accurately represented by the frequency of our remembrances of them. The mother parted from her child, the husband and the wife separated from one another, the lover and the friend, think of each other a thousand times a day. Whenever the spring is taken off, then the natural bent of the inclination and heart assert themselves, and the mind goes back again, as into a sanctuary, into the sweet thought.

Is that how we do with God? Do we so walk with Him that our thoughts instinctively set in that direction? When I take off for a break, does my spirit turn to God? If there is no hand at the helm, does the bow always point that way? When the magnet is withdrawn for a moment, does the needle tremble back and settle itself northwards? If we are walking with God, we shall, more times a day than we can count when the evening comes on, have had the thought of Him coming into our hearts 'like some sweet beguiling melody, so sweet we know not we are listening to it.' Thus we shall 'walk with God.'

Then there is another requisite. 'How can two walk together except they be agreed?' 'He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.' There is no union with God in such communion possible, unless there be a union with Him by conformity of will and submission of effort and aim to His commandments.

Well, then, is that life possible for us? Look at this instance before us. We know very little about how much knowledge of God these people in old days had, but, at all events, it was a great deal less than you and I have. Their theology was very different from ours; their religion was absolutely identical with ours. Their faith, which grasped the God revealed in their creed, was the same as our faith, though the creed which their faith

grasped was only an outline sketch of yours and mine. But at all times and in all generations, the element and essence of the religious life has been the same—that is, the realizing sense of the living divine presence, the effort and aspiration after communion with Him, and the quiet obedience and conformity of the practical life to His will. And so we can reach out our hands across all the centuries to this pre-flood patriarch, dim amongst the mists, and feel that he too is our brother.

And he has set us the example that in all conditions of life, and under the most unfavorable circumstances, it is possible to live in this close touch with God. For in his time, not only was there, as I have said, an incomplete and rudimentary knowledge of God, but in his time the earth was filled with violence, and gigantic forms of evil are represented as having dominated mankind. Amidst it all, the Titanic pride, the godlessness, the scorn, the rudeness, and the violence, amidst it all, this one ‘white flower of a blameless life’ managed to find nutriment upon the dunghill, and to blossom fresh and fair there.

You and I cannot, whatever may be our hindrances in living a consistent Christian life, have anything like the difficulties that this man had and surmounted. For us all, whatever our conditions, such a life is possible.

And then there is another lesson that he teaches us—that such a life is consistent with the completest discharge of all common duties. The outline, as far as appearance was concerned, of this man’s life was the same as the outline of those of his ancestors and successors. They are all described in the same terms. The formula is the same. Enoch lived, Mahalaleel, and all the rest of the half-unpronounceable names, they lived, they begat their heirs, and sons and daughters, and then they died. And the same formula is used

about this man. He walked with God, but it was while treading the common path of secular life that he did so.

He found it possible to live in communion with God, and yet to do all the common things that men did then. Anybody’s house may be a Bethel—a house of God—and anybody’s work may be worship; and wherever we are and whatever we do, it is possible therein to serve God, and there to walk with Him.

2. The crown of this life of communion: ‘He was not, for God took him.’

What wonderful reticence in describing, or rather hinting at, the stupendous miracle that is here in question! Is that like a book that came from the legend-loving and legend-making brains of men; or does it sound like the speech of God, to whom nothing is extraordinary and nothing needs to have a mark of admiration after it? It was the same to Him whether Enoch died or whether He simply took him to Himself. If one wants to know what men would have made of such a thing, if *they* had had to tell it, let them read those wretched Rabbinical fables that have been stitched on to this verse. There they will see how men describe miracles; and here they will see how God does so.

He was not. He disappeared; that was what the world knew. *God took him;* that was what God tells the world.

Thus this strange exception to the law of death stood, as I suppose, to the ancient world as doing somewhat the same office for them that the translation of Elijah afterwards partially did for Israel, and that the resurrection of Jesus Christ does completely for us—it brought the future life into the realm of fact, and took it out of the dim region of speculation altogether. He establishes a truth who

proves it, and he proves a fact that shows it. A doctrine of a future state is not worth much, but the fact of a future state, which was established by this incident then, and is certified for us all now, by the Christ risen from the dead, is all-important. Our gospel is all built upon facts, and this is the earliest fact in man's history which made man's subsistence in other conditions than that of earthly life a certainty.

And then, again, this wonderful exception shows to us, as it did to that ancient world, that the natural end of a religious life is union with God hereafter... Death cannot kill love to God; and the only end of the religious life of earth is its perfecting in heaven. The experiences that we have here, in their loftiness and in their incompleteness, equally witness for us, of the rest and the perfectness that remain for the children of God.

Then, again, this man in his unique experience was, and is, a witness of the fact that death is an abnormality, and results from sin.

I suppose that he trod the road which the divine intention had destined to be trodden by all the children of men, if they had not sinned; and that his experience, unique as it is, is a survival, so to speak, of what was meant to be the law for humanity, unless there had intervened the terrible fact of sin and its wages, death. The road had been made, and this one man was allowed to travel along it that we might all learn, by the example of the exception, that the rule under which we live was not the rule that God originally meant for us, and that death has resulted from the fact of transgression.

No doubt Enoch had in him the seeds of it, no doubt there were the possibilities of disease and the necessity of death in his physical frame, but God has shown us in that one instance, and in the other of the great

prophet's, how *He* is not subject to the law that men shall die, although men are subject to it, and that if He will, He can take them all to Himself, as He did take these two, and will take them who, at last, shall not die but be changed.

Let me remind you that this unique and exceptional end of a life of communion may, in its deepest, essential character, be experienced by each of us. There are two passages in the book of Psalms, both of which I regard as allusions to this incident. The one of them is in the forty-ninth Psalm and reads thus: 'He will deliver my soul from the power of the grave, for He will take me' [49:15]. Our version conceals the allusion, by its unfortunate and non-literal rendering 'receive.' The same word is employed there as here. Can we fail to see the reference? The Psalmist expects his soul to be 'delivered from the power of the grave,' because God *takes* it.

And again, in the great seventy-third Psalm, which marks perhaps the high water mark of pre-Christian anticipations of a future state, we read: 'Thou wilt guide me by Thy counsel, and afterwards *take* me' again the same word 'to glory' [73:24]. Here, again, the Psalmist looks back to the unique and exceptional instance, and in the rapture and ecstasy of the faith that has grasped the living God as his portion, says to himself: 'Though the externals of Enoch's end and of mine may differ, their substance will be the same, and I, too, shall cease to be seen of men, because God takes me into the secret of His pavilion, by the loving clasp of His lifting hand.'

Enoch was led, if I may say so, round the top of the valley, beyond the head waters of the dark river, and was kept on the high level until he got to the other side. You and I have to go down the hill, out of the sunshine, in among the dank weeds, to stumble over the black rocks, and wade through the deep

water; but we shall get over to the same place where he stands, and He that took him round by the top will 'take' us through the river; and so shall we 'ever be with the Lord.'

'Enoch walked with God and he was not; for God took him.' This verse is like some little spring with trees and flowers on a cliff. The dry genealogical table—and here this bit of human life in it! How unlike the others—they *lived* and they *died*. This man's life was walking with God and his departure was a fading away, a ceasing to be found here. It is remarkable in how calm a tone the Bible speaks of its supernatural events. We should not have known this to be a miracle but for the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The dim past of these early chapters carries us over many centuries. We know next to nothing about the men, where they lived, how they lived, what thoughts they had, what tongue they spoke. Some people would say that they never lived at all. I believe, and most of you, I suppose, believe that they did. But how little personality we give them! Little as we know of environment and circumstances, we know the main thing, the fact of their having been. Then we are sure that they had sorrow and joy, strife and love, toil and rest, like the rest of us, that whether their days

were longer or shorter they were filled much as ours are, that whatever was the pattern into which the quiet threads of their life was woven it was, warp and weft, the same yarn as ours.

In broad features every human life is much the same. Widely different as the clothing of these grey fathers in their tents, with their simple contrivances and brief records, is from that of cultivated busy Englishmen today, the same human form is beneath both. And further, we know but little as to their religious ideas, how far they were surrounded with miracles, what they knew of God and of His purposes, how they received their knowledge, what served them for a Bible. Of what positive institutions of religion they had we know nothing; whether for them there was sacrifice and a Sabbath day, how far the original gospel to Adam was known or remembered or understood by them. All that is perfectly dark to us.

But this we know, that those of them who were godly men lived by the same power by which godly men live nowadays. Whatever their creed, their religion was ours. Faith, the bond that unites again the soul to God, has always been the same.

What thought from Alexander MacLaren's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 5:1-6:8 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 5:1-6:8 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 5:1-6:8?

He lived... he begat... he died. It is a sad refrain in Genesis 5. Yet it reminds us of the reality and futility of life in this present world. We are born... we pass our time on this earth... work... play... possibly get married... possibly have sons and daughters... and then pass away in death.

As Ecclesiastes reminds us: If you are only looking at life *under the sun* from a human perspective, then *vanity of vanities, all is vanity!* (Ecclesiastes 1:2)

But in the midst of the sin, depravity, monotony, and death of Genesis 5-6, there are rays of hope.

Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. (5:24)

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. (6:8)

THE WORLD

Write (or draw) all the challenges of living for Christ in our present culture.

What attributes of God and promises of His Word can you hold onto?

In the arrow, write how you can walk with God in this present culture.

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Enoch is an example of one who found life amid the curse of death. In Enoch the author is able to show that the pronouncement of death is not the last word that need be said about a person's life. One can find life if one "walks with God."

John Sailhamer

Noah did not find favor in the eyes of men; they hated and persecuted him, because both by his life and preaching he condemned the world: but he found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and this made him more truly honorable than the men of renown. Let this be our chief desire, let us labor that we may be accepted of him. When the rest of the world was wicked, Noah kept his integrity.

Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What do you know about your own genealogy? In 1-2 words, how would you describe your parents? Grandparents? Great-grandparents?
- Why do you think Genesis 5 starts off with a reminder of how God created humanity (5:1-2)?
- What stands out to you about the life of Enoch?
- What do you think life was like in the pre-flood world? How hard do you think it would have been to walk with God in such a world?
- Do you think fallen angels had sexual intercourse with women in Genesis 6? Why or why not?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Alexander MacLaren? If so, what?
- What challenges do you face living for Christ in our present culture? Do you tend more toward getting angry or going into hiding? What would it look like to "walk with God" in our culture?
- Pray for one another.

