

Everlasting Life

An Introduction to the Bible

T. E. Valentine
irruptiondays.org
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All scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible. Some extra line breaks were added in larger quotations for readability.

Introduction: So Then Faith Cometh by Hearing

This treatise has been a result of many years of prayer, learning, and passion. First, prayer, because I have sought God on how I can have a small role in service to Him in my lifetime. No matter how small, I was convinced that God could open a door to serve Him in some way, regardless of my weaknesses. Second, learning was central in my development since the first day I picked up a Bible and started reading. Having read the Bible many times through, the way I think and see the world now is vastly different from how I did 20 years ago.

Lastly, the passion I have for the Scriptures to be opened to people is not from myself, but from God. It has to be, because I have tried many times to shake off this passion. I have tried to forget the years I spent preparing for professional ministry, and pretend that they never existed. However, the passion never died. I am fairly convinced that it never will.

Hence, this book. It is free because, whenever possible, people should not have to pay to hear the Scriptures. I am convinced that there are people out there that will never in a thousand years come to a church, pick up a Bible, or hear the Word of God from anyone. This book is especially for them.

So what is the big deal about hearing the Word of God? I will let you decide for yourself as you read the rest of this book. But I will share with you one sentence of the Bible that has had major impact on my life within the last year:

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17).

People are changed by hearing, and by implication, understanding, the Word of God. They are not superficially changed, but rather there is a change that takes root that is beyond words. The Word of God is life-giving in every sense of the idea. This treatise will encourage that understanding.

To understand the Bible, the Word of God, there are certain fundamentals that must be known. When I was in missionary training a number of years ago, we learned about how to reach people groups by teaching through the Bible chronologically. In other books, the main characters are introduced at the beginning, and the Bible is no different: God is the main character of the Bible. You must start at the beginning of the Bible when teaching because ***your audience does not know what god you are talking about.*** Just like those people groups that this missionary agency works with, the people of western society have lost this notion. Teaching through the Bible chronologically bridges that gap, because a book should always be read starting at the beginning.

This book is not a true chronological teaching. I have tried to make this as lean as possible so that I do not lose my audience. This book will focus on Genesis 1-9, Isaiah 53, excerpts from the Gospel of John, and a few other Scriptures, which are all portions of the Bible.

While not a true chronological teaching, I consider this book to be Bible-driven. In the spirit of the verse I shared above (Romans 10:17), there are many Scripture quotations. I have tried to put away my own opinions on the matter: I simply quote the Scriptures, and then enumerate some of the major themes below each Scripture quotation.

Having given you this brief introduction, I would like to offer you some basic instructions to make this book worthwhile.

1. Read this book when you do not have other distractions around.
2. Do not skip the Bible quotations. They are the most important part of this book.
3. Be prepared for repetition of themes. If something is repeated, it is significant.
4. Coming into this book, you probably have preconceptions about the Bible, religion, and Christianity. Try to check those preconceptions at the door, and give fresh audience to this treatise.

Lastly, though I say that the Bible is the Word of God, you may be skeptical and want to dismiss me right now. At this point I will not try to defend the Bible; another aim of this treatise is to show you the power of the Bible rather than to tell you about it. You will see it holistically rather than as disparate thoughts sown together by an editor. The Bible is one book, and its author is God.

Let us take the journey together.

Chapter 1: In the Beginning

The first four words of the Bible read, *“In the beginning God.”* This is very significant when considering who God is and who He is not.

There are three main views on the nature of God. First, there is theism, where God has created all things. Second, there is pantheism, where God is in all things, or is all things. Third, there is atheism, where there is no God at all. The Bible is theistic; it says that God created all things out of nothing. We will see this when we read the very first verse of the Bible in a moment.

So what is God’s name? In the Bible, there are two significant names for God. These names suggest much of what we know about God. First is the generic term “God.” You will see this term used many times when the Bible is emphasizing God’s omnipotence.

The other primary name used for God is Jehovah. This is His personal name. Unlike many of today’s names that are given to children where there is little consideration for the name’s meaning, in the ancient world names suggested something about the character of that person. This name means “He is.” At the center of God’s character is His eternality and His existence. ***He always was.*** Before time began, He was. When time ends, He will continue to be. He is also everywhere; nothing can contain him. “Being” is central to understanding God. Both the creation and existence of the universe is dependent upon God’s unlimited sovereign power. The Bible states, *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11).*

One will not often see the name “Jehovah” in the English Biblical text. Most of the time, you will see “LORD” written in all capital letters in its place. Know that in the original text, which is written in another language, Jehovah is the name that is employed.

To have any discussion on Biblical Christianity, one must start in the right place by asking a question: What is God like? We have seen a little already from some of the names of God, but let us look a little closer as to what the Bible says. Many faiths and worldviews, from animistic tribes to major world religions, answer this question differently, so we need to get this one right. However, the Bible provides an answer in its very first verse. Like any other book we would read, we start in the beginning! We see three explicit truths and many implicit truths from this very first verse:

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)

Explicit Truths

First, there are three explicit truths we can see from this verse:

1. **There was a beginning of creation and time.** Everything we see was not always here. God created everything we see and everything we do not see.
2. **In the beginning, God was already there.** God did not ever have a beginning; when He created the world, He already was. You and I had beginnings, but God never had a beginning.
3. **God created everything.** The phrase “*the heaven and the earth*” is a figure of speech called a merism. This literary device takes two opposite extremes to signify a whole. The earth is the very closest we can get to us, while heaven is the farthest away in the recesses of the universe. This phrase means that God created the outermost heavens, and the things we see around us on earth, and everything in between. God created everything—without exception.

Implicit Truths

The facts we have just discussed have many implications worth noting. Let us explore some of them, though there could be many more.

1. **God is eternal.** God always was and always will be. There was a time when there was nothing else other than God: no plants, no animals, no sun, moon or stars. There was only God. Because of this, we see that ***God is distinct from His creation.*** He does not consist of atoms like his creation does, and neither does He have flesh and bones. A being who has neither flesh nor bone, and does not consist of material is called a spirit (John 4:24). He is not restricted by space and time, for He created both. We say that God is eternal, because He has neither beginning nor ending.
2. **God is self-sufficient.** Since He is distinct from the created order, ***God does not need anything to survive.*** We need food, water, and air to survive. God does not need these things, because He created all of those things, and existed just fine without any of it. His separation from the created order is one way to show that God is ***holy.***
3. **God is all-powerful.** Consider the immensity of the universe. Consider how large the greatest star is. God created it all. God is bigger than the universe. Think about all of the power in the nuclear bomb and the rocket; God is more powerful than each of these. Even considering this, He created the minutia of subatomic particles. God’s power is greater than the sum of all of these things, because He made them all. ***God is greater than His creation; God is infinite and His creation is finite.***

4. **God has authority over creation.** When we build a house, we are the owner of that house. The same is true of God. Because He created everything, ***God is the owner of all things.*** Later on in the Bible, God says that *“whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine”* (Job 41:11). He is the true king of the universe. Also, because of this, ***all of the world’s creatures are for God’s pleasure, and are accountable to Him.***
5. **God is a super-intellect.** When we build things, we often need blueprints or directions to know how to build something. We also need tools as well. It is different with God. ***God created everything out of nothing.*** There were no previous materials with which God built the universe. He had no tools. No one had to teach Him how to build the universe from scratch, as we need instruction to develop skills. God had no prior example to follow; ***His creative and artistic hand developed everything with no help, no instruction, no tools and no materials.*** Moreover, since He created everything, God knows everything. Throughout history, humankind learned a lot about the universe through observation. God already knew everything, because He created it all. He knows all of history, because He was there for it all.
6. **God is good and perfect.** Most people agree that there is a standard of goodness and perfection. We may not all agree as to what makes something good or perfect, but we all have such a concept in our vocabulary. Because everything came from God, ***He Himself must be the standard of goodness and perfection in the world.*** He made the universe exactly the way He wanted it to be. If God is the standard of goodness and perfection, His creation must have also been good and perfect. This may not be the case for our world anymore, but the state of the universe at its inception was perfection. Another way to say that God is good and perfect is to say that He is ***righteous.***
7. **God is personal and alive.** In the people we meet and in our friends and family, we see that they all have different personalities. Because people have personality, ***God must also be personal, because personal beings cannot come from the impersonal.*** The same reasoning applies to life. As living beings, we were born because of our parents, other living beings. Life begets life, and God must be alive because life cannot come from non-life. God is the source of life.
8. **God is a trinity.** There is one God, but He exists in three persons. This may not be apparent in the English text, but some things are apparent in the original language. First, the word “God” is a plural noun, but the verb “created” is conjugated in the third person singular. God exists in three persons: the Father, the Son (or the Word), and the Holy Ghost (or the Holy Spirit) (1 John 5:7). This will become more apparent a little later in this chapter of the Bible.
9. **Only God can tell us how the world began.** Because He was the only one who was there, ***God is the only one who can tell us how He created the world*** (Job 38:4).

10. God is able to communicate with us. As corollary to the previous point, if this verse claims God's ability to communicate to us about the origin of the world, we know that He is a God of communication. As a personal being, He can communicate with His creation. We will see this again in Genesis 1:3.

These truths set the true God of the Bible apart from the religions of the world, since He is a personal, all-powerful God that is the creator of all things and the ruler over them all. Because the fundamental attributes of God can be defined in this way, we can see that God deserves honor from all of His creation.

These attributes of God as taught in the Bible affirm the theistic view of God. Since God existed before the universe, space, and time, the Bible denies the pantheistic view of God. To argue the contrary, if God was a part of His creation, then who created Him? He would then have a superior that created Him, and that superior must be the true God.

Since the universe was created by someone, an "uncaused cause," the Bible also denies the atheistic view of God. To argue the contrary, if there is no God, why is there something rather than nothing? Everything in the created order must have come from somewhere.

With these fundamentals in mind, let us proceed with the rest of Genesis 1.

Chapter 2: God Created the Heaven and the Earth

Let us now explore the first section of the Bible in detail: Genesis 1:1-2:3.

