

## **Topic**

### ● I THE "ADAM AND EVE" CREATION ACCOUNT

- A The story is from the "J" Tradition
  - 1 In this tradition, simple story details are used to teach profound truths
  - 2 In this tradition, God is pictured in very human terms, Gods is "anthropomorphic"
- B The first creation account ("7 Day") left one major riddle of life unanswered
  - 1 It taught that God made everything good
  - 2 This teaching fails to answer the riddle of "Evil"
    - a) If God has created everything "good," then "evil's" existence, such a basic and daily reality in our lives, remains unexplained
    - b) The "Man" ("Adam") and "Woman" ("Eve") story provides the Bible's answer to the riddle of evil
- C God the creator is presented in human terms -- as a potter working clay
  - 1 Man (Adam) is created from clay
    - a) Genesis 2:4
      - (1) This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens-- 5 and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground,
      - (2) 6 but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground-- 7 the LORD God formed the man from the dust ["clay"] of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.
    - b) Creation from clay shows that we are one with nature
    - c) But the "Spirit/breath" (the Hebrew word includes both meanings,) of God shows that we are also one with God
      - (1) We possess a sacredness that allows us to stand apart from the rest of the universe
      - (2) And yet we possess a nature that makes us part of the universe
  - 2 Man (Adam,) is superior to all animals
    - a) Adam names them!
      - (1) Genesis 2:15
        - (a) The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.... 18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."
        - (b) 19 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.
      - b) Naming demonstrates (in Hebrew thought) some ability to control and dominate
      - c) At the same time, naming and using a name demonstrates a sense of responsibility
        - (1) We are responsible for the welfare of all animal life
        - (2) We are "stewards of the universe"
    - 3 Man and woman are equal
      - a) This teaching is often missed in interpreting the "Adam/Eve" story
      - b) Some conclude from reading it that God intends that men be superior
        - (1) Man, "Adam," was created first
        - (2) Woman, "Eve," comes from him, from his "rib"
      - c) I received a new insight into this traditional text from a modern Jewish rabbi, Kushner
        - (1) He wrote "When Bad Things Happen to Good People"

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- (2) He knows both the Bible and the Hebrew language
- (3) **He points out that the word translated "rib" in the Adam/Eve story in Hebrew also means "side"**
  - (a) And "side" is the translation usually preferred and selected when this same word is used in other parts of the OT
  - (b) Kushner projects this background to the story of Adam/Eve:
    - [1] There is an ancient myth, idea, common to many cultures
      - [a] The myth holds that the first human was a Male/Female
      - [b] Somehow the two parts of this one person become split
    - [2] **In Genesis, God Himself divides this first person**
      - [a] He takes Adam's female side away from him
        - {1} Genesis 2:18\*
          - {a} And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."
          - {b} 19\* Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air,... But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.
          - {c} 21\* And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, [or "side"] and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib [or "side"] which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.
          - {d} 23\* And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, ["Eve"] Because she was taken out of Man." 24\* Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
        - [b] From this moment on, Adam, the male side, is incomplete by himself
      - [3] **To be whole, the male part needs to be balanced by the female part**
        - [a] Neither part, therefore, is superior in any way to the other
        - [b] And so, seeking completion, fullness, both parts, ("man" and "woman,") come together to form a new "person"
          - {1} Genesis 2:24
            - {a} Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
          - {2} The Hebrew word means a new "person" – it is not limited to referring to "flesh," the surface or skin of our body as we use the word
          - {3} A person is an "en-fleshed spirit" in Hebrew thought, a union
          - {4} Both aspects are needed to constitute a "person"
          - {5} Note: "Eve," (woman,) is no longer built on a mere single "rib;" now she is 1/2 of the original man/woman; she is his female "side"
        - [c] **When they come together, a whole "flesh" or person is re-created, a balanced female/male individual**
  - d) **The basic teaching of the story**
    - (1) "Man," ("Adam,") is incomplete alone: missing his rib, missing his female side
    - (2) And "Woman," ("Eve,") is also incomplete alone: the rib/side was not made to live apart, the "woman" is missing her male side
    - (3) The story, thus, offers a message for Americans
      - (a) We need others to be complete in ourselves
      - (b) **We need the very society we fear!**
      - (c) We need it for emotional serenity and completion