JUDGMENT ACCORDING TO GOD

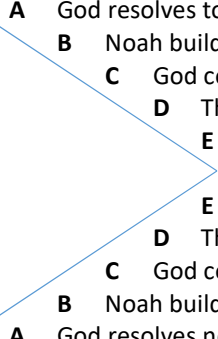
Genesis 6:9-8:22

DAY ONE Observation

The world is corrupt, rebellious, violent, evil. God sees the situation on earth and His heart is grieved. Humanity has reached a point of no return so God sends His righteous judgment upon the earth. This is the Flood.

Before reading through this passage, take a moment to see its overall structure. Genesis 6-8 form a chiasm with the central focus on Genesis 8:1: *God remembered Noah*.

Introduction: Noah's righteousness and Noah's sons (6:9-10)

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- A God resolves to destroy all life on the corrupt earth (6:11-13)
 - B Noah builds an ark (6:14-22)
 - C God commands the remnant to enter the ark (7:1-9)
 - D The flood begins (7:10-16)
 - E The flood prevails 150 days (7:17-24)
 - F God remembers Noah (8:1a)
 - E The flood recedes 150 days (8:1b-5)
 - D The earth dries (8:6-14)
 - C God commands the remnant to leave the ark (8:15-19)
 - B Noah builds an altar (8:20)
 - A God resolves not to destroy all life on earth again (8:21-22)

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 6:9-8:22. Mark words or phrases as you read. Pause after each section to answer the observation questions included in the margin.

⁹ These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.

¹⁰ And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

¹³ And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. ¹⁶ Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. ¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ And of every living thing of all

There are three things to "behold" in Gen. 6:9-13. Behold Noah, behold the earth, behold God. **What do you see when you look at each of them?**

What are the dimensions and the basic structure of the ark?

flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. ²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. ²¹ Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.” ²² Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

What is the purpose of the ark?

What are 2-3 things that you learn about Noah from this passage?

⁷ Then the Lord said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. ² Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, ³ and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. ⁴ For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” ⁵ And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

⁶ Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. ⁷ And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. ⁸ Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground. ⁹ two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. ¹² And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. ¹³ On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, ¹⁴ they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. ¹⁵ They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶ And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the Lord shut him in.

When did the flood begin?

What repeated phrases do you see throughout this passage? What can you learn from each phrase?

¹⁷ The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. ¹⁸ The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ¹⁹ And the waters

prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. ²⁰ The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. ²¹ And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth and all mankind. ²² Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

Highlight 8:1. What is significant about this verse?

8 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. ² The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, ³ and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, ⁴ and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵ And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

⁶ At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made ⁷ and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. ⁸ Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. ⁹ But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. ¹⁰ He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.

¹¹ And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. ¹² Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore.

¹³ In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. ¹⁴ In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out.

¹⁵ Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶ “Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷ Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply

How long were Noah and his family in the ark?

on the earth.”¹⁸ So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him.¹⁹ Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.²¹ And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.

²² While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Summer and winter,
Day and night,
Shall not cease.” (ESV)

What did Noah do after going out from the ark?

What was God’s response?

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Go back through the passage and mark the numbers 7, 40, and 150. Use a different color highlighter or pencil if you have one. Notice an additional numerical structure in this passage.

- 7 days of waiting (7:4)
- 7 days of waiting (7:10)
- 40 days of flood (7:17)
- 150 days of water on earth (7:24)
- 150 days of water on earth (8:3)
- 40 days of waiting (8:6)
- 7 days of waiting (8:10)
- 7 days of waiting (8:12)

Here are the key dates of the flood narrative using Noah’s age as the year marker.

2-10-600	Sunday	Announcement of the flood (7:4)
2-17-600	Sunday	Flood begins (7:11)
3-27-600	Friday	Flood lasts 40 days (7:12)
7-17-600	Friday	Flood increases and abates (8:4)
10-1-600	Wednesday	Mountain tops appear (8:5)
1-1-601	Wednesday	Waters dry up (8:13)
2-27-601	Wednesday	Noah leaves the ark (8:14)

[Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*]

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 7:13-16 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

*On this very same day Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth,
the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark,
they and every animal according to its kind,
and all the livestock according to their kind,
and every crawling thing that crawls on the earth according to its kind,
and every bird according to its kind, all sorts of birds.*

*So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which there was the breath of life.
Those that entered, male and female of all flesh,
entered as God had commanded him;
and the Lord closed the door behind him. (NASB)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

It is hard to comprehend the magnitude of a worldwide flood...and the cataclysmic changes that occurred on the earth during the flood as well as afterwards. Though it may be hard to fathom, there are over 270 cultures around the world that have a flood story in their ancient history.

Stories of a great flood sent in primeval times by gods to destroy mankind followed by some form of new creation are so common to so many peoples in different parts of the world, between whom no kind of historical contact seems possible, that the notion seems almost to be a universal feature of the human imagination. (R. N. Whybray, Professor of OT Studies, Oxford University)

Go to blueletterbible.org and type "Genesis 6" into the "Search the Bible" box. Click on Genesis 6:11 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word "violence" and click on the Strong's number (H2555) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for "violence"? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

Read the following passages that use this Hebrew word.

*Whoever is pregnant with evil
Conceives trouble and gives birth to disillusionment.
Whoever digs a hole and scoops it out
Falls into the pit they have made.
The trouble they cause recoils on them;
Their **violence** comes down on their own heads. (Psalm 7:15-16)*

*The Lord tests the righteous and the wicked,
And the one who loves **violence** His soul hates.
He will rain coals of fire upon the wicked,
And brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup.
For the Lord is righteous, He loves righteousness;
The upright will see His face. (Psalm 11:5-7)*

What does the Lord say will happen to those who love and pursue violence?

Go back to Genesis 6:14 in blueletterbible.org. Find the word “ark” and click on the Strong’s number (H8392) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for “ark”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

In what other passage (besides Genesis 6-9) is this word used? What does it refer to?

Go back to Genesis 8:1 in blueletterbible.org. Find the word “remember” and click on the Strong’s number (H2142) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for “remember”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

Read the following verses which use this Hebrew word. Mark key phrases as you read.

Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. (Genesis 30:22)

So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Exodus 2:24)

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (Exodus 20:8)

Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, “Because I have asked for him from the Lord.” (1 Samuel 1:19b-20)

*Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the Lord our God. (Psalm 20:7)*

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth. (Ecclesiastes 12:1a)

Based on these verses, what does it mean to “remember”? Is it simply cognitive knowledge?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from **Matthew Henry's Exposition of the Old and New Testaments**. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) was a pastor, speaker, and author from Chester, England. He is best known for his exhaustive, six-volume, verse-by-verse commentary on the Scriptures. Charles Spurgeon stated that, "Every minister ought to read it entirely and carefully through once at least."

Depravity of the World (6:11-12)

The wickedness of that generation is here again spoken of as a foil to Noah's piety—he was just and perfect, when all the earth was corrupt—and as further justification of God's resolution to destroy the world...

All kinds of sin was found among them, for it is said the earth was...

1. **Corrupt before God**, that is, in the matters of God's worship; either they had other gods before him, or they worshipped him by images, or they were corrupt and wicked in despite and contempt of God, daring him and defying him to his face.

2. **The earth was also filled with violence** and injustice towards men. There was no order nor regular government; no man was safe in the possession of that which he had the most clear and incontestable right to, no, not the most innocent life; there was nothing but murders, rapes, and rapine. Take away conscience and the fear of God, and men become beasts and devils to one another...where the greater devour the less...

3. **The universal spreading of the contagion**: *All flesh had corrupted his way*. It was not some particular nations or cities that were thus wicked, but the whole world of mankind were so; there was none that did good, no, not one besides Noah. When wickedness has become general and universal ruin is not far off; while there is a remnant of praying people in a nation, to empty the measure as it fills, judgments may be kept off a great while; but when all hands are at work to pull down the

fences by sin, and none stand in the gap to make up the breach, what can be expected but an inundation of wrath?

Prediction of the Deluge (6:13-22)

1. **God makes Noah the man of his counsel**, communicating to him his purpose to destroy this wicked world by water. As, afterwards, he told Abraham his resolution concerning Sodom (Gen 18:17). The secret of the Lord is with those that fear him (Psalms 25:14) ...

2. **God makes Noah the man of his covenant** *But with thee will I establish my covenant...* When God makes a covenant, he establishes it, he makes it sure, he makes it good. His are everlasting covenants. The covenant of grace has in it the fountain and foundation of all distinguishing favors; we need desire no more, either to make up our losses for God or to make up a happiness for us in God, than to have his covenant established with us...

3. **God directs Noah to make an ark**. This ark was like the hulk of a ship, fitted not to sail upon the waters (there was no occasion for that, when there should be no shore to sail to), but to float upon the waters, waiting for their fall. God could have secured Noah by the ministration of angels, without putting him to any care, or pains, or trouble, himself; but he chose to employ him in making that which was to be the means of his preservation, for the trial of his faith and obedience. We cannot do it without God, and he will not without us. Both the providence of God, and the grace of God, own and crown the endeavors of the obedient and diligent. God gave him very particular instructions con-

cerning this building, which could not but be admirably well fitted for the purpose when Infinite Wisdom itself was the architect.

- It must be made of gopher-wood. Noah, doubtless, knew what sort of wood that was, though we now do not, whether cedar, or cypress, or what other.
- He must make it three stories high within.
- He must divide it into cabins, with partitions, places fitted for the several sorts of creatures, so as to lose no room.
- Exact dimensions were given him, that he might make it proportional, and might have room enough in it to answer the intention and no more.
- He must pitch it within and without—without, to shed off the rain, and to prevent the water from soaking in—within, to take away the bad smell of the beasts when kept close.
- He must make a little window towards the top, to let in light, and (some think) that through that window he might behold the desolations to be made in the earth.
- He must make a door in the side of it, by which to go in and out.

4. God makes Noah a great blessing to the world, and herein makes him an eminent type of the Messiah, though not the Messiah himself, as his parents expected, (Gen. 5:29). God made him a preacher to the men of that generation. As a watchman, he received the word from God's mouth, that he might give them warning, (Ezek. 3:17). Thus, while the long-suffering of God waited, by his Spirit in Noah, he preached to the old world...and herein he was a type of Christ, who, in a land and age wherein all flesh had corrupted their way, went about preaching repentance and warning men of a deluge of wrath coming.