Genesis 1:1-2:3: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (2) And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

(3) And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. (4) And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. (5) And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

(6) And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. (7) And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. (8) And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

(9) And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. (10) And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. (11) And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. (12) And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. (13) And the evening and the morning were the third day.

(14) And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide 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 firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. (16) And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. (17) And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, (18) And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. (19) And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

(20) And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. (21) And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. (22) And God blessed

them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. (23) And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

(24) And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. (25) And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

(26) And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. (28) And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

(29) And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. (30) And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. (31) And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

(2:1) Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. (2) And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. (3) And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

This story shows the unfolding of the primordial world. Only God can tell us about the creation of the world because He was the only one there. We see how God was alone in the beginning, and He created everything out of nothing. It all started with God being alone. God then brought the universe into existence, including a world populated with animals and people. Let us look at some of the major themes that are included in this beautiful creation narrative.

1. **Everything had a beginning except God.** We have seen this already when we looked at Genesis 1:1. God was alone, and created everything out of nothing. Everything had a “birthday” so to speak. But not God... He always existed.

2. **The Spirit of God subdued the primordial waters.** In the pagan literature of the ancient Near East, the waters were personified as gods. Here, we simply see the Holy Spirit subduing these waters. There is likely more going on than what we see here, and we will look at this in a little while. For now, let it suffice to say that these massive waters were easily controlled by God, for He created them (Nehemiah 9:6). There was no life, just water and chaos, and God was about to form something out of all of this.

3. **God created everything by His Word.** Genesis 1:3 reads, *“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”* God spoke, and light simply began to exist. ***When God commands something, it happens.*** He is the boss and king over the entire created order. God issued commands 10 times in this passage of the Bible, and whatever He commanded immediately happened without any delay. Even the inanimate elements of creation obey His commands. There is more than just words being spoken like we speak words. The Word is the Son of God, and by the Word was everything created (Colossians 1:16).

4. **What God creates is “good.”** Genesis 1:4 reads, *“And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.”* In fact, we see this refrain six times, with a seventh time when God said that His creation was “very good.” We will see why in a moment. However, ***God by His very nature is good, and He can only create good things.*** God is perfect, and the world He originally created was perfect and lacked nothing.

5. **Living creatures beget after their own kind.** Genesis 1:12 tells us that *“the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.”* When you see an apple tree, you expect to find apples on it. It would be strange to see oranges on an apple tree. Likewise, dogs give birth to dogs, deer give birth to deer, and people give birth to people. ***God is a God of order, and His creation shows His orderliness.***

6. **God created humankind in His image.** The Bible tells us, *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth”* (Genesis 1:26).

First, in some aspect, God created people to be like Him. In other words, we have some similar traits and abilities that God has. We are personal beings. We have personality, far more than we see in the animal kingdom. We have the ability to think, have emotions, and communicate with one another with sophisticated language.

Second, we see that humankind was to rule over the created order. Though God

is the King over everything, He delegated authority to people. We are to be the caretakers of the world.

Lastly, we note that God had said, “*Let us make man in our image.*” We spoke briefly of the Trinity above, that He is three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is the “us” here.

7. **God is love.** This is not Hollywood or greeting card love. Love means service. Though God is the King of the universe, He provided all of the essentials for the creatures He brought into existence.

So many conditions in the universe and on our planet make us, and all life, possible. The herbs and fruit trees were food for all of the animals and people. The earth was created just the right amount of space from the sun to sustain life. The amount of oxygen in the atmosphere allows for life to exist; one extreme would allow human beings to suffocate, and the other would cause fires. If the gravitation force were altered by 1 part in 10^{40} , the moon would not keep in its orbit, and the sun would not exist. And if the universe were expanding at the rate of one millionth more slowly, the earth’s temperature would be 10,000 degrees. (See Geisler, Norman L. *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999. pp. 26-27.)

8. **God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh day.** God created the world in six days. He did not need endless millennia to think about design and execute His plan. He did it instantly, orderly, and in a few days. The six fold refrain “And the evening and the morning were the xth day” explains that these were literal days; there was an evening, a morning, and it was a numbered day. God did not set the world in motion and let things evolve from primordial slime; He created the world to be inhabited (Isaiah 45:18), and placed living creatures in the world within days of the dawn of time.

It may seem rather curious that God rested on the seventh day. Why would He need to “rest”? God is all powerful, and does not need rest. We may get tired after a long day’s work. God, however, never gets tired. So why rest? Because there was nothing else left to do (Genesis 2:1)! It was a perfect world, and when God created humankind, He declared it “very good.” He created everything for His pleasure (Revelation 4:11), and He had created everything exactly the way He had planned it to be.

All of these themes are important groundwork as to understanding the fundamentals of the Bible, who God is, and who we are before God. All of this was the visible created world. As we will see next, God also created some invisible elements of the universe.

Chapter 3: O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!

The creation story (Genesis 1:1-2:3), which we just discussed a bit, tells us a lot about God, the creation of the natural world, and humankind. However, God also created spirit beings, or angels, that also exist. We had previously said that God is a Spirit, meaning He is a being without flesh and bone. These angels also do not have flesh and bone, but unlike God, they are created beings; they had a beginning. The information is not so plentiful concerning angels, but there are many things that we know from the Scriptures, and, in fact, we need to know some basics.

1. **All spirit beings are subordinate to God.** Since God created them, they belong to Him and were created to serve His purpose. The word angel means “messenger” or “ministering spirit” (Hebrews 1:13-14). These spirit beings were designed to do His bidding. The Bible says, *“Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word”* (Psalms 103:20).
2. **Angels are subordinate beings, and they are finite.** They were not with God in eternity past; they had a beginning. In the writings of the Bible, it says, *“Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee”* (Nehemiah 9:6). The host of heaven is the host of spirit beings that dwell in heaven. They cannot be everywhere at once like God; they can only be in one place at one time. Angels are finite beings that are subordinate to God.
3. **God created an innumerable amount of angels.** The Bible states that there were *“ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands”* of angels, or over 100 million of them, around the throne of God at one time (Revelation 5:11). God did not create them all the same, as we know there are at least two types of spirit beings: seraphim and cherubim.
4. **They were probably created between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2.** Though the creation narrative is silent as to when angels were created, it is likely that they were created between these two verses.
5. **One of these angels was named Lucifer.** Though angels are all very mighty beings, they are all subordinate to God. Lucifer is no different. This cherub’s name means shining one, or bright one. He was ‘anointed,’ and had a place of prominence among the angels. He was created an impeccable angelic being, created in great beauty. Let us look at this angel in detail.

This passage in the Bible talks about the king of Tyrus, but as we read this, we see that the prophet was speaking to the spiritual force behind this king.

Ezekiel 28:12-19: Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. (13) Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. (14) Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. (15) Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. (16) By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. (17) Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. (18) Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. (19) All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

Let us look at some of the themes discussed in here.

1. **Lucifer was highly intelligent and beautiful.** “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty” (Ezekiel 28:12). His intelligence and appearance was greater than any other creature.
2. **Lucifer had lived in Eden, the Garden of God.** God created this well-watered paradise for humankind in which to dwell, with fruit trees from which they could freely eat. Though we will discuss this place later, we see that Lucifer also lived there (Ezekiel 28:13).
3. **Lucifer was created to be a musical creature.** “Tabrets and pipes” are musical instruments (Ezekiel 28:13).
4. **Lucifer is an anointed cherub.** He had a position of authority over the other angels (Ezekiel 28:14).
5. **Lucifer was created perfect.** God can only create perfect things; therefore, Lucifer was perfect at his creation (Ezekiel 28:15).

6. **Iniquity was found in Lucifer.** Though Lucifer was created perfect, He rebelled against God (Ezekiel 28:15). Rebellion against God is often called *sin* in the Bible. Sin fundamentally changed the nature of Lucifer. By rebelling against God, he became God's adversary. In the original language of this text, Hebrew, the word meaning adversary is *Satan*, which is the name we normally call Lucifer since his rebellion.

Here, we see that Lucifer saw his own beauty and in essence, worshipped himself (Ezekiel 28:17). As a result, we see that God threw him out of heaven, where God's throne is (Ezekiel 28:16). Eventually, he will be thrown into a lake of fire, that was specifically created for him and anyone who followed him (Ezekiel 28:18, see Matthew 25:41).

Let us consider another famous portion of Scripture that speaks of Lucifer, Isaiah 14:12-15:

Isaiah 14:12-15: How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! (13) For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (15) Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

The one thing of note here is that ***Lucifer, who became Satan, wanted to be God!*** After all we have discussed on the power of God, it is absurd to think that Satan could become like God. God is the omnipotent Creator, and Satan is a finite creation of God. We see that the only thing that results is that at some time in the future, he will be brought down to hell, another term concerning the lake of fire we mentioned above.

Lucifer did not rebel alone; other angels followed him (Revelation 12:9). The angels that rebelled with Lucifer are called devils or demons. The rise and fall of Lucifer and his cronies likely all happened between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. The words for "without form, and void" in Genesis 1:2 indicates that judgment took place on these fallen angels. This would mean that he had hardly lived a full day before rebelling against God! In Genesis 1:2 we read that "*the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*" This is very similar to another part of the Bible that uses similar language, and it is referring to the world after great judgment and destruction (Genesis 8:1). Whether this conjecture stands is not as important. We do know that Satan rebelled very early on in the earth's history, and it is a tragedy that some of God's angels turned out to be evil and malicious creatures. Unfortunately, that was only the beginning.

Chapter 4: And the LORD God Planted a Garden Eastward in Eden

After God created the world, He created a place for His newly formed people to live. Let us move on to Genesis 2, where we see what happened to those first people formed. These verses will rehearse the latter part of the sixth day of Creation when humankind was first formed (Genesis 1:26-31), but we will see much more detail than what we saw previously.

Genesis 2:4-10, 15-25: These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, (5) And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. (6) But there went up a mist 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 soul.

(8) And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. (9) And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (10) And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads...

(2:15) And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. (16) And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: (17) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

(18) And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. (19) And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. (20) And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. (21) And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; (22) And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. (23) And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. (24) Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (25) And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Let us explore some of the major themes we see in this passage.