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- (d) Our increased isolation from each other comes with an emotional and mental cost
- D Peace
  - 1 Can never be sought or experienced as a thing in itself
    - a) It is the result of proper relationships
      - (1) With God,
      - (2) With self
      - (3) With others
    - b) Eden is pictured as a place of peace,
      - (1) Adam and Eve had good relations
        - (a) With God
          - [1] God walked in the garden in the cool of evening -- presumably with them
            - [a] Genesis 3:8
              - {1} Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.
            - [2] Prior to their fall, they had no need to hide from Him
          - (b) With themselves
            - [1] Both of them were content with their nakedness
            - [2] They were unaware that they were naked
              - [a] This story detail shows and teaches that they were able to accept all that they were
              - [b] They knew no shame — no desire or need to hide any part of themselves
              - [c] Genesis 2:25
                - {1} The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.
          - (c) With others
            - [1] They cooperate with each other
              - [a] Genesis 2:23
                - {1} The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." 24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.
                - {2} 25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.
              - [2] Their fellowship meant the end of loneliness for Adam
      - 2 The teaching of the story:
        - a) Peace is what God wills for each of us
        - b) God did not create us for emptiness, shame, isolation
        - c) God's created us to live in peace
          - (1) To achieve this peace, we need community
          - (2) God so planned His universe, that He desired all parts (including all humans) to associate and cooperate in harmony
  - E Sin
    - 1 "Sin" is not a thing!
      - a) It certainly is not eating an "apple" — the kind of fruit eaten is not mentioned in the Bible
      - b) And it is not simply the eating of a fruit —
        - (1) How petty that would make God

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- (a) He would have allowed all the pain of history to occur because two people ate some fruit
- (b) **Such a concept certainly does not square with our experience of life**
- (2) **Pain and horror, shame and anxiety, depression and cruelty are not the consequences of a "fruit binge"**
- (3) Genesis 2:16
  - (a) And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."
- (4) Genesis 3:1
  - (a) Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"
  - (b) 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"
  - (c) 4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
  - (d) 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.
- 2 **God is "love"**
  - a) **This frequent statement can better be expressed and understood as: God is "loving"**
  - b) It is better understood by using a verb, not a noun
- 3 **Sin is the absence of God**
  - a) The absence of love
  - b) **The absence of "being loved"**
    - (1) Either we experience some acceptance, but not as much as we need -- and we need to be loved each moment in all parts of our being
    - (2) Or we do not experience love and acceptance at all -- we feel rejected, "not OK," "dirty," down to the very core of our existence
  - c) **This absence of love, leads, in turn, to our failing to love others as we were created to do**
    - (1) We fail to love ourselves
    - (2) And we fail to love some or all others
- 4 **This emptiness, this absence, results from our preferring the limited love of creation to the unlimited love of God for which we were created**
  - a) Sin is our cheating ourselves out of our birthright!
  - b) It always results in punishment: our not getting all the love we need to experience inner peace
  - c) Some emptiness results
    - (1) We punish ourselves
    - (2) God doesn't punish us
    - (3) **God gave us the commandments and the prophets to warn us against the individual and communal actions by which we punish ourselves and others**
    - (4) He gave us these guides to save us from these punishments
- F **The effects of sin**
  - 1 **On our relationship with self**
    - a) **This relation is broken**
    - b) **We become aware of our nakedness**