Noah Invited into the Ark (7:1-4)

Here is a gracious invitation of Noah and his family into a place of safety, now that the flood of waters were coming.

The call itself is very kind, like that of a tender father to his children, to come in doors, when he sees night or a storm coming: Come thou, and all thy house, that small family that thou hast, into the ark... Not he only, but his house also, his wife and children, are called with him into the ark. It is good to belong to the family of a godly man; it is safe and comfortable to dwell under such a shadow...

This call to Noah was a type of the call which the gospel gives to poor sinners. Christ is an ark already prepared, in whom alone we can be safe when death and judgment come. Now the burden of the song is, "Come, come;" the word says, "Come;" ministers say, "Come;" the Spirit says, "Come, come into the ark!"...

Here is notice given of the now imminent approach of the flood: *Yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain (7:4)*... After the hundred and twenty years had expired, God grants them a reprieve of seven days longer, both to show how slow he is to anger and that punishing work is his strange work [Is 28:21] and also to give them some further space for repentance: but all in vain; these seven days were trifled away, after all the rest; they continued secure and sensual until the day that the flood came...

The Deluge (7:5-24)

1. Here is Noah's ready obedience to the commands that God gave him. He went into the ark, upon notice that the flood would come after seven days, though probably as yet there appeared no visible sign of its approach, no cloud arising that threatened it, nothing done towards it, but all continued

serene and clear; for, as he prepared the ark by faith in the warning given that the flood would come, so he went into it by faith in this warning that it would come quickly, though he did not see that the second causes had yet begun to work. In every step he took, he walked by faith, and not by sense.

During these seven days, it is likely, he was settling himself and his family in the ark, and distributing the creatures into their several apartments. This was the conclusion of that visible sermon which he had long been preaching to his careless neighbors, and which, one would think, might have awakened them; but, not obtaining that desired end, it left their blood upon their own heads...

The brute creatures readily went in with him. The same hand that at first brought them to Adam to be named now brought them to Noah to be preserved. The ox now knew his owner, and the ass his protector's crib, nay, even the wildest creatures flocked to it; but man had become more brutish than the brutes themselves, and did not know, did not consider, (Isaiah 1:3)...

2. Here is the date of this great event; this is carefully recorded, for the greater certainty of the story.

It was in the 600th year of Noah's life, which, by computation, appears to be 1656 years from the creation. The years of the old world are reckoned, not by the reigns of the giants, but the lives of the patriarchs; saints are of more account with God than princes. The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. Noah was now a very old man, even as men's years went then. The longer we live in this world the more we see of the miseries and calamities of it... Sometimes God exercises his old servants with extraordinary trials of obedient patience. The oldest of Christ's soldiers must not promise themselves a dis-

charge from their warfare till death discharge them. Still they must gird on their harness, and not boast as though they had put it off...

We are told that it was in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, which is reckoned to be about the beginning of November; so that Noah had had a harvest just before, from which to victual his ark.

In the self-same day that Noah was fixed in the ark, the inundation began. Note: Desolating judgments come not till God has provided for the security of his own people... When good men are removed judgments are not far off; for they are taken away from the evil to come...

3. See what was done on that day, that fatal day to the world of the ungodly. The fountains of the great deep were broken up. Perhaps there needed no new creation of waters; what were already made to be, in the common course of providence, blessings to the earth, were now, by an extraordinary act of divine power, made the ruin of it. God has laid up the deep in storehouses (Psalms 33:7), and now he broke up those stores. As our bodies have in themselves those humors which, when God pleases, become the seeds and springs of mortal diseases, so the earth had in it bowels those waters which, at God's command, sprang up and flooded it. God had, in the creation, set bars and doors to the waters of the sea, that they might not return to cover the earth (Ps. 104:9; Job 38:9-11); and now he only removed those ancient landmarks, mounds, and fences, and the waters of the sea returned to cover the earth, as they had done at first...

The windows of heaven were opened, and the waters which were above the firmament were poured out upon the world... The rain, which ordinarily descends in drops, then came down in streams, or spouts, as they call them in the

Indies, where clouds have been often known to burst, as they express it there, when the rain descends in a much more violent torrent than we have ever seen in the greatest shower. We read (Job 26:8) that God binds up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them; but now the bond was loosed, the cloud was rent, and such rains descended as were never known before nor since, in such abundance and of such continuance: the thick cloud was not, as ordinarily it is, wearied with waterings (Job 37:11), that is, soon spent and exhausted; but still the clouds returned after the rain, and the divine power brought in fresh recruits. It rained, without intermission or abatement, forty days and forty nights and that upon the whole earth at once, not, as sometimes, upon one city and not upon another. God made the world in six days, but he was forty days in destroying it; for he is slow to anger: but, though the destruction came slowly and gradually, yet it came effectually...

4. **It is added, *The Lord shut him in*** (7:16). As Noah continued his obedience to God, so God continued his care of Noah: and here it appeared to be a very distinguishing care; for the shutting of this door set up a partition wall between him and all the world besides. God shut the door to secure him, and keep him safe in the ark. The door must be shut very close, lest the waters should break in and sink the ark, and very fast, lest any without should break it down... Hitherto the door of the ark stood open, and if any, even during the last seven days, had repented and believed, I know they might have been welcomed into the ark; but now the door was shut, and they were cut off from all hopes of admittance: for God shuts and none can open...

The Earth Becomes Dry (8:1-19)

1. **An act of God's grace:** *God remembered Noah* and every living thing. This is an ex-

pression after the manner of men; for not any of his creatures (Luke 12:6), much less any of his people, are forgotten of God...

Noah himself, though one that had found grace in the eyes of the Lord, yet seemed to be forgotten in the ark, and perhaps began to think himself so; for we do not find that God had told him how long he should be confined and when he should be released. Very good men have sometimes been ready to conclude themselves forgotten of God, especially when their afflictions have been unusually grievous and long. Perhaps Noah, though a great believer, yet when he found the flood continuing so long after it might reasonably be presumed to have done its work, was tempted to fear lest he that shut him in would keep him in, and began to expostulate. How long wilt thou forget me? But at length God returned in mercy to him, and this is expressed by remembering him...

2. **An act of God's power over wind and water**, both of which are at his beck, though neither of them is under man's control. He commanded the wind, and said to that, Go, and it went, in order to the carrying off of the flood: God made a wind to pass over the earth. When God remembers he remembers effectually, for good; he remembers us to save us, that we may remember him to serve him...

As the earth was not drowned in a day, so it was not dried in a day. In the creation, it was but one day's work to clear the earth from the waters that covered it, and to make it dry land; nay, it was but half a day's work, (1:9-10). But, the work of creation being finished, this work of providence was effected by the concurring influence of second causes, yet thus enforced by the almighty power of God. God usually works deliverance for his people gradually, that the day of small things may not be despised, nor the day of great things despaired of (Zech. 4:10; Prov. 4:18).

3. **An act of Noah's faith.** Though God had told Noah particularly when the flood would come, even to a day (7:4), yet he did not give him a particular account by revelation at what times, and by what steps, it should go away. Because the knowledge of the former was necessary to his preparing the ark, and settling himself in it; but the knowledge of the latter would serve only to gratify his curiosity, and the concealing of it from him would be the needful exercise of his faith and patience...

Noah's Sacrifice (8:20-22)

1. **Noah's thankful acknowledgment of God's favor to him.** *He built an altar.* Hitherto he had done nothing without particular instructions and commands from God. He had a particular call into the ark, and another out of it; but he did not wait for a particular command thus to express his thankfulness. Those that have received mercy from God should be forward in returning thanks, and do it not of constraint, but willingly.

2. **God's gracious acceptance of Noah's thankfulness.** It was a settled rule in the patriarchal age: *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?* (4:7) Noah was so... God was well pleased with Noah's pious zeal, and these hopeful beginnings of the new world, as men are with fragrant and agreeable smells; though his offering was small, it was according to his ability, and God accepted it.

Having caused his anger to rest upon the world of sinners, he here caused his love to rest upon this little remnant of believers... Hereupon, he took up a resolution never to drown the world again. Herein he had an eye, not so much to Noah's sacrifice as to Christ's sacrifice of himself, which was typified and represented by it, and which was indeed an offering of a sweet-smelling savor (Eph 5:2).

Good security is here given, and that which may be relied upon, that this judgment should never be repeated...and that the course of nature should never be discontinued...

It is plainly intimated that this earth is not to remain always; it, and all the works in it, must shortly be burnt up; and we look for new heavens and a new earth, when all these things must be dissolved. But, as long as it does remain God's providence will carefully preserve the regular succession of times and seasons, and cause each to know its place. To this we owe it that the world stands, and the wheel of nature keeps it track...

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

What thought from Matthew Henry's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE Application

Re-read Genesis 6:9-8:22 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of this passage to your daily life. (One option is to listen to this whole passage on a Bible app.)

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 6:9-8:22?

Though people in modern times do not like talking about God's judgment, it is real. God is loving, gracious, merciful, and patient, but He is also holy, righteous, and just and He must punish sin. To ignore sin, overlook it, or minimize it would make God an unfair, unrighteous, and poor Judge.

Most of us are okay with God's judgment as long as it is against "all those bad people out there." We often see the sins of others much more readily than we see our own. But all of us have violated God's eternal law. All of us have fallen short of His righteousness. All of us have failed to love Him and others with the totality of our being. All of us have gone our own selfish way. And all of us are self-righteous enough to justify our own behavior and blame everyone else.

Read Romans 3:9-19. Mark key words as you read. What does this passage say about us?

What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. As it is written:

"There is no one righteous, not even one;
There is no one who understands;
There is no one who seeks God.
All have turned away,
They have together become worthless;
There is no one who does good, not even one.
Their throats are open graves;
Their tongues practice deceit.
The poison of vipers is on their lips.
Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.
Their feet are swift to shed blood;
Ruin and misery mark their ways,
And the way of peace they do not know.
There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. (Romans 3:9-19)

The Bible's diagnosis of our heart is clear. We have all sinned and we all deserve judgment.