1. **God is referred to as the LORD God instead of just God.** If you recall, the word “LORD” refers to God’s personal name, Jehovah. This is the first time we see this designation in the Bible (Genesis 2:4). Instead of only seeing God as the powerful being that created the world and subdued the chaotic waters of creation, we see Jehovah God as He personally interacted with Adam, the first man. Adam had an interpersonal relationship with God. The Lord fashioned Adam and his wife, and God communicated with them.
2. **Plants were watered by a mist from the ground rather than rain water.** This may not seem very important at first, but we see that rain was not a phenomenon that the world experienced (Genesis 2:5-6). This is also apparent since rainbows did not appear in the sky until later on in the Bible (Genesis 9:13).
3. **God created the man Adam and breathed life into him.** The LORD God created Adam out of the dust of the ground. This was not enough however; God had to breathe life into him for Adam to be a real live person. (Genesis 2:7). ***Only God can create life; God is the source of life.***
4. **God loved Adam.** Remember, by love, we mean a practical love which is service. God placed Adam into the Garden of Eden, a lush garden with many fruit trees (Genesis 2:8-9). He could eat as much as he wanted from these trees (Genesis 2:16). God did not ask Adam if he wanted to be placed there; ***God simply placed him there, because God is the creator and owner of all things.*** God knew what was best for Adam, and gave him a perfect home in which to live. Likewise, God knows what is best for us, and gives us what we really need.

Let us look at the specifics of God’s gift to Adam. God said to Adam, “*Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat*” (Genesis 2:16). The phrase “freely eat” in the original language indicated emphasis. The word “eat” is actually used twice for emphasis. Adam could eat as much as he wanted from the garden, and he did not need to ask for more. God provided sustenance for Adam as a free gift.

5. **God made Adam the caretaker of the garden.** Adam’s job was to take care of this garden (Genesis 2:15). ***Since God is the authority over everything, He can delegate that authority to anyone He wishes.***
6. **There were two named trees in the Garden, the first was the tree of life.** This one tree that was in the garden had a place of prominence; it was called the tree of life. The little we know about this tree is that it somehow imparted life to whoever ate of it (Genesis 3:22). It also bore multiple types of fruit, which made it

unique from any other tree that ever existed (Revelation 22:2).

7. **God commanded Adam not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.** Adam could eat of the tree of life and any of the other trees, except one. Adam could not eat of the other named tree, called the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). God commanded that Adam should not eat of this tree of knowledge. Eating of this tree would introduce death into the human race.

To this point, death was not a part of creation. God had created a perfect world. ***Death was a consequence for disobeying and rebelling against God, not a natural phenomenon.*** This phrase “surely die” is very similar to the “freely eat” we looked at in the previous verse. The verb “die” is used twice for emphasis. If Adam ate of the tree, it was not that he might die, or likely die, but that he would definitely die. ***When God states something is going to happen, it is definitely going to happen.***

We also need to define death. In some ways, we need to think of it as separation. Adam was going to physically die. He was not necessarily going to immediately breathe his last breath. However, there are three ways he was going to die. ***First, Adam was going to be separated from God.*** God is omnipresent, so it is not possible for Adam to be separated from God by proximity. By separation, we mean that the friendship and peace that existed between God and Adam would immediately be severed. This is very similar to what happened between Lucifer and God.

Second, Adam’s body would start to slowly die. It may take a while, but his body would age, and eventually his body would breathe its last breath.

Third, Adam would also eventually be thrown into the lake of fire after death (Hebrews 9:27). God is perfect, and imperfection cannot be in the presence of the perfect God. This terrible fate was not temporary. Adam would be in this lake of fire for eternity, because he sinned against the infinite God (Revelation 20:14-15).

To this point, just as death was an unknown concept, so was anything that was not perfect. Adam only knew the good and the perfect. If he ate of the tree of knowledge, he would learn what evil is, and the greatest evil, death.

8. **God created a wife for Adam.** To this point, Adam is alone (Genesis 2:18). We see God said that it was “not good” for Adam to be alone. This is the first time in the entire Bible that we see that something is “not good”!

God once again delegated His authority to Adam, this time to name all of the animals. To name something is to have authority over it. Seeing all of the animals, he saw that he lacked a mate, unlike all of the other animals.

After Adam saw his need, God provided a “help” for Adam. Marriage is inaugurated here in God’s Garden of Eden.

9. **Adam and his wife were naked.** This may seem odd, because we know well that it is shameful to be naked. However, shame and embarrassment did not exist in those days, and they had no idea about clothes. A further explanation will be seen in the next chapter.

Adam and his wife lived in this perfect new world. They knew communion with God and with one another. They had all of their necessities available to them in a beautiful garden. God gave everything this new pair of human beings would need or want. If only this were the end of the story!

Chapter 5: It Shall Bruise Thy Head

Though God was gracious to His newly formed people, a great tragedy occurred. Let us read what happens next.

Genesis 3:1-24: Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (2) And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: (3) 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 ye die. (4) And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: (5) For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

(6) And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. (7) And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

(8) And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. (9) And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? (10) And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (11) And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? (12) And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

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

(14) And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: (15) And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

(16) Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

(17) And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt

not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; (18) Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; (19) In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

(20) And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. (21) Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. (22) And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: (23) Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. (24) So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

This portion of the Bible is packed with a lot of information. It is at once seasoned with both despair and hope. Let us mine the treasure of this text one piece at a time.

1. **The serpent is none other than Satan.** The name Satan does not appear in this passage, but we know from Revelation 12:9 that this serpent is Satan in disguise. Satan is the enemy of God and wants to hurt God anyway that he can. One way he can do so is by trying to harm God's special possession and own image, people. Because Satan hates God, he also hates people (John 8:44). Satan is a liar, so he disguised himself as this serpent.
2. **The serpent undermined God's goodness and His command.** We will see soon that Satan was very familiar with God's command about the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:1, 4). As God's enemy, he questioned God's provision, as if God was holding something back from Adam and his wife.
3. **The serpent approached Adam's wife, not Adam.** If you noticed in the previous chapter, God entrusted His commandment concerning the tree of knowledge to Adam *before* his wife was created (Genesis 2:17-18). Satan was counting on the fact that somewhere between Adam hearing the command and his telling his wife about it, that something would get miscommunicated (Genesis 3:1).
4. **Adam's wife misquoted God's Word.** It is good to notice that she misquoted God in at least three ways. Either Adam misquoted it to his wife, or his wife misquoted it on her own. I feel like it was probably a little bit of both, but we cannot know for sure.

First, in Genesis 3:2, we read, *"We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden."* That may sound close to the same as the original command in Genesis 2:16.

However, notice the absence of the word “freely.” Remember how this word indicated the duplication of the word “eat” in the original manuscripts? This was done for emphasis, so that Adam and his wife would know that they could eat as much from the garden as they would want. Well, the woman did not use this emphasis. We can tell that the couple did not recognize God’s generosity as they should have.

In Genesis 3:3, the woman said of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, “*Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it.*” God never said anything about not touching it; this was added somewhere by Adam or Eve along the way.

In the same verse, the woman also stated the penalty for eating or touching this tree: “*lest ye die.*” Again, the emphasis of duplicating the verb “die” is missing. The definite consequence of death was softened to a mere possibility.

When we are ignorant of God’s Word, we open the door for sin and rebellion against Him. Because the woman (and as we shall see, the man also) did not know the command of God, Satan had a complete inroad to dominate her with his lies.

5. **The serpent knew God’s command, and negated it.** The serpent replied to the woman, “*Ye shall not surely die*” (Genesis 3:4). The serpent made two changes to God’s commandment. First, he changed the subject from “thou” to “ye” (from singular to plural) because Adam’s wife had not been created at the time when God gave the commandment. This is not the significant change.

The main issue is that ***Satan, in the guise of the serpent, took God’s commandment and stuck the word “not” in front of it.*** Satan called God a liar. He properly used the word “die” twice for emphasis. The serpent knew exactly what God had said; he plainly negated it.

The serpent alleged that God had lied to Adam and his wife in order to hold something back from them (Genesis 3:5). They would be like gods! As Lucifer lifted himself up in pride when he saw how God had blessed him, he also was trying to use pride to turn her away from God.

This was the first time that either Adam or his wife had ever seen anyone challenge God’s command or His goodness. As ones who were ordained of God to rule over His creation, the serpent was under their authority (Genesis 1:28). The first human beings had a choice: They could either submit to the LORD God, who was the creator, owner and king over the created order, or they could listen to a creature under their authority.

6. **Adam and his wife disobeyed God and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.** The woman, after being lied to by Satan, started considering the tree

(Genesis 3:6). She noticed three things about the tree: it seemed to be good for food, pleasant to look at it, and able to make them wise. Sin is often about one of these things (1 John 2:16). Life was no longer about serving God, but rather on how to please herself.

We could (wrongfully) excuse the woman because she was fooled by Satan. **Adam, however, who had directly heard the commandment from God, outright rebelled against God.** Adam was entrusted with the Word of God, and he failed to obey it.

Now that they had rebelled against God, Adam and his wife were to face the consequences of their sin.

7. **Adam and his wife immediately felt shame.** *“The eyes of them both were opened”* (Genesis 3:7). So where was the divinity that Satan had promised? On the contrary, they felt guilt. They knew something was wrong. **This “knowledge” of evil they received was not knowledge about evil, but rather experiential knowledge of evil.** They now **were** evil.

Being naked, they felt exposed and ashamed. **They rightfully recognized that they needed to cover their shame.** They tried to cover their shame by making their own clothes out of fig leaves. Take note of this; we will discuss this shortly.

8. **Sin cannot stand before God.** God is **holy**. He is distinct from His creation, and He is perfect. Imperfection cannot stand in His presence. The moment that Adam and his wife heard God in the garden, **they ran and hid** (Genesis 3:8).