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- c) **And we become ashamed of this nakedness**
  - (1) **Genesis 3:6**
    - (a) *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*
    - (b) *7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*
  - d) Even today most of us are still ashamed of parts of ourselves
  - e) We present to each other only those parts of ourselves with which we are comfortable: the "nice" parts
  - f) And we hide the remainder of ourselves behind physical, emotional, and intellectual garments, behind "games"
  - g) **And so we cheat others from the gift of our total self**
    - (1) We were made to bless them with this self
    - (2) They were made to be blessed by the gift of our complete love
  - h) **Our sin affects them -- always!**
- 2 **On our relationship with God**
  - a) This relation is broken
  - b) **Adam and Eve hide themselves in shame**
    - (1) **Genesis 3:8**
      - (a) *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*
      - (b) *9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*
  - c) **Because of sin, we, like Adam and Eve, are no longer comfortable in God's presence**
    - (1) God is still perfect love
    - (2) But because of our partial emptiness, we know and feel that we no longer deserve to be perfectly loved
  - d) Therefore, we hide the emptiness of our past and present from God and from others
- 3 **On our relationship with others**
  - a) These relations are broken
  - b) **Adam and Eve, who had previously lived in such harmony, begin blaming each other after the fall**
    - (1) **Genesis 3:11**
      - (a) *And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?"*
      - (b) *12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me--she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."*
  - c) Others are seen as threats to us although they were actually created as gifts to enrich us
  - d) And we see others as responsible for our emptiness, pain, discomfort
- G **Work: A Blessing or A Curse?**
  - 1 **Work is not a result of any sin, not a punishment for any sin**
    - a) *Our charge from God to subdue the universe precedes any fall*
    - b) **Genesis 2:15**
      - (1) *The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.*
    - c) **Actually work should be seen as a blessing, a privilege,**
      - (1) **We are made co-creators with God!**

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- (2) **We are called to bring the universe to completion**
    - (a) **God rested,**
      - [1] Not because all the work was done
      - [2] **But because God had (and has) made us free**
        - [a] Only we can use our freedom to complete creation -- to achieve the plan God intends for it
        - [b] To force us to act as He desires would be to destroy our freedom!
    - (b) But because God made us free, He will never destroy this freedom, the mark of our unique dignity
  - (3) Therefore, God needs us to love each other in order to bring His universe to perfection
- 2 **Sin affects our unity with the universe**
  - a) **Work that doesn't produce the desired goal(s) is a result of sin**
  - b) **The ground is cursed**
    - (1) **Genesis 3:17**
      - (a) *And to the man he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' **cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; :18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.***
  - (2) **Work no longer is seen only as a gift**
    - (a) **We can toil**
    - (b) And we can fail to reap benefits from our efforts
  - (3) As a consequence, the unjust world economy blesses some and hurts others
    - (a) For example, Western world farmers are losing their family farms because they **produce too much food**
    - (b) And in the Eastern world millions are starving to death from **lack of food**
- H **The snake**
  - 1 **The snake was used in order to discredit the Canaanite religion**
    - a) The Canaanite religion stood as a constant threat luring Israelites from their faith in Yahweh, God,"
      - (1) The Canaanite religious practices included relations with temple prostitutes -- enjoying them **honored** the goddess they represented
      - (2) This prostitution and the other rites of the religion could easily seem more exciting than Israelite animal sacrifice
    - b) **Genesis 3:1**
      - (1) ***Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"***
      - (2) ***5...When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.***
      - (3) ***7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.***
  - 2 **The snake was the symbol used for Astarte and, thus, temple prostitution**
    - a) **The women (Eve)/(temple prostitutes) tempt the men (Adam)/(Israel) to drift from Yahweh, the God of Israel**
    - b) The story was written in and for a culture very different from ours
      - (1) **Women were seen as the property of their husbands**
        - (a) To violate a wife was to hurt her husband, to cheat him, to misuse his property
        - (b) Such violations **threatened the peace of society**