*The heart is more deceitful than all else
And is desperately sick;
Who can know it?
I, Yahweh, search the heart;
I test the inmost being,
Even to give to each man according to his ways,
According to the fruit of his deeds. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)*

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

For the wages of sin is death... (Romans 6:23a)

But God... Though we deserved judgment for our sin, God sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins. Jesus took our sin, our death, and our judgment upon Himself, on the cross, so that He could give us His righteousness, His life, and His blessing.

*All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)*

*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners,
Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)*

*If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from
the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, leading to righteousness, and
with the mouth he confesses, leading to salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)*

What did God do in order to save us from our sin? _____

What are we to do in response to His love? _____

Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation? Yes No Unsure

If yes, then take a moment to rejoice in His grace! There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus!

If no, then read Romans 10:9-10 again. Will you trust in Jesus now and confess Him as your Lord?

If you are unsure, then read the passages above. If you trusted in Jesus, then trust in His Word!

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

In the day that we stand before our Master and Maker, it will not matter how many people on earth knew our name, how many called us great, and how many considered us fools. It will not matter whether schools and hospitals were named after us, whether our estate was large or small, whether our funeral drew ten thousand or no one. It will not matter what the newspapers or history books said or didn't say. What will matter is one thing and one thing only – what the Master thinks of us.

Randy Alcorn

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- When you think of the Flood and Noah's Ark, what images or thoughts come into your mind? What is your earliest recollection of hearing this story?
- As you think through Genesis 6-8, what do you learn about the world? What do you learn about Noah? What do you learn about God?
- It appears that Noah preached for 120 years and yet no one responded (Gen. 6:3; 2 Pet. 2:5). What does this tell you about the heart of humanity, particularly at this time?
- How hard do you think it would have been for Noah and his family to follow the Lord (and build a big boat in the middle of the desert) during this time?
- Imagine life on the ark for over a year. What strikes you the most about this scene?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Matthew Henry? If so, what?
- Plan a trip with your community group or family to the Ark Encounter in Williamstown, KY. 😊 This would be a great road trip! Or just go out to eat together and encourage one another.



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PROMISE ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 9:1-29

DAY ONE Observation

After the Flood, there is “fresh start” on the earth. Noah and his family are similar to Adam at creation. They are charged to refill the earth and rule over the animals. God’s promise to Noah gives hope to us all.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 9:1-29. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Write down the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. ² The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴ But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵ And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.

⁶ “Whoever sheds the blood of man,
by man shall his blood be shed,
for God made man in his own image.

⁷ And you, be fruitful and multiply,
increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”

⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹² And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

¹⁸ The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) ¹⁹ These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed.

²⁰ Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. ²¹ He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. ²² And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. ²³ Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. ²⁴ When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵ he said,

“Cursed be Canaan;
a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.”

²⁶ He also said,
“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem;
and let Canaan be his servant.

²⁷ May God enlarge Japheth,
and let him dwell in the tents of Shem,
and let Canaan be his servant.”

²⁸ After the flood Noah lived 350 years. ²⁹ All the days of Noah were 950 years, and he died. (ESV)

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Genesis 9 marks the beginning of the concept of “human government” (9:6).

If a person kills another person, what should happen to them? _____

Why? _____

What is God’s covenant promise in 9:8-17? _____

What is the sign of this covenant? _____

Summarize what happens in 9:20-27. _____

**DAY TWO
Meditation**

Quiet your heart and allow God to speak through His Word. Slowly read Genesis 9:12-15 several times. Reflect on each word. Meditate on them over and over until you memorize them.

God said,

*“This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you
and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations;
I have set My rainbow in the cloud,
and it shall serve as a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth.
It shall come about, when I make a cloud appear over the earth,
that the rainbow will be seen in the cloud, and
I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you
and every living creature of all flesh;
and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.” (NASB)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE
Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Though, in many ways, Noah is like a “new Adam,” there are significant changes on the earth from the time of creation to the time after the Flood. **Read Genesis 1:28-31 with 9:1-5.**

God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every animal of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so. And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.

Then God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every animal of the earth and on every bird of the sky; on everything that crawls on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea. They are handed over to you. Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I have given everything to you, as I gave the green plant. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. I certainly will require your lifeblood; from every animal I will require it. And from every person, from every man as his brother I will require the life of a person.

What differences do you see between these two “commissions” given to humanity?

Go to blueletterbible.org and type “Genesis 9” into the “Search the Bible” box. Click on Genesis 9:13 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word “bow” and click on the Strong’s number (H7198) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for “bow”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? _____

How is the Hebrew word normally used in the Bible? What could be significant about this?

The episode with Noah and his sons in Genesis 9:20-27 is another passage which raises a number of questions and yields different interpretations.

Read back through Genesis 9:20-27 and answer the questions in the margin.

²⁰ Noah, a man of the soil, began to plant a vineyard. ²¹ When he drank some of the wine, he got drunk and uncovered himself inside his tent.

²² Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers who were outside.

²³ Shem and Japheth took the garment and placed it on their shoulders. Then they walked in backwards and covered up their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so they did not see their father's nakedness.

²⁴ When Noah awoke from his drunken stupor he learned what his youngest son had done to him.

²⁵ So he said,
 "Cursed be Canaan!
 The lowest of slaves
 he will be to his brothers."

²⁶ He also said,
 "Worthy of praise is the Lord, the God of
 Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem!
 ²⁷ May God enlarge Japheth's territory and
 numbers! May he live in the tents of Shem and
 may Canaan be the slave of Japheth!"

What does Noah do?

What does Ham do?

What do Shem and Japheth do? (Note that it is called "the garment" implying that Ham actually took the garment that Noah had in the tent.)

Who does Noah pronounce his curse on?

Read through Leviticus 18. What are the later actions of the descendants of Canaan?

A simple reading of the text indicates that Ham's sin was not only seeing the nakedness of his father but also gloating in it and even acting in such a way that Noah's shame would be exposed.

What do these actions say about Ham's heart? _____

The "curse" pronounced on Ham is specifically aimed at his son, Canaan, who would be the father of the Canaanites—the people who would inhabit the land that Israel would eventually possess. Their perverse sexual behavior and immoral lifestyles were foreshadowed by Ham's actions.

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from **Matthew Henry's Exposition of the Old and New Testaments**. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) was a pastor, speaker, and author from Chester, England. He is best known for his exhaustive, six-volume, verse-by-verse commentary on the Scriptures. Charles Spurgeon stated that, "Every minister ought to read it entirely and carefully through once at least."

Blessing of Noah and His Sons (9:1-7)

We read, in the close of Genesis 8, the very kind things which God said in his heart, concerning the remnant of mankind which was now left to be the seed of a new world. Now here we have these kind things spoken to them. In general, God blessed Noah and his sons, that is, he assured them of his good-will to them and his gracious intentions concerning them. This follows from what he said in his heart. Note, All God's promises of good flow from his purposes of love and the counsels of his own will (Eph. 1:11; 3:11)...

The first blessing is here renewed: *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth (9:1, 7)*, for the race of mankind was, as it were, to begin again.

1. **God sets the whole earth before them**, tells them it is all their own, while it remains, to them and their heirs. Note: The earth God has given to the children of men, for a possession and habitation, Psalms 115:16. Though it is not a paradise, but a wilderness rather; yet it is better than we deserve. Blessed be God, it is not hell.

2. **He gives them a blessing**, by the force and virtue of which mankind should be both multiplied and perpetuated upon earth, so that in a little time all the habitable parts of the earth should be more or less inhabited; and, though one generation should pass away, yet another generation should come, while the world stands, so that the stream of the human race should be supplied with a constant succession, and run parallel with the current of time, till both should be delivered up together

into the ocean of eternity. Though death should still reign, and the Lord would still be known by his judgments, yet the earth should never again be dispeopled as now it was, but still replenished, Acts 17:24-26.

3. **He gives them a grant of power over the inferior creatures...** This revives a former grant (1:28), only with this difference, that man in innocence ruled by love, fallen man rules by fear. Now this grant remains in force, and thus far we have still the benefit of it...

4. **He gives a grant of maintenance and subsistence:** *Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you (9:3)*. Hitherto, most think, man had been confined to feed only upon the products of the earth, fruits, herbs, and roots, and all sorts of corn and milk; so was the first grant. But the flood having perhaps washed away much of the virtue of the earth, and so rendered its fruits less pleasing and less nourishing, God now enlarged the grant, and allowed man to eat flesh, which perhaps man himself never thought of, till now that God directed him to it, nor had any more desire to than a sheep has to suck blood like a wolf. But now man is allowed to feed upon flesh, as freely and safely as upon the green herb...

5. **He gives a rule:** Willful murderers must be put to death. This is the sin which is here designed to be restrained by the terror of punishment. God will punish murderers: *At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man, that is, "I will avenge the blood of the murdered upon the murderer."* 2 Chron. 24:22... Note: The righteous God will certainly make inquisition for blood, though

men cannot or do not. One time or other, in this world or in the next, he will both discover concealed murders, which are hidden from man's eye, and punish avowed and justified murders, which are too great for man's hand.

The magistrate must punish murderers: *Whoso sheddeth man's blood*, whether upon a sudden provocation or having premeditated it, *by man shall his blood be shed*, that is, by the magistrate, or whoever is appointed or allowed to be the avenger of blood. There are those who are ministers of God for this purpose, to be a protection to the innocent, by being a terror to the malicious and evildoers, and they must not bear the sword in vain (Romans 13:4). Before the flood, as it should seem by the story of Cain, God took the punishment of murder into his own hands; but now he committed this judgment to men, to masters of families at first, and afterwards to the heads of countries, who ought to be faithful to the trust reposed in them...

To this law there is a reason annexed: *For in the image of God made he man at first*. Man is a creature dear to his Creator, and therefore ought to be so to us. God put honor upon him, let not us then put contempt upon him (James 3:9). Such remains of God's image are still even upon fallen man as that he who unjustly kills a man defaces the image of God and does dishonor to him...

God's Covenant with Noah (9:8-17)

1. Here is the establishment of God's covenant with this new world, and the extent of that covenant. God is graciously pleased to deal with man in the way of a covenant, wherein God greatly magnifies his condescending favor, and greatly encourages man's duty and obedience, as a reasonable and gainful service. All God's covenants with man are of his own making: *I, behold, I*. It is thus expressed both to raise our admiration

and to confirm our assurances of the validity of the covenant...