The man and the woman were once friends of God! The LORD gave them everything they had ever needed. Now, they were afraid of God. Remember the first way we defined death in the previous chapter? **Adam and his wife were separated from God. This separation was not by proximity, but rather in relationship.**

God called to Adam to ask them where they were (Genesis 3:9). **God knows everything.** So why did He ask where they were? **God asks questions to expose sin and elicit confession.**

In this key exchange between God and the man, the woman, and the serpent, a literary device is used called a **chiastic structure**. In such a device, let me demonstrate with a simple example. If there were a five-lined poem, the first and fifth lines would be related, or parallel in some way. The second and the fourth line would also be parallel. The third line would be the crux of the structure, and it would be what is most emphasized in the entire structure.

In this case the chiastic structure is Genesis 3:9-19. God first questioned the man (Genesis 3:9-12). Second, He questioned the woman (Genesis 3:13). God then pronounced judgment on the serpent (Genesis 3:14-15), then judgment on the woman (Genesis 3:16), and then judgment on the man (Genesis 3:17-19). The crux of the chiastic structure is the judgment on the serpent.

9. **The man and the woman shifted blame, but ultimately confessed their rebellion against God.** When asked if Adam ate from the tree, notice his answer in Genesis 3:12: *“The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”* Adam blamed his wife and God for his own choice to disobey! “If it weren’t for that woman you gave me!” Ultimately, he had to confess that he did eat from the tree.

When asking the woman in Genesis 3:13, the woman placed some blame on the serpent, but ultimately confessed as well.

10. **A seed of the woman will destroy Satan.** God did not ask the serpent anything; God pronounced judgment on the serpent. In Genesis 3:14, God pronounced judgment on the serpent as an animal.

In Genesis 3:15, God pronounced judgment on Satan, the force behind the serpent. This is the crux of the whole exchange. I will include it here, and we will examine it a piece at a time:

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

God said that He would place enmity between Satan and the woman, and also between Satan’s seed and the woman’s seed. “Seed” is a child or a descendant. What is important to know about this is that in the Scriptures, women do not normally have “seed”; men do. In the Bible, posterity is named in the man and not in the woman, so this is highly unusual.

Whoever this seed of the woman is, he was going to deliver a mortal wound to Satan (“it shall bruise thy head”). Also, Satan was going to wound this seed of the woman in some way.

At some point in time yet unknown to Adam and his wife, a virgin would conceive and have a son, and though this son would suffer in some way at the hands of Satan, He would destroy Satan and his works. This man is called a Savior.

11. **There were consequences of this sin on all of humanity.** In Genesis 3:16, we see that women would now have excruciating pain in giving birth. Work would no longer be as it was in the garden, but rather with great exertion, with flesh-

tearing thistles (Genesis 3:17-18). The ground would be cursed. The whole created order was marred because its chief caretakers, humankind, had rebelled against God.

Unlike Satan, **God always tells the truth**. God had said that they would surely die, and their bodies were already beginning to die (Genesis 3:19). A flower cut from the garden may look very much alive, but in reality it has been cut from its source of life. Adam was cut from his source of life, God, and eventually physically died, his body returning to the ground (Genesis 5:5).

Remember previously, we saw how death was threefold:

Death as relational separation from God: They were separated from God relationally because of sin. The holy creator God cannot have sin in His presence.

Death as the body physically dying: God had said that they would physically die, and they eventually did.

Death as eternal condemnation in the lake of fire: So what about this? Are Adam and his wife condemned to the lake of fire? Unless they have a Savior to save them, they have no hope. They are destined to eternal flame unless somehow they can be saved.

God in His goodness was going to provide a way through the Savior.

12. Adam and his wife believed God. So we read Genesis 3:20: *“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.”* Finally, we find out the name of Adam’s wife: Eve. This is more than a name, however.

Eve indeed was mother of all the living. Every single human being that has ever lived on this planet has the common ancestors of Adam and Eve. There were no other people on the planet except these two at this time. This is part of the reason why Eve is her name.

It runs deeper than that, though. By this verse, **we see that Adam and Eve believed God’s promise of the coming Savior**. After hearing tons of bad news about their marriage relationship, birth pains, and working in thistles in great toil, they cling to the promise of a coming Savior that will save them from Satan! A woman was going to give birth to one who would bring life again! They realized that this Savior was the only hope to rescue them from the fires of hell. They may not have trusted God that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would result in death. They may have trusted Satan’s word over God’s Word. Now, however, they were trusting God because His provision of the Savior was their only hope.

13. God took away the shame of Adam and Eve. If you recall, Adam and Eve tried to clothe themselves with fig leaves (Genesis 3:7). By the time the LORD God was in the garden, they were naked again (Genesis 3:10). The clothing they made for themselves did not hold together well! ***Humankind cannot cover their own shame by their own works and methods.***

In Genesis 3:21, God provided clothes for them: clothes that would last. Here we begin to see how God could punish Adam and Eve's sin without punishing them. God slew animals and took their skins, making for them new clothes. ***Innocent animals died in Adam and Eve's place; death is the only payment for sin.*** These coverings covered their shame. The animals did not do anything wrong. The innocent animals' blood was shed in the place of Adam and Eve.

14. God removed Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Being evicted from the garden was both an act of judgment and of grace. It was an act of judgment because imperfection cannot come into the presence of God. It was also an act of grace (unmerited favor) because humankind will not live forever in the painful conditions that now existed in the world. The LORD placed cherubim, one of the types of angels, to block the way back into the garden (Genesis 3:24). Adam and Eve could never go back in; God forced them out.

Starting from the beginning of the Bible until now, we have seen the majesty of the LORD God, in all His power, creating a perfect world. But because of Satan and the rebellion of humankind, the once perfect world was now cursed. Pain, suffering, and death, once unheard of, were now commonplace. Apart from the coming Savior, no hope remained for the human race, but rather a life of suffering and death, and after this, the judgment of the lake of fire (Hebrews 9:27).

Every human being that has come into the world since Adam and Eve was born dead in sin. We all have sin, meaning we are born in a state of rebellion against God. This is far beyond mere moral pollution. We were all born outside the Garden of Eden, alienated and separated from God. We are born evil, and we naturally do evil. Because we are by nature God's enemies and Satan's pawns, all we know how to do is sin and rebel against God. Apart from the promised Savior, we have no hope in this life, or in the next life. God's wrath remains because of our sin. Death is the only payment for sin.

Not only are we born rebels who do nothing but sin, we also are victims of other people's sin. Other people hurt us. We are all ultimately selfish, exalting ourselves and filling ourselves with our desires. Because of this, we hurt other people and people hurt us.

Furthermore, we are victims of living in a fallen world. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God and obeyed Satan's lies, they relinquished much of their authority on earth and gave it to Satan. Sickness and disease were now present, and we could get a terminal disease that would rob us of life. Nothing in this world is certain except uncertainty.

Lastly, Satan is still alive and well in this world. We know that one day he will be thrown into the lake of fire, but as of now, he is out to destroy and kill as many people as he can. He has a huge army of devils, the angels that have rebelled against God with him, that help him. He has usurped humanity's authority, and the world became his kingdom.

How will the Savior change all of this? We will keep reading, and discover how.

Chapter 6: And the LORD Had Respect

When Adam and Eve were thrust out of the Garden, they began life in a fallen world. The first thing we read about them is that they begin having children. Let us read about them.

Genesis 4:1-16, 25-26: And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. (2) And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

(3) And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. (4) And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: (5) But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

(6) And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? (7) If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

(8) And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. (9) And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? (10) And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. (11) And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; (12) When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

(13) And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. (14) Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. (15) And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. (16) And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden...

(4:25) And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. (26) And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.

Let us consider these two sons of Adam and Eve, and see the similarities and differences between them both.

1. **Adam's sons Cain and Abel were both born outside of the Garden of Eden and inherited their parents' sin nature.** While God created Adam without sin, in His image (Genesis 1:27; 5:1), these two sons were born in Adam's sinful image (Genesis 5:3). They never knew life without sin; they were born in sin. The world in which they lived was no longer "very good" as God had created it. ***Cain and Abel were born servants of Satan.*** There is nothing that they could do about it, and there was nothing they could give back to God to pay for their sin. This narrative is only about two of Adam and Eve's sons; they apparently had many children as time went by (Genesis 4:14; 5:4).
2. **The faith of Eve is apparent in the naming of Cain.** It seems Eve was thinking that the Savior of Genesis 3:15 had already come, saying that she had "*gotten a man from the LORD*" (Genesis 4:1). However, we know that this was Adam's son, and there was no way that this was the Savior. The name "Abel" is rather insignificant, meaning either breath or evanescence. It would appear that Adam and Eve saw great promise in Cain, and not so much in Abel.
3. **The vocations of Cain and Abel tell us a lot about them.** Cain was a "*tiller of the ground*" (Genesis 4:2). Most people in these ancient times were probably farmers, like Cain. There was no large human civilization yet. He would have been very familiar with working in the cursed soil day in and day out (Genesis 3:17-19).

Abel, on the other hand, was "*a keeper of sheep*" (Genesis 4:2). This may not sound extraordinary, but let us consider a few things about the world up to this time. Human beings were vegetarian in those times (Genesis 1:29; 2:16). The human race did not consume meat until Genesis 9:3-4. The nomadic lifestyle was not known until one of Cain's descendants, Jabal, began to live such a life (Genesis 4:20). Why did Abel choose to be a keeper of sheep? ***Abel chose his vocation because he believed the promises of God.*** His parents must have told him how God had to slay animals in order to make skins to cover their shameful nakedness. His vocation was bringing animal sacrifices to God, knowing that ***the shedding of the blood of the animal was a picture as to how God takes away sin: the innocent dies for the guilty.***

4. **The offerings of Cain and Abel also tell us about them.** An offering is a gift to God. These two men both decided to bring an offering to God. We do not see that they were commanded to bring any manner of gift; they chose to bring gifts to God voluntarily.

We just saw how Abel's trusting in God's promises, or his ***faith***, drove him to choose his vocation. Abel brought "*of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat*

thereof" (Genesis 4:4). Abel brought the best of the best of what he had. ***He believed that if someone was going to die in place of his sin, that someone was going to have to be perfect and of the best sort.***

Cain, on the contrary, brought his leftovers. He was a tiller of the ground. He brought to God whatever he already had lying around. His offering was reminiscent of Adam and Eve's fig leaf aprons they had made, that God did not accept. Remember how God had to provide animal skins because their own works, the fig leaf aprons, were not acceptable? Abel's sacrifice, on the other hand, was reminiscent of the animal skins that God provided.