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- (2) The woman was seen as the one luring the innocent man into this adultery
- c) Think of the views held even today of women in Near Eastern countries where very strict Islam is practiced
  - (1) These women must be veiled, hidden
  - (2) Otherwise they will lure naive, innocent men into problem relationships
- d) The cultural situation was worse at the time the Bible was written
  - (1) The Canaanite temple prostitutes lured Israelite males away from loyalty to God
  - (2) Just as "Eve" did
  - (3) Beware the snake!
- 1 **Original Sin**
  - 1 The concept of an original sin is not taught much today
    - a) This silence is sad
    - b) The story spotlights a basic part of the reality we all experience daily
  - 2 This is the core teaching offered by the story:
    - a) **We suffer from the sin(s) of others**
      - (1) Cain and Abel were not born in the Garden of Eden -- none of Adam and Eve's children were
        - (a) Genesis 3:23
          - [1] So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.
          - [2] 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.
        - (b) Genesis 4:1
          - [1] Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man." 2 Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.
      - (c) Cain and Abel were not born into the harmony God desired, intended, for them
      - (d) This failure was not because of any lapse on their parts
    - (2) It occurred because of the sins of others, of their parents
    - (3) **This teaching, this reality, seems unfair to us**
      - (a) The Bible doesn't address the issue of its fairness
      - (b) Rather, it simply tells us
        - [1] What God wills (where "The Man" and "The Woman" were created: in the Garden)
        - [2] And what we actually experience (where Cain and Abel were created: outside the Garden)
  - b) **What happened to Cain and Abel happens to each of us**
    - (1) **We, too, suffer the effects of the sins of others**
    - (2) **We were not born in the garden of harmony God desired we experience**
    - (3) **Nor are we living in this Garden**
  - c) We need this sin "forgiven," removed
    - (1) We need "affirmation," to experience "the blessing" to be accepted for who we are not for what we do
    - (2) A Catholic psychiatrist distinguishes between
      - (a) **Repression Neuroses:**
        - [1] Psychotherapy often assists an individual to experience some healing

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- [a] He helps the person discover feelings that have been repressed, the root cause of the anxiety
- [b] The person seeking help is guided to learn to discover what is being repressed and aided to give a healthy expression to these feelings
- [2] Recovery results
- (b) **Affirmation neuroses**
  - [1] Discovering the cause of the anxiety through therapy has **no affect on the problem**
    - [a] The individual learns about a loss of acceptance early in life
    - [b] This discovery does nothing to remove the primal need for affirmation
    - [c] The need for affirmation still remains as strong after the discovery as it was before
  - [2] For healing, affirmation must come through a person or a group
  - [3] All of us feel a need to experience acceptance as we are
- d) We need to learn the basic truths concerning "Original Sin" offered in the story of "Cain and Abel"
  - (1) **The sins of others affect us as much as our own sins!**
  - (2) A cruel father can result in his child living with
    - (a) A fear of authority
    - (b) A deep fear of God the Father
  - (3) **We need "forgiveness," "freedom from the effects of the sins of others," of sin that "originates outside ourselves," "Original Sin," as much as we need it from our own sins**
- II EVIL SPREADS
  - A The relentless spread of evil is the theme of the remainder of Genesis 1 -- 11
    - 1 These stories demonstrate that once evil enters our world, it spreads despite our efforts
    - 2 This fact is certainly true from my own experience
      - a) The emptiness within me grew despite everything I did
      - b) In desperation, I turned more and more to people and things as answers
      - c) This turning resulted in more and more emptiness
    - 3 Something similar happens in our world
  - B **Cain and Abel**
    - 1 Adam and Eve argued (over who was to blame for eating the fruit)
    - 2 Next step in the progression of evil was that Cain killed Abel
      - a) **Evil between us grows in intensity**
      - b) **Genesis 4:8**
        - (1) **Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.**
    - 3 **The story reflects the culture that produced it**
      - a) The Israelites were shepherds at the time the story was formed
      - b) **And their hated enemies, the Canaanites, were farmers**
      - c) **Genesis 4:3**
        - (1) **In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD.**
        - (2) **4 But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering. 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor.**
      - d) No reason is given in the story for God's differing reactions to the two offerings