2. The particular intention of this covenant.

It was designed to secure the world from another deluge: There shall not any more be a flood. God had drowned the world once, and still it was as filthy and provoking as ever, and God foresaw the wickedness of it, and yet promised he would never drown it any more; for he deals not with us according to our sins. It is owing to God's goodness and faithfulness, not to any reformation of the world, that it has not often been deluged and that it is not deluged now. As the old world was ruined to be a monument of justice, so this world remains to this day, a monument of mercy, according to the oath of God, that the waters of Noah should no more return to cover the earth, Isaiah 54:9. This promise of God keeps the sea and clouds in their decreed place, and sets them gates and bars; hitherto they shall come. If the sea should flow but for a few days, as it does twice every day for a few hours, what desolation would it make! And how destructive would the clouds be, if such showers as we have sometimes seen were continued long! But God, by flowing seas and sweeping rains, shows what he could do in wrath; and yet, by preserving the earth from being deluged between both, shows what he can do in mercy and will do in truth. Let us give him the glory of his mercy in promising and of his truth in performing...

Articles of agreement among men are usually sealed, that the covenants may be the more solemn, and the performances of the covenants more sure, to mutual satisfaction. God therefore, being willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his councils, has confirmed his covenant by a seal, which makes the foundations we build on stand sure. The seal of this covenant of nature was natural enough; it was the rainbow, which, it is likely, was seen in the

clouds before, when second causes concurred, but was never a seal of the covenant till now that it was made so by a divine institution...

The rainbow appears when the clouds are most disposed to wet, and returns after the rain; when we have most reason to fear the rain prevailing, then God shows this seal of the promise that it shall not prevail. Thus God obviates our fears with such encouragements as are both suitable and seasonable. The thicker the cloud the brighter the bow in the cloud. As threatening afflictions abound, encouraging consolations much more abound...

The rainbow is the reflection of the beams of the sun, which intimates that all the glory and significance of the seals of the covenant are derived from Christ the Sun of righteousness, who is also described with a rainbow about his throne (Rev. 4:3), and a rainbow upon his head (Rev. 10:1), which intimates, not only his majesty, but his mediatorship...

A bow bespeaks terror, but this bow has neither string nor arrow, as the bow ordained against the persecutors has and a bow alone will do little execution. It is a bow, but it is directed upwards, not towards the earth; for the seals of the covenant were intended to comfort, not to terrify. As God looks upon the bow, that he may remember the covenant, so should we, that we also may be ever mindful of the covenant, with faith and thankfulness.

Sin of Ham (9:18-23)

1. Noah's family and employment... Noah was by his calling led to trade in the fruits of the earth. He began to be a husbandman, that is, sometime after his departure out of the ark, he returned to his old employment, from which he had been diverted by the building of the ark first, and probably afterwards by the building of a house on dry land for himself

and family... Though Noah was a great man and a good man, an old man and a rich man, a man greatly favored by heaven and honored on earth, yet he would not live an idle life, nor think the husbandman's calling below him.

2. Noah's sin and shame: He planted a vineyard; and, when he had gathered his vintage...he drank too liberally, more than his head at this age would bear, for he was drunk. We have reason to think he was never drunk before nor after; observe how he came now to be overtaken in this fault. It was his sin, and a great sin, so much the worse for its being so soon after a great deliverance; but God left him to himself...and has left this miscarriage of his upon record, to teach us that sometimes those who, with watchfulness and resolution, have, by the grace of God, kept their integrity in the midst of temptation, have, through security, carelessness, and neglect of the grace of God, been surprised into sin, when the hour of temptation has been over. Noah, who had kept sober in drunken company, is now drunk in sober company. Let him that thinks he stands take heed...

Observe here the great evil of the sin of drunkenness. It discovers men. What infirmities they have, they betray when they are drunk, and what secrets they are entrusted with are then easily got out of them. Drunken porters keep open gates. And it disgraces men, and exposes them to contempt. As it shows them, so it shames them. Men say and do that when drunk which when they are sober they would blush at the thoughts of...

3. Ham's impudence and impiety: He saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren. To see it accidentally and involuntarily would not have been a crime; but, he pleased himself with the sight... Perhaps Ham had sometimes been himself drunk, and re-proved for it by his good father, whom he was therefore pleased to see thus overcome. Note:

It is common for those who walk in false ways themselves to rejoice at the false steps which they sometimes see others make. But charity rejoices not in iniquity, nor can true penitents that are sorry for their own sins rejoice in the sins of others.

He told his two brethren without (in the street, as the word is), in a scornful deriding manner, that his father might seem vile unto them. It is very wrong, to make a jest of sin (Prov. 14:9), and to be puffed up with that for which we should rather mourn. And, to publish the faults of any, especially of parents, whom it is our duty to honor. Noah was not only a good man, but had been a good father to him; and this was a most base disingenuous requital to him for his tenderness. Ham is here called the father of Canaan, which intimates that he who was himself a father should have been more respectful to him than was his father.

4. The pious care of Shem and Japheth to cover their poor father's shame. They not only would not see it themselves, but provided that no one else might see it, herein setting us an example of charity with reference to other men's sin and shame; we must not only avoid those that proclaim it, but we must be careful to conceal it, or at least to make the best of it, so doing as we would be done by. There is a mantle of love to be thrown over the faults of all (1 Peter 4:8). Besides this, there is a robe of reverence to be thrown over the faults of parents and other superiors.

Noah's Prophecy (9:24-29)

1. Noah comes to himself: He awoke from his wine. Sleep cured him, and, we may suppose, so cured him that he never relapsed into that sin afterwards. Those that sleep as Noah did should awake as he did, and not as that drunkard (Proverbs 23:35) who says when he awakes, I will seek it yet again.

2. He pronounces a curse on Canaan the son of Ham. In whom Ham is himself cursed, either because this son of his was now more guilty than the rest, or because the posterity of this son was afterwards to be rooted out of their land, to make room for Israel. ... Though the Canaanites were to be a formidable people, yet they were of old an accursed people, and doomed to ruin. The particular curse is, *A servant of servants*... This certainly points at the victories obtained by Israel over the Canaanites, by which they were all either put to the sword or put under tribute (Josh. 9:23; Judges 1:28-35), which happened not till about 800 years after this...

God often visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, especially when the children inherit the fathers' wicked dispositions, and imitate the fathers' wicked practices, and do nothing to cut off the entail of the curse...

Though divine curses operate slowly, yet, first or last, they will take effect. The Canaanites were under a curse of slavery, and yet, for a great while, had the dominion; for a family, a people, a person, may lie under the curse of God, and yet may long prosper in the world, till the measure of their iniquity, like that of the Canaanites, be full. Many are marked for ruin that are not yet ripe for ruin. Therefore, Let not thy heart envy sinners...

3. He blesses Shem, or rather blesses God for him, yet so that it entitles him to the greatest honor and happiness imaginable... He calls the Lord the God of Shem; and happy, thrice happy, is that people whose God is the Lord, Ps. 144:15. All blessings are included in this. This was the blessing conferred on Abraham and his seed; the God of heaven was not ashamed to be called their God. Shem is sufficiently recompensed for his respect to his father by this, that the Lord himself puts this honor upon him, to be his God, which is a sufficient recompense for all our services

and all our sufferings for his name... The glory of all that is at any time well done, by ourselves or others, must be humbly and thankfully transmitted to God, who works all our good works in us and for us. When we see men's good works we should glorify, not them, but our Father (Matthew 5:16) ...

4. **He blesses Japheth**, and, in him, the isles of the Gentiles, which were peopled by his seed... It denotes the conversion of the Gentiles, and the bringing of them into the church; and then we should read it, God shall persuade Japheth (for so the word signifies), and then, being so persuaded, he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, that is, Jews and Gentiles shall be united together in the gospel fold. After many of the Gentiles shall have been proselyted to the Jewish religion, both shall be one in Christ (Ephesians 2:14-15) ...

Japheth has the blessing of the earth beneath: God shall enlarge Japheth, enlarge his seed, enlarge his border. Japheth's prosperity peopled all Europe, a great part of Asia, and perhaps America. Note, God is to be acknowledged in all our enlargements. It is he that enlarges the coast and enlarges the heart. And again, many dwell in large tents that do not dwell in God's tents, as Japheth did... Shem has the blessing of heaven

above: He shall (that is, God shall) dwell in the tents of Shem, that is "From his loins Christ shall come, and in his seed the church shall be continued." The birth-right was now to be divided between Shem and Japheth, Ham being utterly discarded. In the principality which they equally share Canaan shall be servant to both. The double portion is given to Japheth, whom God shall enlarge; but the priesthood is given to Shem, for God shall dwell in the tents of Shem: and certainly we are more happy if we have God dwelling in our tents than if we had there all the silver and gold in the world. It is better to dwell in tents with God than in palaces without him...

When Japheth joins with Shem, Canaan falls before them both. When strangers become friends, enemies become servants...