We read in the Bible later that *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh"* (Hebrews 11:4). To be ***righteous*** means to be without sin. How could Abel be considered righteous, being born a sinner in Satan's kingdom? ***Abel was a sinner, but he was declared righteous by God because he trusted God and believed His promises.***

A note of caution: We need to remember that the original animal skins were given by God. We in ourselves cannot offer anything to God to cover for our sins. The blood sacrifice of Abel is a picture of faith in how God will one day remove our sin by the coming Savior.

5. **God respected Abel's sacrifice but did not respect Cain's.** It was not the difference of vocation that made the difference. Though Cain chose to be a tiller of the ground, surely he could have made a trade with Abel to offer what God required. Cain and Abel both knew from their parents that they were helpless sinners before God, and that *"it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul"* (Leviticus 17:11). Abel offered his blood sacrifice by faith, and Cain brought his leftovers. The result was that God was pleased with the one and not the other (Genesis 4:4-5).

Cain was very angry, but God brought him great hope and consolation: *"And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him"* (Genesis 4:6-7). If Cain trusted God, he could have had God's respect just as Abel had.

6. **Cain killed Abel.** We already saw how Cain was enraged by his rejection. He worked hard in the field all day, every day. It was not easy doing what he did, gathering food from the field, which grew thorns and thistles. But the work of human beings does not please God. It is trusting God that makes the difference, and Cain did not trust God.

His mother had called him the man that was gotten from the LORD (Genesis 4:1). Perhaps Cain even thought that he himself was the promised Savior! Now his younger brother came along and threatened this prominence, and the possible favored status he had in the family.

We already saw that Cain was angry, possibly for some of these reasons. He was probably very jealous of his brother too. I think something more sinister was at work, however.

Cain knew God required a blood offering, so he decided to throw it in God's face and killed his brother. "You want a blood offering, God? Since you love Abel so much, his blood should do just fine!" If this really is the case, then we see that not only did Cain not trust God, but he hated Him.

7. **Cain is condemned as a wanderer.** God knows everything, and does not need to ask us anything. As God questioned Adam and Eve in the Garden to elicit a confession of sin, He did the same with Cain: "*Where is Abel thy brother?*" (Genesis 4:9). Unlike his parents, he did not confess any sin, but rather retorted with a lie.

"Cain went out from the presence of the LORD" (Genesis 4:16). As far as we can tell, he never sought God ever again, and God never sought him. Cain was condemned as a vagabond, and his work as a tiller of the ground was to be fruitless (Genesis 4:12). The last we see of him, he built a city in his pride, naming it after his son. His great-great-great-grandson was also a murderer, and departed from God's decree of marriage (Genesis 2:24) by marrying two wives. (You can read more about Cain's family in Genesis 4:17-24.)

8. **Abel is still alive.** Abel was murdered by his older brother Cain, but we see that God told Cain that "*the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground*" (Genesis 4:10). His body may have been dead, but somehow Abel was alive and calling out to God. ***Because Abel believed the promises of God, he was not sent to the lake of fire, but rather still lived. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh"*** (Hebrews 11:4).
9. **Seth was given to Adam and Eve in Abel's place.** Adam and Eve, though naming Cain as if he would be the Savior, realized that it was Abel who pleased God. They blessed this new son, Seth, to be in place of Abel (Genesis 4:25).

We see that this son's family trusted God (Genesis 4:26), and that this son's lineage would eventually be the family from which the Savior was born.

Like these first humans that walked the earth, ***we cannot please God in our own efforts.*** There is nothing intrinsically special about us that makes us acceptable to God. We are his enemies, helpless before him, and we must trust that He will save us from death and the lake of fire. Like Abel, the only thing left to do is to trust God's promise of a coming Savior. Let us revisit these promises.

First, though our sin must be punished by God, God can punish our sin without punishing us.

This was pictured in the animal skins given to Adam and Eve, and in Abel's sacrifice. Remember, however these were just pictures of something bigger that God was going to do. These things did not permanently remove our sin, guilt and shame. The garments of Adam and Eve perished with time. Abel's sacrifice was finally consumed by the fire. We need to trust God that He will provide a way to permanently remove sin from us and save us from the lake of fire.

Second, God was going to send a Savior to destroy Satan and his kingdom. At this point, it is not exactly clear how He was going to do this, but we need to trust God that He is willing and able to save us from sin, Satan, and the lake of fire.

Chapter 7: And the LORD Shut Him In

Being a thesis on a very specific objective, to define the fundamentals of Biblical Christianity, we will not discuss every verse in the Bible. We will pick up our discussion in Genesis 6:9, and read portions of the next several chapters to demonstrate our hopelessness to save ourselves before the creator God, and how He saved a man named Noah.

Genesis 6:9-22: These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. (10) And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (11) The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. (12) And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

(13) And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (14) Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. (15) And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. (16) A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. (17) And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. (18) But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. (19) And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. (20) Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. (21) And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. (22) Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Let us examine some of the themes we see in this portion of the Scriptures.

1. **Noah was just, perfect, and walked with God.** These are very noble terms to describe a man (Genesis 6:9). Noah was born in sin like everybody else. However, by these terms we can see that he was a man, like Abel, who believed the promises of God concerning the coming Savior. Noah knew of his sin, and knew that God had to save him from his sin.

By “just” the Bible means that this Noah was righteous. As with Abel, he was declared righteous and perfect only because of his trusting in God. Moreover,

Noah “walked with God.” We see that this righteous man was close with God. Elsewhere in the Bible, Noah is referred to as a “*preacher of righteousness*” (2 Peter 2:5), meaning he was exhorting others to trust in God’s promises, or there would be a great judgment upon them.

2. **Noah had three sons.** Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Genesis 6:10). Ham was the youngest of the three (Genesis 9:24), and Japheth was the oldest (Genesis 10:21). Shem is listed first, as he is the one from where the line of the Savior will derive.
3. **The world was filled with violence and corrupt.** We see that the world “*was filled with violence*” (Genesis 6:11). God hates violence. When humanity is left to its own without God, we see that it devolves into the most sordid state. In another part of the Bible, we see how that, without God, people...

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. (Romans 1:29-32)

Before we proceed with the discussion, do not think for a moment that we as human beings have changed in the slightest. Look in the mirror: the above passage is you and me apart from the grace of God. Given the right circumstances, and apart from the mercy of God, any one of us can turn into this. “*The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth*” (Psalm 11:5).

The world was “corrupt” (Genesis 6:12). It was anarchy, and had decayed into a very miserable place. It had become a place where God knew that there was no hope for humanity to trust in Him. The promises of God were folly to them. Except for Noah, every single person was violent and corrupt.

Also notice that “*the earth was filled with violence.*” The population of the world was not merely in the hundreds or even in the thousands. If the earth was “filled,” that means that people were everywhere, covering the whole face of the earth.

4. **God would destroy the earth with everyone in it.** The world had reached a point of no return. God knew that nobody was going to trust in Him, and there was nothing to do to save them. God was going to destroy the world with everything in it (Genesis 6:13). He was going to do this by sending flood waters upon the earth (Genesis 6:17).

5. **God provided a way for Noah and his family to be saved.** God commanded Noah to build an ark, which is an archaic word for “box.” So this giant box was going to serve as a boat to protect Noah and his family from the coming flood. God had very specific instructions on how it was to be built. This giant ark was how God was going to preserve Noah, his family, and a pair of each of the land animals.
6. **Noah obeyed God and built the ark exactly as God had specified.** Noah did exactly as he was told (Genesis 6:22). If Noah had not trusted God and did not do exactly according to the specifications, the boat could have sunk, not have been big enough, or any number of disasters. Noah had to trust that God knew better than he did, and that God, who is perfect and good, was his only hope to be saved from judgment.

Let us read further about what happened:

Genesis 7:10-8:4: And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. (11) In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. (12) And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. (13) In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; (14) They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. (15) And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. (16) And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.

(17) And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. (18) And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. (19) And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. (20) Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

(21) And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: (22) All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. (23) And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. (24) And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

(8:1) And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged; (2) The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; (3) And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. (4) And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

1. **God had said there would be a flood, and there was.** *When God promises something it always comes to pass.* The flood came from above and from beneath. Recall that in Genesis 2:5-6, there was an implication that it had never rained before.
2. **Noah, his family, and the animals all went into the ark.** Noah did all that he was told, trusting God to save him from the flood.
3. **The LORD shut him in.** Noah and the rest entered into the ark, but it was God Himself who shut them all in. Once He closed the door, nobody was getting off, and nobody else was getting on. The salvation of Noah's family was sealed, and the damnation of the world was sealed. Just as when Adam and Eve were thrown out of the garden and God had placed His angels at the entrance to keep them out, the people of the world could not enter into the ark by the door that God had closed.
4. **The flood was a global flood and destroyed all land animals and people outside of the ark.** This flood was not any localized flood, but rather covered the entire world (see Genesis 7:19-20). It was not merely pouring rain, but we see fountains of water also erupted from beneath the surface of the earth. All of the floods and landslides in history do not compare to what happened in those days.
5. **God remembered Noah.** God knows everything, and is all-powerful and perfect. God had not forgotten Noah; rather this was a way to say that God was about to fulfill His promise to deliver Noah and his family from the flood waters. With a strong wind passing over the earth, the waters of the flood were subdued.

If you remember correctly, we saw earlier how *“the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters”* (Genesis 1:2), after the time where Lucifer possibly rebelled against God. The word “wind” in Genesis 8:1 is the same word as the word for “Spirit” in the Hebrew language, the original language in which this part of the Bible was written. Just as the Spirit of God was subduing the waters after judgment upon Satan, God made a wind to pass over the judgment waters, and was about to make a clean start with the human race. The ark eventually sat atop the mountains of Ararat, in modern day eastern Turkey.