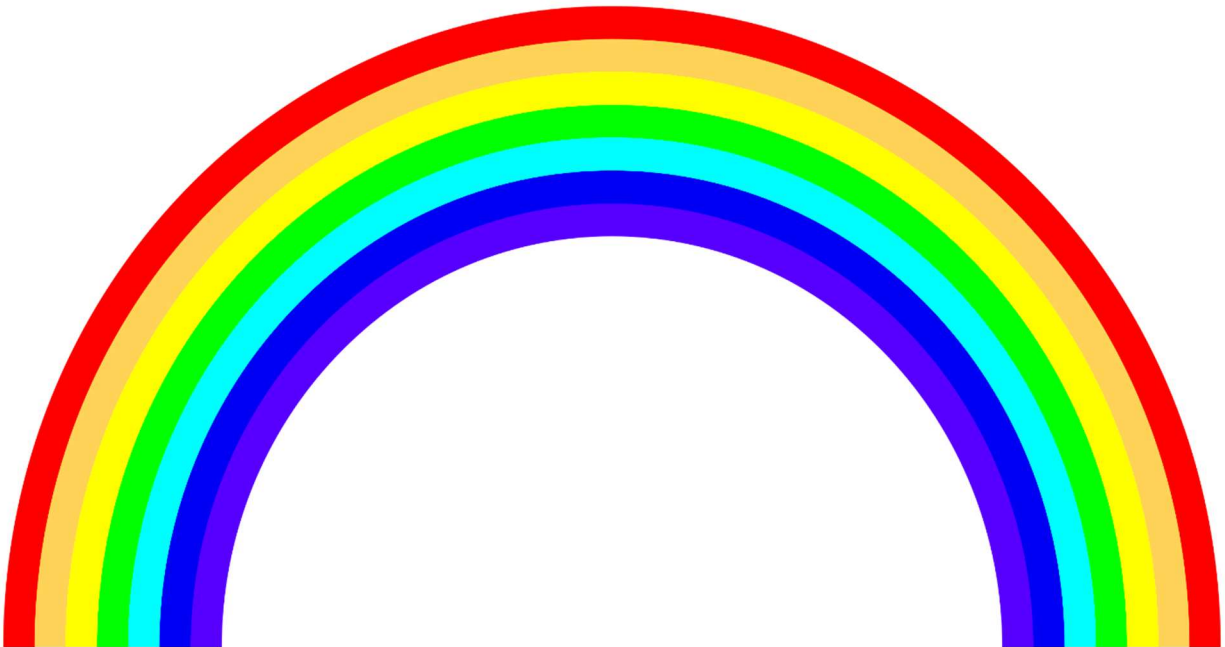
Noah lived 950 years—20 more than Adam and but 19 less than Methuselah: this long life was a further reward of his signal piety, and a great blessing to the world, to which no doubt he continued to *preach righteousness*. Though he lived long, yet he died, having probably first seen many that descended from him dead before him. Noah lived to see two worlds, but, being an heir of the righteousness which is by faith, when he died he went to see a better than either.

What thought from Matthew Henry's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Re-read Genesis 9:1-29 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of Genesis 9:1-29 to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 9:1-29?



Read the following promises of God. Mark one that particularly strikes you or means the most to you right now in your life. Rewrite the promise underneath the rainbow above.

*The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you;
He will never leave you nor forsake you.
Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. (Deuteronomy 31:8)*

*Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)*

*The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him;
Though he may stumble, he will not fall,
For the LORD upholds him with His hand. (Psalm 37:23-24)*

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways submit to Him,
And He will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)*

*You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on You,
because they trust in you. (Isaiah 26:3)*

*But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
They will run and not grow weary,
They will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:31)*

*So do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)*

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD,
"Plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
Plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)*

*So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'
For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But
seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
(Matthew 6:31-33)*

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
And I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,
For I am gentle and humble in heart,
And you will find rest for your souls.
For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)*

Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. (John 8:36)

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God,
to those who are the called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)*

*But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."
Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may
rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in
persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)*

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.

Dolly Parton

Earth is the only planet in the solar system with rainbows. Mars may have some frozen water ... but Earth is the only planet in our solar system capable of creating rainbows. That's because Earth is the only planet with consistent liquid precipitation and direct sunlight.

No two people see the exact same rainbow. That's because a rainbow has no physical presence; a rainbow is a purely optical phenomenon, and its appearance – its precise shape, arc, and the width of its color bands – will be slightly different according to the eye of the beholder. That means that every rainbow is unique to you.

Fascinating Facts About Rainbows

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What is your favorite dinner? Why do you enjoy it so much?
- What has changed from the time of creation to the time after the Flood?
- What is God's promise to Noah? Does Noah have to do anything for God to keep His promise?
- Describe a time when you saw a beautiful rainbow in the sky. What should we remember when we see a rainbow?
- What do you think Ham did that was so sinful? What did this say about his heart?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Matthew Henry? If so, what?
- Read through the promises listed on pages 142-143. Which one means the most to you right now in your life? Why? Pray together speaking out the promises of God as you pray.

THE NATIONS ACCORDING TO GOD

Genesis 10:1-11:32

DAY ONE Observation

From Noah's three sons—Shem, Ham, Japheth—came all the nations and peoples of the world. Thus, Genesis 10-11 details where all these nations came from and how the nations were separated by languages.

Ask God to speak to your heart as you read Genesis 10:1-11:32. Mark words or phrases as you read. Pause after each section to answer the observation questions included in the margin.

These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

² The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³ The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴ The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. ⁵ From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations.

⁶ The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. ⁷ The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. ⁸ Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. Therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord." ¹⁰ The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. ¹¹ From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and ¹² Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. ¹³ Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, ¹⁴ Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and Caphtorim.

¹⁵ Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, ¹⁶ and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁷ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁸ the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites dispersed. ¹⁹ And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. ²⁰ These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

²¹ To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born. ²² The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. ²³ The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. ²⁴ Arpachshad fathered Shelah; and Shelah fathered Eber. ²⁵ To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. ²⁶ Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. ³⁰ The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the

Highlight the names of Noah's three sons in 10:1 and in 10:2, 10:6, 10:20, 10:21, 10:31, 11:10. This will help you see the structure of this passage.

10:5 is a summary statement, used also in 10:20 and 10:31. Circle the words lands, clans, languages, and nations in each of these verses.

Write down what you learn about Nimrod.

Count the names of the sons and descendants of Japheth, as well as the sons and descendants of Ham & Shem. **Record the number by each section above.**

direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east. ³¹ These are the sons of Shem, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

³² These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

11 Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ² And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³ And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” ⁵ And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶ And the Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” ⁸ So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹ Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

Highlight the “come, let us” statements in this passage.

What happened at Babel?

¹⁰ These are the generations of Shem. When Shem was 100 years old, he fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood. ¹¹ And Shem lived after he fathered Arpachshad 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹² When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah. ¹³ And Arpachshad lived after he fathered Shelah 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁴ When Shelah had lived 30 years, he fathered Eber. ¹⁵ And Shelah lived after he fathered Eber 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁶ When Eber had lived 34 years, he fathered Peleg. ¹⁷ And Eber lived after he fathered Peleg 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁸ When Peleg had lived 30 years, he fathered Reu. ¹⁹ And Peleg lived after he fathered Reu 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰ When Reu had lived 32 years, he fathered Serug. ²¹ And Reu lived after he fathered Serug 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

²² When Serug had lived 30 years, he fathered Nahor. ²³ And Serug lived after he fathered Nahor 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁴ When Nahor had lived 29 years, he fathered Terah. ²⁵ And Nahor lived after he fathered Terah 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁶ When Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Who are the three sons of Terah?

²⁷ Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. ²⁸ Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans. ²⁹ And 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 Iscah. ³⁰ Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

Where did they live?

³¹ Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there. ³² The days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran. (ESV)

Where was Terah going to take his family?

What thought or verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Genesis 10 is called the Table of Nations. It explains how the peoples, languages, lands, and nations branched out from Noah's three sons—Shem, Ham, Japheth.

How many sons and grandsons did each of the following of Noah's sons have? Count the different names in each section.

- Japheth (10:2-5) _____
- Ham (10:6-20) _____
- Shem (10:21-31) _____
- Total: _____

What person built the kingdom of Babel and Ninevah (Assyria) in Genesis 10?



DAY TWO Meditation

Read Genesis 11:1-4 several times. This is not the typical passage to meditate on but take time to consider the thoughts, words, and actions of the people at the tower of Babel. What was the danger? What was their sin?

*The whole earth had a common language and a common vocabulary.
When the people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.*

*Then they said to one another,
“Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.”
(They had brick instead of stone and tar instead of mortar.)*

*Then they said,
“Come, let’s build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens
so that we may make a name for ourselves.
Otherwise we will be scattered across the face of the entire earth.” (NET)*

Write down the observations that you can make from this passage, sketch out any images or thoughts that you have, or simply rewrite the passage below giving emphasis to key words.

Offer the passage back to God in the form of a personalized prayer.

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Nimrod is a significant figure in Genesis 10. He is the founder of the “kingdom of Babylon.” (10:10)

Go to blueletterbible.org and type “Genesis 10” into the “Search the Bible” box. Click on Genesis 10:8 to bring up the verse in the Hebrew. Find the word “Nimrod” and click on the Strong’s number (H5248) to bring up the Hebrew word, its definition, and its usage in the Old Testament.

What is the Hebrew word for “Nimrod”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially the Outline of Biblical Usage and Gesenius’ Lexicon.)

Next, find the word “mighty one” in Genesis 10:8 and click on the Strong’s number (H1368).

What is the Hebrew word for “mighty one”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

What is its definition? (Note especially Strong’s Definitions and Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon.)

Next, find the word “hunter” in Genesis 10:9 and click on the Strong’s number (H6718).

What is the Hebrew word for “hunter”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the Old Testament? _____ (See KJV Translation Count.)

To best understand the meaning of this Hebrew word (especially in this context), click on the Root Word (Etymology) to bring up the definition of the root word, *tsud* (H6679).

What is the definition of the root word? (Note especially Strong’s and Gesenius’ Lexicon)

Read the following passages which use this root word. Mark key thoughts as you read.

*By means of a harlot a man is reduced to a piece of bread,
And the adulteress will **prey upon** his precious life. (Proverbs 6:26)*

The enemy **hunted** our steps,
So that we could not walk in our streets;
Our end drew near,
Our days were finished
For our end had come. (Lamentations 4:18)

Faithful men have disappeared from the land; there are no godly men left.
They all wait in ambush to shed blood; they **hunt** their own brother with a net. (Micah 7:2)

Based on these verses, what do you think it means that Nimrod was a “mighty (see Hebrew giber above) hunter” before the Lord...or possibly better translated, “in God’s very face”?

Nimrod is the ruler who built the kingdom of Babylon. He is its founder, as well as the founder of Ninevah (Assyria). The tower that is being built in Babel is not some kind of Eiffel Tower trying to reach into outer space. Rather most historians see it as a ziggurat. **Read the following excerpt.**

Ziggurat. This architectural form was developed in the third millennium BC in Babylonia from a low platform supporting a shrine to the massive seven-story brick towers like *Etemenanki* “Building which is the foundation platform of heaven and earth” associated with the temple of Marduk at Babylon named Esagila (“whose top is [in] heaven”) measuring 295 square ft. at the base and about the same height. Access to each level was by a ramp or stairway. On the top of this “artificial mountain” was a shrine where the god of the city was believed to descend to have intercourse with man in special rites. Several ziggurats have been excavated, those at Ur, Ashur and Choga Zambil being the best known and preserved. The “Tower of Babel” might have been a ziggurat since they are to be found in all principal Mesopotamian cities. (*Encyclopedia of the Bible*)

What observations can you make about the “tower of Babel” from this encyclopedia entry?

Putting it all together, you have a godless rebel named Nimrod, with a hatred toward God and a diabolical heart toward others, bringing a multitude of people together in unified opposition to God with a desire to build a false religion that glorifies sexual immorality and human sacrifice.

What was God’s response to Nimrod’s “tower project” and the people unified behind it?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from **Matthew Henry's Exposition of the Old and New Testaments**. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) was a pastor, speaker, and author from Chester, England. He is best known for his exhaustive, six-volume, verse-by-verse commentary on the Scriptures. Charles Spurgeon stated that, "Every minister ought to read it entirely and carefully through once at least."

The Rebellion of Nimrod (10:6-14)

Nimrod...is here represented as a great man in his day: He began to be a mighty one in the earth, that is, whereas those that went before him were content to stand upon the same level with their neighbors, and though every man bore rule in his own house yet no man pretended any further, Nimrod's aspiring mind could not rest here; he was resolved to tower above his neighbors, not only to be eminent among them, but to lord it over them. The same spirit that actuated the giants before the flood (who became mighty men, and men of renown, 6:4), now revived in him, so soon was that tremendous judgment which the pride and tyranny of those mighty men brought upon the world forgotten.

Note: There are some in whom ambition and affectation of dominion seem to be bred in the bone; such there have been and will be, notwithstanding the wrath of God often revealed from heaven against them. Nothing on this side of hell will humble and break the proud spirits of some men, just like Lucifer (Is. 14).

Nimrod was a great hunter; with this he began, and for this became famous to a proverb. Every great hunter is, in remembrance of him, called a Nimrod.

1. Some think he did good with his hunting, served his country by ridding it of the wild beasts which infested it, and so insinuated himself into the affections of his neighbors, and got to be their prince.

2. Others think that under pretense of hunting he gathered men under his command, in pur-

suit of another game he had to play, which was to make himself master of the country and to bring them into subjection. He was a mighty hunter, that is, he was a violent invader of his neighbors' rights and properties, and a persecutor of innocent men, carrying all before him, and endeavoring to make all his own by force and violence. Note: Great conquerors are but great hunters.

Nimrod was a mighty hunter *against the Lord* [LXX Greek translation]; that is...

1. **He set up idolatry**, as Jeroboam did, for the confirming of his usurped dominion. He set up a new government. He set up a new religion. Babel was the mother of harlots.

2. **He carried on his oppression and violence in defiance of God himself**, daring Heaven with his impieties, as if he and his huntsmen could outmatch the Almighty, the Lord of hosts and all his armies.

Nimrod was a great ruler. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel. Some way or other, by arts or arms, he got into power, either being chosen to it or forcing his way to it; and so laid the foundations of a monarchy, which was afterwards a head of gold, and the terror of the mighty, and bade fair to be universal.

Nimrod was a great builder. Probably he was architect in the building of Babel, and there he began his kingdom; but, when his project to rule all the sons of Noah was baffled by the confusion of tongues, out of that land he went forth into Assyria and built Nineveh, etc., that, having built these cities, he might command them and rule over them.

Observe, in Nimrod, the nature of ambition.

1. **It is boundless.** Much would have more, and still cries, *Give, give.*

2. **It is restless.** Nimrod, when he had four cities under his command, could not be content till he had four more.

3. **It is prideful.** The spirit of building is the common effect of a spirit of pride. Nimrod's name signifies rebellion, which...teaches us that tyrants to men are rebels to God, and their rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft...

The Tower of Babel (11:1-4)

The close of the foregoing chapter tells us that by the sons of Noah, or among the sons of Noah, the nations were divided in the earth after the flood, that is, were distinguished into several tribes or colonies; and, the places having grown too strait for them, it was either appointed by Noah, or agreed upon among his sons, which way each several tribe or colony should steer its course, beginning with the countries that were next them, and designing to proceed further and further, and to remove to a greater distance from each other, as the increase of their several companies should require. Thus was the matter well settled, one hundred years after the flood, about the time of Peleg's birth; but the sons of men, it should seem, were loath to disperse into distant places; they thought the more the merrier and the safer, and therefore they contrived to keep together, and were slack to go to possess the land which the Lord God of their fathers had given them, thinking themselves wiser than either God or Noah...

Instead of coveting to enlarge their borders by a peaceful departure under the divine protection, they contrived to fortify them, and, as those that were resolved to wage war with Heaven, they put themselves into a posture of

defense. Their unanimous resolution is, *Let us build ourselves a city and a tower.* It is observable that the first builders of cities, both in the old world (4:17), and in the new world here, were not men of the best character and reputation. Cities were first built by those that were rebels against him and revolters from him.

1. **How they excited and encouraged one another to set about this work.** They said, *Let us make brick* (v. 3), and again, (v. 4), *Let us build ourselves a city;* by mutual excitements they made one another more daring and resolute...

2. **What materials they used in their building.** The country, being plain, yielded neither stone nor mortar, yet this did not discourage them from their undertaking, but they made brick to serve instead of stone, and slime or pitch instead of mortar... What a difference there is between men's building and God's; when men build their Babel, brick and slime are their best materials; but, when God builds his Jerusalem, he lays even the foundations of it with sapphires, and all its borders with pleasant stones (Rev. 21:19).

3. **For what ends they built.** Some think they intended hereby to secure themselves against the waters of another flood. God had told them indeed that he would not again drown the world; but they would trust to a tower of their own making, rather than to a promise of God's making or an ark of his appointing. If, however, they had had this in their eye, they would have chosen to build their tower upon a mountain rather than upon a plain, but three things, it seems, they aimed at in building this tower—

- **It seems designed for an affront to God himself;** for they would build a tower whose top might reach to heaven, which bespeaks a defiance of God, or at least a

rivalry with him. They would be like the Most High, or would come as near him as they could, not in holiness but in height. They forgot their place, and, scorning to creep on the earth, resolved to climb to heaven, not by the door or ladder, but some other way.

- **They hoped hereby to make themselves a name;** they would do something to be talked of now, and to give posterity to know that there had been such men as they in the world. Rather than die and leave no memorandum behind them, they would leave this monument of their pride, and ambition, and folly... These Babel-builders put themselves to a great deal of foolish expense to make themselves a name; but they could not gain even this point, for we do not find in any history the name of so much as one of them...
- **They did it to prevent their dispersion:** *Lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth.* Josephus says, "It was done" "in disobedience to that command (9:1), Replenish the earth." God orders them to disperse. "No," say they, "we will not, we will live and die together." They engage themselves in this vast undertaking that they might unite in one glorious empire. They resolve to build this city and tower, to be the metropolis of their kingdom and the center of their unity. It is probable that the band of ambitious Nimrod was in all this. He could not content himself with the command of a particular colony, but aimed at universal monarchy, in order to which, under pretense of uniting for their common safety, he contrives to keep them in one body, that, having them all under his eye, he might not fail to have them under his power...It is God's prerogative to be universal monarch, Lord of all, and King of kings; the man that aims at it offers to step into the throne of God, who will not give his glory to another.

The Separation of Languages (11:5-9)

We have here the quashing of the project of the Babel-builders, and the turning of the counsel of those prideful men headlong, that God's counsel might stand in spite of them.

The Lord came down to see the city, v. 5. It is an expression after the manner of men; he knew it as clearly and fully as men know that which they come to the place to view.

1. Before he gave judgment upon their cause, he enquired into it; for God is incontestably just and fair in all his proceedings against sin and sinners, and condemns none unheard.

2. It is spoken of an act of condescension in God to take notice even of this building, which the undertakers were so proud of; for he humbles himself to behold the transactions, even the most considerable ones, of this lower world, Ps. 113:6. Observe...

- **Their weakness and frailty as men.** It was a very foolish thing for the children of men, worms of the earth, to defy Heaven, and to provoke the Lord to jealousy. Are they stronger than he?
- **Their sinfulness and obnoxiousness.** They were the sons of that Adam, that sinful disobedient Adam, whose children are by nature children of disobedience, children that are corrupters.
- **Their distinction from the children of God.** These daring builders had separated themselves from the godly line of Shem, and built this tower to support and perpetuate that separation. Pious Eber is not found among this ungodly crew; for he and his are called the children of God, and therefore their souls come not into the secret, nor unite themselves to the assembly, of these children of men.

The counsels and resolves of the Eternal God concerning this matter; he did not come down merely as a spectator, but as a judge, as a prince, to look upon these proud men, and abase them. Observe...

1. **God suffered them to proceed a good way before he put a stop to it**, that they might have space to repent, and, if they had so much consideration left, might be ashamed of it and weary of it themselves; and if not that their disappointment might be the more shameful, and every one that passed by might laugh at them, saying, These men began to build, and were not able to finish, that so the works of their hands, from which they promised themselves immortal honor, might turn to their perpetual reproach. Note: God has wise and holy ends in permitting the enemies of his glory to carry on their impious projects a great way, and to prosper long in their enterprises.

2. **God determined to disperse them.** Two things he considered:

- **Their oneness**, as a reason why they must be scattered: “Behold, the people are one, and they have all one language. If they continue one, much of the earth will be left uninhabited; the power of their prince will soon be exorbitant; wicked-ness and profaneness will be insufferably rampant, for they will strengthen one another’s hands in it... Note, While the builders of Babel, though of different families, dispositions, and interests, were thus unanimous in opposing God, what a pity is it, and what a shame, that the builders of Zion, though united in one common head and Spirit, should be divided, as they are, in serving God!
- **Their obstinacy**: Now nothing will be restrained from them; and this is a reason why they must be crossed and thwarted in

their design. God had tried, by his commands and admonitions, to bring them off from this project, but in vain; therefore, he must take another course with them. See here...the sinfulness of sin, and the willfulness of sinners...and the necessity of God’s judgments upon earth, to keep the world in some order and to tie the hands of those that will not be checked by law.