After Noah and his family got off of the ark, God made a covenant with them and made them a great promise:

Genesis 9:8-11: And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, (9) And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; (10) And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. (11) And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

Noah believed that God would send the floodwaters, and that he had to build the ark according to God's directions. Noah was a sinner deserving the same judgment as the rest of the world, but he trusted God's promises. Because he sought God and trusted in him, he was considered "*a just man and perfect in his generations*" (Genesis 6:9) and "*found grace in the eyes of the LORD*" (Genesis 6:8). God therefore kept His promise to save Noah and his family.

God promised that He would never again destroy the world by a flood. When God makes a promise, He always keeps it. Millennia later, we see that no global flood has ever come again upon the world. There have been plenty of floods, but never one that destroyed in such a wide scope as this one. We do know, however, that God again will destroy the world, but in that day, it will be by fire (Revelation 20:14-15). ***As Noah believed God that He would judge the world, and moved in faith to build an ark that would keep him safe, we also need to believe God that He can save us from the lake of fire.*** We will see how God provided a way of salvation.

Chapter 8: He Was Wounded for Our Transgressions

After Noah got off the ark, the world was repopulated and was divided into various nations as centuries went by. God in His own providence selected one nation above the others in which He would reveal Himself and from which the Savior would come. This nation was called Israel. Through this nation, the LORD revealed more of what we should expect from the Savior when He would come.

1. **The Savior would be born of a virgin.** We already saw this in Genesis 3:15. This is also reiterated in Isaiah 7:14: *“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”*
2. **The Savior would be from the tribe of Judah.** The nation of Israel began with a patriarch named Abraham. He had a son Isaac, who was born to him miraculously in his old age. Isaac also had a son, named Jacob, who in turn had twelve sons. Those twelve sons designate the patriarchs of the twelve tribes of Israel. The tribe of Judah was to be the ancestor of the Savior.

Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. (Genesis 49:8-10)

This prophecy showed how a ruling dynasty of kings would come from this tribe. After those kings, the Savior (“Shiloh” or “tranquility”) would be revealed in Israel. The Savior will put peace between humankind and God.

3. **The Savior would be born in a town called Bethlehem.** Micah 5:2 reads: *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”*
4. **The Savior would come from the lineage of King David.** King David was the beginning of a dynasty of kings of Israel, and later the nation of Judah. Jeremiah 23:5-6 reads, *“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”*

The Branch is a title for the Savior throughout the Old Testament. Other

references include Isaiah 11:1-5, Jeremiah 33:14-18, Zechariah 3:8, and Zechariah 6:12-13. Also, the Savior was going to give us the LORD's righteousness, because we ourselves are not righteous (Jeremiah 23:6).

5. **The Savior would suffer and die for humanity.** Remember how innocent animals had to die to cover the sin and shame of Adam and Eve? For centuries afterward, God's people made animal sacrifices, showing that they believed that they were sinful and that someone else had to die for them. However, even after centuries of animal sacrifice, they still needed animals to cover their sin and shame. This Savior was going to put an end to all sacrifices for sin. The Savior was going to offer Himself as a sacrifice, whose blood was going to make a covering for sin once and for all time. In Daniel 9:26, we read:

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

The word Messiah (or in the Greek language, Christ) indicates one who is anointed by God. Previous kings of Israel were referred to by this name. This King, however, was going to die for the sins of His people, and in the context of this passage, it was going to be approximately 483 years (69 sevens in Daniel 9:25) after the city of Jerusalem was going to be rebuilt (Daniel 9:25). This takes us up to about the first century, A.D.

6. **The Savior would be God Himself.** If the animal skins God gave Adam and Eve did not cover sin forever, and the lambs that Abel sacrificed did not suffice, how could a mere human being be any better? If all human beings such as you and me were condemned in the sin of Adam before we were ever born, how could mortal creatures finish the penalty of sin forever, once and for all? How could a regular person like you and me, if he or she were somehow sinless, be the one who would bruise the head of Satan and destroy him? God Himself would have to be the Savior.

We read in Isaiah 9:6: *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* The mighty God, who created the heaven and the earth, would somehow come to earth as a human being, and be a sacrifice for the sins of every human being that has ever lived.

The LORD says in Zechariah 12:10, *"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as*

one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

Here is one part of the Bible that depicts the life and death of this Savior. Hundreds of years before the Savior came, Isaiah foretold the following:

Isaiah 53:1-12: Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? (2) For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. (3) He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (4) Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. (5) But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (6) All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (7) He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. (8) He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. (9) And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. (10) Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (12) Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Let us look at some of the themes that we see here:

1. **The message of the suffering servant must be believed.** "Who hath believed our report?" (Isaiah 53:1). Just as Adam and Eve believed the promise of the coming Savior, we must believe that the Savior has paid for our sins. What the prophet Isaiah is about to record are the LORD's promises in which we must trust.
2. **The Servant did not appear extraordinary.** The "he" in Isaiah 53:2 is referred to as the LORD's servant (Isaiah 52:13), who is the promised Savior. According to Isaiah 53:2, there is nothing physically appealing about Him. He was not going to be a

smooth-talking orator with a striking appearance that people were going to admire Him.

3. **He would be rejected and hated.** For some reason, this Savior was going to be hated (Isaiah 53:3). Later, we will see why, but the people He came to save hated Him enough to kill Him.
4. **He was punished because of other people's wrong doings.** Just as animals were punished for the sins of Adam, Eve, and Abel, and to cover their shame, this Man also was punished for others' sins (Isaiah 53:5-6). *The sins of every single human being in the world, past, present, and future, was laid upon God's Servant.*
5. **He did not retaliate against those who slew Him.** The Savior voluntarily took His unjust punishment (Isaiah 53:7).
6. **The Savior was killed.** Isaiah 53:8 tells us *"he was cut off out of the land of the living."*
7. **He was perfect and without sin.** He practiced no deceit or violence (Isaiah 53:9); *He was perfect.*
8. **He was associated with the wicked and the rich in His death.** We will see a little later the significance of this (Isaiah 53:9).
9. **The Servant was a sin offering.** As Abel offered the best of his flock to God, this Servant was the best and perfect of most offerings (Genesis 4:4, Isaiah 53:10). God requires perfection, and He was satisfied by the Servant's offering (Isaiah 53:11). People from all over the world who trust God will be declared clean from sin and saved from hell because of this blood sacrifice (Isaiah 52:13).
10. **The Servant was exalted because of His obedience.** He would be raised from the dead and placed in the highest authority because of His obedience to the point of suffering and death (Isaiah 52:13; 53:12).
11. **He made intercession for sinners' transgressions.** Not only did He pay for the sins of humankind, but He also made intercession for them before God (Isaiah 53:12). God's wrath is appeased for the one who *"believed our report"* (Isaiah 53:1).

This last passage of the Scriptures is a very vivid description as to what would happen to this Savior promised of God. Throughout the Bible, there are a large amount of predictions like this one that would show what the Savior would be like, and how He would save people. We have only looked at a very small subset of these Scriptures. Psalm 22, for example, shows many more minute details about the Savior. Being that this is a short treatise, we will move onto the greatest news of all: the Savior, Jesus Christ, has

already come, and fulfilled all of the Scriptures we have seen throughout this entire discussion.

Jesus Christ

Hundreds of years after these prophecies about the Savior were penned down, Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, from the tribe of Judah, in the town of Bethlehem, and as a descendant of King David. Moreover, He was God Himself. Let us take each one in turn.

1. **Jesus Christ was born of a virgin named Mary.** A young girl, engaged to be married, heard this promise of God through an angel (Luke 1:28-35):

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

2. **Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, being from the tribe of Judah.** Because of taxation, Mary and her future husband Joseph went to Bethlehem, and while there, she gave birth to her Son (Luke 2:4-7):

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Jesus is also referred to as “*the Lion of the tribe of Juda*” (Revelation 5:5).

3. **Jesus Christ was a descendant of King David.** The first verse of the gospel of Matthew reads: “*The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham*” (Matthew 1:1).

4. **Jesus Christ was God.** The first two verses of the book of John read: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.”* The Word always was, and did not have a beginning. If you remember from the promises to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15, and to Mary as we just saw, Jesus had no human father. God the Son, or the Word, was placed in the womb of the virgin Mary. God the Son became a human being. He was both man and God. The human race was alienated and separated from God, without hope, and filled with all wretchedness and sinfulness. No Savior could come from the human race as it was; God Himself had to become a human being, and deliver us from sin, Satan, and hell.

This answers a lot of the questions as to how Jesus was the coming Savior, except about how He would die for all of humanity. Much of the rest of this treatise will deal with this subject. We will look at two narratives that occur during the life of Jesus on earth, and then we will focus on the key event of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Chapter 9: Except a Man be Born Again

The first narrative we will focus on will be when a religious leader, named Nicodemus, approached Jesus to ask Him questions. Throughout His time on earth, Jesus had been doing many notable miracles, which included instantaneous healing of the sick and feeding multitudes of people with a small bit of food. He was also preaching about the good news of salvation. Right before Nicodemus met Him, Jesus had miraculously created wine instantaneously from water. Being God, Jesus had control over the entire creation domain. People could not deny that His works were of divine origin, which is why Nicodemus came to speak with Him.

John 3:1-21: There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: (2) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. (3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. (8) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. (9) Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? (10) Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? (11) Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. (12) If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? (13) And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. (14) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (15) That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (18) He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (19) And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (20) For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. (21) But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

There is a lot significant here. Let us examine the dialogue:

1. **Nicodemus was “of the Pharisees.”** This means he was part of a religious group that was very familiar with the law and the prophets in the Bible. He would have been familiar with everything we have discussed so far, and would have been considered most devoted to God by everyone.

While this group was held in high esteem by the masses for religious zeal, they largely were rejecting Jesus as the promised Savior (John 3:11). There are a few reasons for this, one of which was that Jesus did not conform to the clique of the religious elite, but rather exposed their hypocrisy. He did not have the fancy education or wealth (Isaiah 53:2). Because most Pharisees had rejected Jesus, he had to come by night, secretly, to speak to Him (John 3:2).