3. **The wisdom and mercy of God** in the methods that were taken for the defeating of this enterprise: *Let us go down, and there confound their language.* This was not spoken to the angels, as if God needed either their advice or their assistance, but God speaks it to himself, or the Father to the Son and Holy Spirit. They said, *Let us make brick and Let us build a tower*, animating one another to the attempt; and now God says, *Let us confound their language...*

Note, the mercy of God, in moderating the penalty, and not making it proportional to the offence; for he deals not with us according to our sins. He does not say, “Let us go down now in thunder and lightning, and consume those rebels in a moment;” or, “Let the earth open, and swallow up them and their building, and let those go down quickly into hell who are climbing to heaven the wrong way.” No; only, “Let us go down, and scatter them.” They deserved death, but are only banished or transported; for the patience of God is very great towards a provoking world. Punishments are chiefly reserved for the future state. God’s judgments on sinners in this life, compared with those which are reserved, are little more than restraints.

Note, the wisdom of God, in pitching upon an effectual expedient to stay proceedings, which was the confounding of their language, that they might not understand one another’s speech, nor could they well join hands when their tongues were divided; so that this would

be a very proper method both for taking them off from their building (for, if they could not understand one another, they could not help one another) and also for disposing them to scatter; for, when they could not understand one another, they could not take pleasure in one another. Note, God has various means, and effectual ones, to baffle and defeat the projects of proud men that set themselves against him, and particularly to divide them among themselves, either by dividing their spirits (Judges 9:23), or by dividing their tongues, as David prays, Psalm 55:9.

4. Their language was confounded. God, who, when he made man, taught him to speak, and put words into his mouth fit to express the conceptions of his mind by, now caused these builders to forget their former language, and to speak and understand a new one, which yet was common to those of the same tribe or family, but not to others: those of one colony could converse together, but not with those of another. Now,

- This was a great miracle, and a proof of the power which God has upon the minds and tongues of men, which he turns as the rivers of water.
- We all suffer by it, to this day. In all the inconveniences we sustain by the diversity of languages, and all the pains and trouble we are at to learn the languages, we smart for the rebellion of our ances-

tors at Babel. Nay, and those unhappy controversies which are strifes of words, and arise from our misunderstanding one another's language, are owing to this confusion of tongues.

- As the confounding of tongues divided the children of men and scattered them abroad, so the gift of tongues, bestowed upon the apostles (Acts 2), contributed greatly to the gathering together of the children of God, who were scattered abroad, and the uniting of them in Christ, that with one mind and one mouth they might glorify God, Romans 15:6.

5. Their building was stopped: They left off to build the city. This was the effect of the confusion of their tongues; for it not only incapacitated them for helping one another, but probably struck such a damp upon their spirits that they could not proceed, since they saw, in this, the hand of the Lord gone out against them... The very thing which they feared came upon them. That dispersion which sought to evade by an act of rebellion they by this act brought upon themselves; for we are most likely to fall into that trouble which we seek to evade by sinful methods...

They left behind them a perpetual memorandum of their reproach, in the name given to the place. It was called Babel, confusion. Those that aim at a great name commonly come off with a bad name...

What thought from Matthew Henry's words stands out to you the most? Why?

DAY FIVE Application

Re-read Genesis 10:1-11:32 and consider the truths that you have learned this week. Seek to apply the message of this passage to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week from your study of Genesis 10:1-11:32?

The Tower of Babel is the story of humanity unified in opposition to God to their own destruction. It is a false unity—a unity controlled and dictated by a tyrant and centered on a false religion. Our world loves to talk about peace and unity, but the reality is that, apart from a transformation of the heart, any “unity” we seek to achieve will eventually deteriorate into totalitarianism, godlessness, sexual immorality, violence, and destruction. Consider the countries that have sought a “utopia” through communism or consider the growth of porn and radicalism on the internet.

The peace and unity that the human heart longs for will only be achieved through Jesus Christ.

Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying:

*“You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth.” (Revelation 5:9-10)*

This is the end of the story. Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, will reign on the earth. And people from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation will worship before Him. The earth will finally have true peace and unity as the Lamb, who was slain for our sin, reconciles all things to Himself.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. (Ephesians 1:7-10)

So how should we live in light of these truths?

First, we should seek to live in unity with one another as a foretaste of Christ’s kingdom.

Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope at your calling—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:1-6)

What qualities are to describe our lives as believers in Jesus Christ?

What seven “ones” do we have in common as believers in Jesus Christ?

How is your heart toward other believers in Jesus Christ? Is there someone whom you are in conflict with? Someone you have resentment toward? Someone you need to bear with in love? Someone that you need to forgive? Someone that you need to ask forgiveness from?

Examine your heart before the Lord. What do you need to do in response to God’s Word?

Second, we are to have a heart for the nations. Though people are in rebellion against God, we are called to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ, His ministers of reconciliation.

Who do you know that needs Jesus Christ as Savior? Pray for them now.

Go to operationworld.org (or download the app). Pray for the nation that is featured today...and continue to pray for the nations each day. Pray also for the missionaries that our church supports.

What nation did you pray for today? _____

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Missions is about the worship of Jesus. The goal of missions is the global worship of Jesus by His redeemed people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. The outcome of missions is all peoples delighting to praise Jesus. And the motivation for missions is the enjoyment that His people have in Him. Missions aims at, brings about, and is fueled by the worship of Jesus.

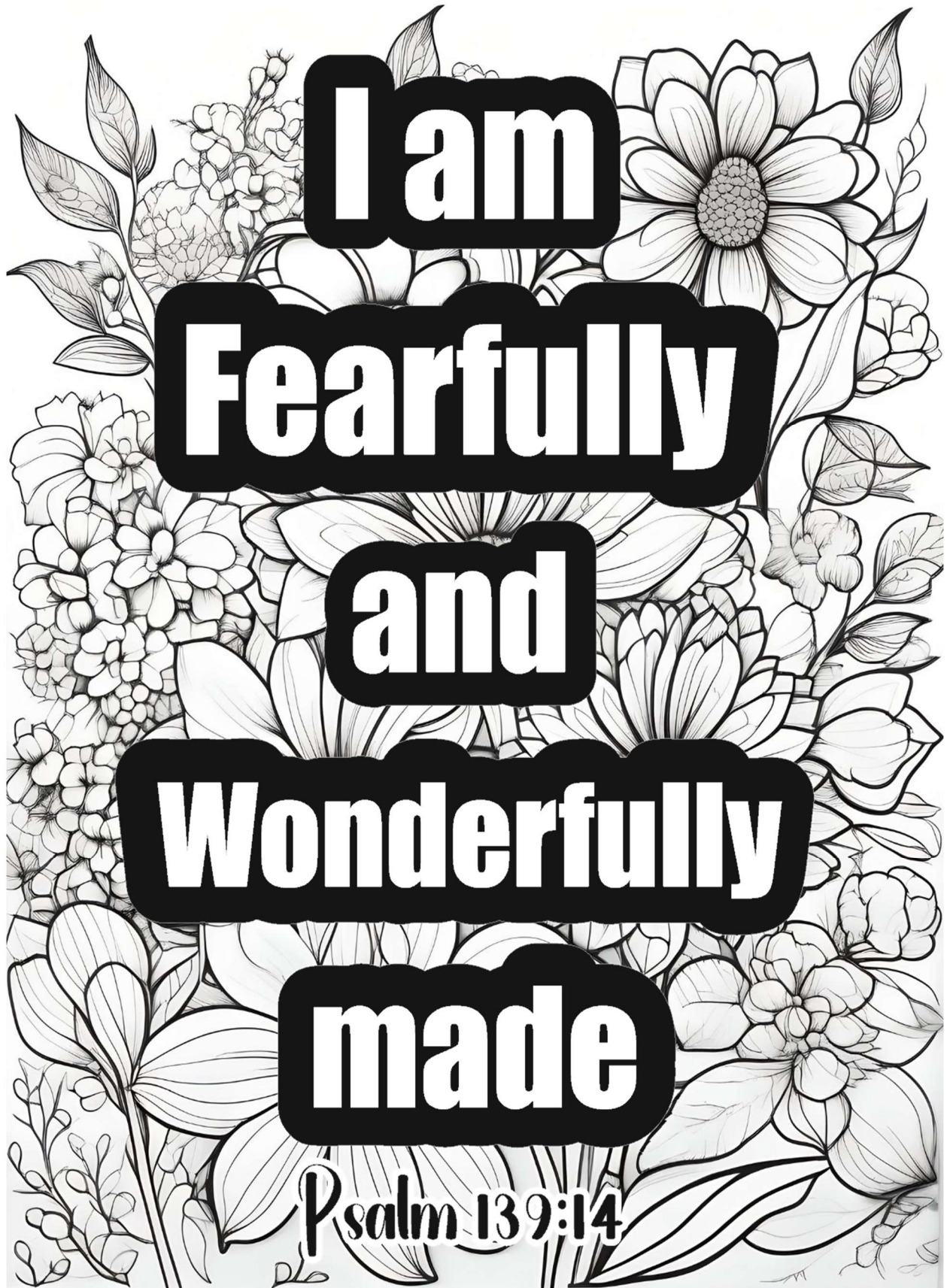
David Mathis

Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR GROUP OR FAMILY DISCUSSION:

- What is one of the biggest problems that you see in our world today?
- When you see the problems of the world, how do you tend to respond? Get angry? Complain? Become fearful? Become stressed? Post stuff on social media? Talk to others? Pray?
- What did you learn from the Table of Nations in Genesis 10?
- Who was Nimrod? Why is he significant?
- Why was the Tower of Babel such a serious issue in God's eyes?
- Did you discover anything new, interesting, or meaningful in your study of this passage this week? Or in your reading of Matthew Henry? If so, what?
- Share with your group one or two people whom you know who need salvation in Jesus Christ. Pray together as a group for the people who are mentioned.
- Though the nations are in rebellion against God, God still has a heart for the nations! Use the Operation World website or app to pray for one of the nations of the world.



**I am
Fearfully
and
Wonderfully
made**

Psalm 139:14

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FINAL NOTES FROM GENESIS 1-11

Things that I have learned during this study:

Who is Jesus to you? Have you acknowledged Him as your only Savior and Lord? There is no other name under heaven by which people can be saved (Acts 4:12). Jesus entered our world to save us from our sins. He died on the cross for you and for me. He rose again to give us eternal life. Have you placed your trust in Him? If not, do so today!

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. —Romans 10:9-10

This study guide was written by Pastor Steve Foster for use with the Genesis sermon series at Community Bible Church, Baton Rouge, LA. You are welcome to reproduce any part of it for your own personal study. For any other use, please contact pastor@516church.org.



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8354 Jefferson Highway
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809
www.516church.org