Nicodemus admitted that Jesus must be from God, because of the miracles He had been performing.

2. **Jesus answered the question Nicodemus did not ask.** The question Jesus answered was how to be right with and accepted by God, and the answer is, *“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3).

Just like every human being since Adam, we all were born into Satan’s kingdom. We are born at enmity with God, and we are His enemies. Being born again indicates that we must start over, and become a new creature. Romans 5:12 says, *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”*

Jesus also defined being “born again” as being born of the Holy Spirit. We were all born in the flesh when we were born the first time, as descendants of Adam. We now must be born again, of the Spirit.

3. **Nicodemus, though an expert in religion, did not understand.** Nicodemus asked, *“How can these things be?”* (John 3:9).
4. **Sinful humanity cannot enter the presence of God as they are, but Jesus can.** Remember how Adam and Eve were forced out of the Garden because of their sin? Today, in the same way, human beings cannot enter into the presence of God because of sin. We are helpless to do anything about it. However, Christ, the perfect Son of God who came from heaven can enter into the presence of God because He is without sin (John 3:13).
5. **Jesus will be crucified, and by looking to Him, we can be saved.** Moses lifting up the serpent requires some explanation. It would have been a story with which everyone in that culture would have been familiar. Centuries before Jesus came

to the earth, God's people had been complaining to the leader of their nation, Moses. God punished them by sending serpents among them (Numbers 21:4-6). When the people confessed their sin and asked for deliverance, God gave this instruction to Moses: *"Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live"* (Numbers 21:8). As God had promised, when Moses made the brass serpent and placed it upon a pole, whoever looked at the serpent survived (Numbers 21:9).

Like the serpent, Jesus also was going to be "lifted up" (John 3:14). This was a common way to say that He was going to be crucified, which was a cruel way to slowly torture and execute a criminal. This was commonly used as the death penalty in Roman times. As One who would be *"an offering for sin"* (Isaiah 53:10), or a blood sacrifice, all people had to do was look and live.

In John 3:15, Jesus said that whoever believes that Jesus is the blood offering for their sin, that person would be saved from hell and have eternal life. This is what He meant to be born again.

Jesus reiterated again to be clear: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). Jesus left the splendor of heaven to identify with wicked human beings, you and me, here on earth. When we trust that Jesus Christ paid for our sins in His death, we would have eternal life. We are born into new, everlasting life.

An explanation is required on what it means that *"God so loved the world."* In our culture, we are taught that love is sexual and permissive. Forget all of that. God does not love our wickedness; rather He is disgusted with us to our very core. Love here should be defined as service, just as we had defined it before. God served us and helped us by sending His Son. He knew that by nature all we could do is be rebels against Him. ***Everything we do and what we are deserves to be destroyed in Christ's crucifixion. The violent death Jesus said He was going to face reflects God's opinion of our sinful nature.*** This act of self-sacrifice is His love (His service) toward us.

6. **Christ did not come to condemn, but to save.** Jesus came not only to save us from the penalty of our sin, but also from sin itself. The issue of being condemned by God is no longer about sin; the issue is whether we trust Jesus Christ as our sin offering or not.

Chapter 10: I am the Resurrection, and the Life

As I have mentioned before, Jesus performed many miracles while He lived on this earth. He healed incurable people and instantaneously calmed violent storms. Let us look at one of the most miraculous things He did.

Many people believed that He was the promised Savior. Lazarus, and his sisters Mary and Martha, were three such people. One day, Lazarus fell sick and died, and the Lord Jesus was not anywhere near Him. Several days later, Jesus went down to Bethany, their hometown, and many of those who mourned the loss of Lazarus were there. Let us look at what happened.

John 11:17-27, 38-45: Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. (18) Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: (19) And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. (20) Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. (21) Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. (22) But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. (23) Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. (24) Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. (25) Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: (26) And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? (27) She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world...

(11:38) Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. (39) Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. (40) Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? (41) Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. (42) And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. (43) And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. (44) And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. (45) Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Let us examine this conversation between Jesus and Martha, Lazarus' sister, and the subsequent events:

1. **Lazarus was really dead.** There was no mistake about his death. There was no chance of him being revived, but rather he was already decomposing after being dead four days (John 11:17, 11:39).

2. **Martha believe Jesus' authority as the Christ was enough that He could have healed Lazarus.** She knew not only that, but also that Lazarus was going to be resurrected (bodily risen from the dead) at the last day (John 11:24). The people of Israel knew from the Scriptures that people would be risen from the dead at some time in distant future. Daniel the prophet wrote, *"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt"* (Daniel 12:2). Lazarus believed the promises of the coming Savior much like men such as Abel did, and such would be those who awake *"to everlasting life."*
3. **Jesus is the resurrection and the life.** If someone dies who believes on the Lord Jesus, *"though he were dead, yet shall he live"* (John 11:25). Lazarus will certainly rise again.

Moreover, whoever believes on the Lord Jesus *"shall never die"* (John 11:26). Remember how Adam and Eve sinned by eating of the tree of knowledge, and they were physically alive yet spiritually dead? Trusting in Jesus as the Christ is to be spiritually alive again. The enmity between the believer and God was gone, and the eternal punishment in the lake of fire was gone. In the future, the believer would rise from the dead, never to die again. Just as eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil brought certain death, believing on the Son of God brought certain eternal life. The threefold cord of death was destroyed.

Since Jesus as the Son of God was the source of all life (Genesis 1:26-27, Colossians 1:16), He has the ability to give life to the dead. Not only can He resurrect and give life; He also is *the* resurrection and *the* life.

4. **Lazarus rose from the dead after four days of being dead.** Jesus always is heard by God the Father (John 11:41-42), and Jesus can give life to all because He is the author of life. Lazarus was dead, and his life was over. Though dead and helpless, God could bring Him back from the dead, and He did.

Chapter 11: It is Finished

After a ministry of preaching against sin and the good news of salvation, showing compassion to the poor and lowly, and performing miracles, Jesus was arrested by the religious leaders of the day. Previously we saw how these leaders did not respect Him because He did not fit in with their clique. As time went by, they saw Him as a threat. First, they were afraid of losing their nation to the imperial power, Rome (John 11:48). Israel was not an autonomous nation at this time, but rather was under the worldwide empire of Rome. If Jesus brought them too much attention, they might have lost their existence as a nation. It was also clear that they just simply did not believe in Him (John 3:19-20). They loved being a part of the religious establishment, and cared more about the appearance of religiosity than being honest about their own sin (John 12:42-43). They were even envious of Him, because of His power, knowledge of the Scriptures, and His perfection (Mark 15:10).

What we must understand is that God was not surprised by any of this (John 19:11). It was not that Jesus one day was taken off-guard by being arrested, but rather He knew it was coming, down to the exact minute. He even told Nicodemus ahead of time what was going to happen. All of what He was about to go through was to save people once and for all from sin, Satan, and the lake of fire.

He was arrested by the religious leaders, and ultimately was turned over to the political leaders to be put to death. For the sake of space, we will only examine some excerpts of this event. Before He was crucified, He was scourged and sentenced:

John 19:1-11: Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. (2) And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, (3) And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. (4) Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. (5) Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! (6) When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. (7) The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

(8) When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; (9) And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. (10) Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? (11) Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

1. **Jesus was scourged and beaten.** The word scourged is very significant. Jesus was whipped with a cord of barbed whips that ripped his back off (John 19:1). He was beaten by soldiers and mocked (John 19:3) and His head was cut by thorns (John 19:2). Jesus is the real King (remember Christ means to be an anointed king), but they derided Him as less than nothing. The prophet Isaiah said centuries earlier that *“his visage was so marred more than any man”* (Isaiah 52:14).
2. **Jesus did not try to save Himself from His death sentence.** Pilate, the governor of Judaea, believed that Jesus was innocent (Mark 15:10) but had Jesus beaten anyway. When Pilate interrogated Jesus one last time, Jesus did not even try to defend Himself (John 19:9). It was God’s will for Him to be put to death (John 19:11). Isaiah also foresaw that *“he was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth”* (Isaiah 53:7).

After this, Jesus was crucified, dying an excruciating death:

John 19:16-18: Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. (17) And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: (18) Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

1. **Jesus was crucified.** Jesus was nailed to perpendicular wooden beams referred to here as a cross (John 19:17). Nails were inserted into His hands and feet to hold Him on the cross. His fleshless back rubbed against the wood. He spent a long time suffering, not for His own crimes, but for the sins of the world. The prophet Daniel tells us that *“after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself”* in the first century A.D. (Daniel 9:26). Isaiah said *“for the transgression of my people was he stricken”* (Isaiah 53:8).
2. **Jesus was slain among criminals.** Two other criminals were executed with Him (John 19:18). They were convicted thieves (Matthew 27:38). Isaiah said that *“he made his grave with the wicked”* (Isaiah 53:8).

After a long time of suffering, Jesus finally died:

John 19:28-30: After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. (29) Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. (30) When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

A lot more could be said about these verses, but let us look at the most important themes:

1. **His death fulfilled prophetic Scriptures.** Jesus knew that He had fulfilled the Scriptures as the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. The drinking of vinegar is a fulfillment to Psalm 69:21, *“They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.”* Though we looked at a few prophecies fulfilled by Christ in this treatise, there are a multitude of others that He fulfilled, showing that Jesus is indeed the promised Savior and the God of the universe.
2. **Jesus’ death paid for all of humanity’s sin.** Jesus single-handedly, unilaterally suffered and died for us. No amount of good works will save us from the wrath of God and the lake of fire. When Jesus died, nothing else needed to be added to it.

When I was in missionary training a number of years ago, it was said that there are two religions in the world: do and done. Every religion centers upon doing rituals or good works to manipulate the gods, obligating them to save them or get them to do what they want.

The real God does not work that way. God does not need anything from us. He is holy and self-sufficient, not depending on His creation for anything. It was by His mercy that He chose to save sinners by dying for them. His death paid for our sins, which is why He said *“It is finished.”* *“It is finished”* once and for all and nothing or no one can add to or subtract from it.

3. **Jesus Himself gave up His own life.** He voluntarily gave up His life at exactly the right moment (John 19:30). The Bible reads, *“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father”* (John 10:17-18).

The day Jesus died, He was buried in a tomb:

John 19:38-42: And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. (39) And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. (40) Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. (41) Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. (42) There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews’ preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

1. **Jesus was buried.** A man named Joseph buried Jesus. Joseph was a follower of Jesus who was rich (Matthew 27:57) and a counsellor (Luke 23:50). Isaiah also said that *“he made his grave... with the rich in his death”* (Isaiah 53:9).
2. **Jesus was truly dead.** After Jesus was dead, *“one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water”* (John 19:34). There was no question that Jesus was dead.

Three days later, Jesus rose from the dead, according to the Scriptures. He was seen by over 500 people after He arose (1 Corinthians 15:6). We will look at one of the encounters with the risen Jesus:

John 20:24-29: But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. (25) The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. (26) And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. (27) Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. (28) And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. (29) Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

1. **Thomas was one of the core followers, referred to as “the twelve.”** He saw all of the miracles Jesus did. He heard Jesus tell Him that He had to suffer and die, and rise again. Nonetheless, after all the others had said about Him being alive, Thomas did not believe it. He had to see Him to believe (John 20:25).
2. **Jesus appeared inside with the doors shut.** Being God, no one needed to let Him in the door (John 20:26).
3. **Jesus was not a spirit; He still had a physical body.** We saw earlier that a spirit is a being without flesh and bone. Jesus was not a spirit; He came to earth as a man, and He still is a man today, with flesh and bone. Thomas discovered this when he placed his finger in the hole of Jesus’ hand, and in His side (John 20:27). Thomas was convinced that He was the LORD God because of this great miracle.

Chapter 12: I Declare Unto You the Gospel

Let us review all of what we have seen so far before we proceed.

1 Corinthians 15:1-6: Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; (2) By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. (3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; (4) And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: (5) And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: (6) After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

1. **The gospel means “glad tidings” or “good news.”** 1 Corinthians 15:1. Being saved from the lake of fire and being forgiven of sins is good news! What exactly constitutes the gospel?
2. **Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection is the gospel.** 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. We were hopeless before God as His enemies. Our sin deserved the punishment and wrath of God.

God showed Adam and Eve that He could punish their sin without punishing them by slaying innocent animals and giving them animal skins to cover their shame. Abel knew that the best of his sheep were suitable offerings because the animal’s blood was shed instead of his.

There was a problem, though. Adam and Eve’s animal skins eventually wore out and they needed new ones. Abel’s sheep died instead of Abel, but the sheep stayed dead. Another one would be sacrificed, and another, and another... All of these offerings really never could pay for sin, because they were temporary at best.

It took the almighty Son of God to become a man and offer Himself on the Cross, the righteous God dying instead of sinful humankind. It took more than a mortal creature for the remission of humankind’s sin; Jesus Christ suffered and died once and for all... and as a sacrifice He did not remain in the grave. He rose again from the dead, and is alive today, never again to die.

3. **Jesus was seen alive by over 500 people.** It is not as if a few people saw the resurrected Christ; a multitude saw Him. After Jesus ascended into heaven (which we will discuss later), every believer of the Lord Jesus Christ, receiving power of the Holy Ghost, spread this good news across the vast majority of the Roman Empire within a generation or two... without picking up swords and without threatening. In fact, they were persecuted and many were executed, but

swimming against the tide, God spread this religion through these believers in Jesus Christ.

4. **Believing the gospel is salvation from sin, Satan, and the lake of fire.** 1 Corinthians 15:2. The events of the gospel do not guarantee that everyone is saved. Cain brought an offering, but He did not believe the promises of God. Let us look at this word “believe.”

A common illustration is sitting in a chair. When you sit in a chair, you do not normally inspect it to see if it will hold you. You trust that it will hold you. The idea is a matter of trusting Christ. We are not looking at our own resources to save ourselves from the coming wrath of God. We know that we are not righteous people, and are not acceptable to God. We admit that we need God to unilaterally save us.

The gospel is the historical facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. This is objective truth. But this objective truth must be made subjective in our lives: this great salvation is appropriated by faith.

Objective truth: Jesus died for humanity’s sins, and rose from the dead.

Subjective truth: Jesus died for *your* sins, and rose from the dead.

5. **This happened “according to the scriptures.”** 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. We looked at several Scriptures that effectively predicted the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we did not even scratch the surface of all that is in the Bible. God preserved the Bible over millennia in order to show us that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world.

How extensive is the salvation that God has given us in Jesus Christ? Let us look at another famous passage of Scripture.

Ephesians 2:1-10: And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; (2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (4) But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;); (6) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: (7) That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (8) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast. (10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

1. **We are made alive.** God made us “quick,” or made us alive, though we were previously helpless in our sin (Ephesians 2:1). Note the past tense; it has happened already. We still physically die, living in the cursed flesh with which we were born, but we will be resurrected when Jesus Christ returns for us sometime in the future (which we will discuss later). What is meant here is that we are no longer helpless to do anything but sin. As saved people, we can now do what pleases God.
2. **Previously, we served Satan.** We used to live according to “*the prince of the power of the air,*” which is another name for Satan. Being enslaved to sin was to serve Satan. Do you remember the first promise of the Savior in Genesis 3:15?

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

God pronounced this judgment upon Satan because he led Adam and Eve to rebel against God. Satan was going to bruise the heel of this Savior. This was Christ on the cross. But Christ, rising from the dead, delivered the death blow to Satan, in bruising his head. Satan and his angels no longer have the power over us like they did. One day, he will be destroyed forever, and the risen Savior Jesus Christ will throw him into the lake of fire.

We are no longer Satan’s subjects. As believers in Jesus Christ, we are free. There are days that we may not feel free or act free, but we are free. It is not that we feel saved, for faith is not an emotion. We are saved based on the historical fact that Jesus was crucified for our sins, and rose again.

3. **But God.** These are two beautiful words in Ephesians 2:4. We previously served Satan and our lusts and sins, but God, seeing that we were helpless to do anything but sin, destined for eternal flame, made us alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:5). We are saved by grace, which is unmerited favor. God was not looking at us, thinking, “Well, he was a sinner, but not too bad.” No, rather, He was disgusted with the entire human race, enough to cast us out of His sight forever, but He showed mercy by creating us anew.
4. **We sit together in heaven with Him.** Now we may still sin, still living this side of heaven, but the Lord Jesus is our advocate to God the Father when we do sin (1 John 2:1). We were declared righteous by God on the basis of a new union with Jesus Christ. We have died with Christ, rose again with Christ, and we ascended and are seated with the risen Christ (Ephesians 2:6). We truly are new creatures by His decree, born again, having passed from death to life. Having this unity with Jesus Christ, we now have the power by faith to live in our experience what we have been declared by the Lord Jesus.

There is a lot of information here, and I have not even scratched the surface of the implications of these beautiful truths. If you take anything from this, know how thoroughly the Lord Jesus has saved us from sin, Satan, and the lake of fire. ***One day, we will rise again from the dead ourselves, never to sin again, and be saved forever from the presence of sin if we believe that Jesus died for us and rose again.***

5. **Good works have been ordained for us.** Ephesians 2:8-10 is a very famous triad of verses. Being saved by the Lord Jesus was something that He alone did, not of any good work, action, or intrinsic quality we possess (Ephesians 2:8). It is a gift that God gave us (Ephesians 2:9).

However, God did not stop there, but gave us good works to do in this life (Ephesians 2:10). Being “created in Christ Jesus” is not when we were born, but when we were born again. ***Saved people are God’s true workmanship.***

Please note the order of these verses, however, because this is misunderstood a lot by many well-meaning people. We are saved, and then we are commissioned for good works. To say otherwise is to put the cart before the horse.

For example, the unbeliever cannot do good works, surrender their lives to Christ, turn from sin, say prayers, or make any other promise to God to be saved. We have already established that the unsaved are “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Ephesians 2:1), walking “*according to the prince of the power of the air*” (Ephesians 2:2), and are “*by nature the children of wrath*” (Ephesians 2:3). The unsaved are helpless to do anything that pleases God, and are His enemies. Salvation is believing the Word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then, and only then, can we walk in the good works we were ordained to do.

One final note, is that one day we will rise from the dead when Jesus returns to the earth. What happens to us who are saved in the meantime? The Bible tells us, “*We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*” (2 Corinthians 5:8). We who are saved are instantly with the Lord the moment we breathe our last breath. Our spirit, absent from the body, is with Jesus. What a glorious thought!

Chapter 13: As the Days of Noe Were

As we have mentioned before, Jesus was seen by many witnesses after He rose from the dead. He was seen for forty days, and then ascended into heaven. His followers were instructed to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, who would guide them into all truth and give them the power and boldness to preach the gospel to all nations. Jesus said to them:

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:18-20).

The lone reason why this world still exists today is for the preaching of the gospel, for *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9). God wants everyone everywhere to hear the Gospel and be saved, and now, nearly 2,000 years later, there are people who still have not heard anything about Jesus.

The entire purpose of this treatise is so that you, the reader, can hear the Word of God and believe, and be saved.

So what is next? Jesus is coming back. We do not know when this will be for sure, but we know that *“this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come”* (Matthew 24:14). When He does come back, He will pour out His wrath on the world that largely rejected His offer of eternal life.

But He did say something else about His return: He said that shortly before His return, the world would be like in the days of Noah:

But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. (Matthew 24:37-42)

Noah warned people of the impending destruction of the world, but they largely blew him off. They were living daily life without God. If you also remember, the world was filled with violence (Genesis 6:11). Looking at Cain’s descendants, they were into

entertainment (Genesis 4:21), advancing technology (Genesis 4:22), and justifying wrongdoing (Genesis 4:23-24), all without a care of who God is, rejecting the promise of the coming Savior.

As Noah, however, we should not be concerned as much with any of the types of things that Cain's descendants were doing as much as we should be trusting God's provision of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, watching for His return, and telling the world the hope of the gospel. There is a storm coming: this time not of rain, but of fire. We need to be on the ark with Jesus, because we do not know when He is going to shut the door.