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- e) Nor was one needed by the culture of the time which reflected hatred between shepherds (Israelites) and farmers (Canaanites)
- C Genealogies
  - 1 One genealogy is offered before and one after flood
  - 2 Before the flood the ages of the great leaders are all in the 900's
    - a) Genesis 5:5
      - (1) Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died. 6 When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh. 7 And after he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters.
      - (2) 8 Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died. 9 When Enosh had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan. 10 And after he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters.
      - (3) 11 Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died. 12 When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel.
      - (4) 13 And after he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. 14 Altogether, Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.
      - (5) 15 When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. 16 And after he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. 17 Altogether, Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.
      - (6) 18 When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. 19 And after he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 20 Altogether, Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.
      - (7) 21 When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. 22 And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters.
      - (8) 23 Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. 24 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.
      - (9) 25 When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. 26 And after he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters.
      - (10) 27 Altogether, Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died. 28 When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. 29 He named him Noah
  - 3 After the flood the ages of the great leaders start at 500's and end in 100's
    - a) Genesis 11:10
      - (1) This is the account of Shem. ...Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters. 12 When Arphaxad had lived 35 years, he became the father of Shelah....Arphaxad lived 403 years.
      - (2) ..15 And after he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived 403 years.... 17 And after he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived 430 years.... And after he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived 209 years
      - (3) ...21 And after he became the father of Serug, Reu lived 207 years.... 23 And after he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived 200 years....
      - (4) 25 And after he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters. 26 After Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.
  - 4 Remember: numbers are used symbolically in the Bible
    - a) We read them expecting that they are literal reports
      - (1) The 7 days of creation
      - (2) The 40 days of temptation (for Jesus)
        - (a) Matthew 4:1
          - [1] Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

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- (3) The 77 (or "70 times 7,") as the number of times to forgive others
  - (a) Matthew 18:21
    - [1] Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.
- (4) The 144,000 in Heaven in Revelation
  - (a) Revelation 7:4
    - [1] Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel.
- b) All of these numbers had symbolic significance
  - (1) 40 and 12 are complete numbers
    - (a) 40: the average age of a generation of people at that time – so fullness
    - (b) 12: the number of tribes so all Israel
  - (2) So "144,000" refers to absolute fullness --
    - (a) None of those God intended to be saved were overlooked
      - [1] Not even the most insignificant person
      - [2] Notice that after we are told 144,000 were saved, we are told the saved include a number so vast no one can count it
    - (b) The two references (contradictory to us) illustrates that the first number referred to completion, not a literal head count
    - (c) Revelation 7:2
      - [1] Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: 3 "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."
      - [2] 4 Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.
      - [3] 5 From the tribe of Judah 12,000 were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben 12,000, from the tribe of Gad 12,000, 6 from the tribe of Asher 12,000, from the tribe of Naphtali 12,000, from the tribe of Manasseh 12,000,
      - [4] 7 from the tribe of Simeon 12,000, from the tribe of Levi 12,000, from the tribe of Issachar 12,000, 8 from the tribe of Zebulun 12,000, from the tribe of Joseph 12,000, from the tribe of Benjamin 12,000.
      - [5] 9 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.
- (3) And 70 times 7 refers to an endless number
  - (a) 7 was the number of days in a week
    - [1] So 7 indicates fullness
    - [2] When multiplied by more than itself (70,) the number means endless
- 5 In the differences between sets of genealogies, the spread of evil is shown
  - a) The OT had no concept of a heaven and/or hell after death
    - (1) Everyone, absolutely everyone, was treated the same after death
    - (2) They all went to a dreaded place "Sheol," "the pit"
  - b) But the Bible reflects an experience of a God who is just
    - (1) Therefore, He must reward the good in this life — according to the traditional Old Testament view
    - (2) The only important rewards if God is just were

**Topic**

- (a) Health
- (b) Wealth
- (3) Both were needed
- c) **So in the view of many people, the length of life and wealth demonstrates a person's goodness**
  - (1) But genealogies show the general trend of a decreasing age for even the best of people
  - (2) As time passed, life was getting shorter
  - (3) So even the best were not as good at the start of the second genealogy as they were at the end of the first
- 6 **This decrease in age held true even after God attacked evil with the Flood**
  - a) Evil persists and spreads
  - b) The persistence is certainly true for real life
    - (1) Abusers were almost always abused themselves
    - (2) Pia Melody, an abuse counselor, teaches this
      - (a) **"God's Precious Child -- You!"**
        - [1] **God intends us to be special in every area of our lives**
          - [a] Physical
          - [b] Emotional
          - [c] Sexual
          - [d] Intellectual,
          - [e] Social
          - [f] Spiritual
        - [2] Anything, anyone stripping a child of the experience of being precious in any of these areas commits abuse
        - [3] Many churches and church leaders strip children of the experience of being precious spiritually
          - [a] They confuse the sinner with the sin
          - [b] No matter what we do, we remain precious at our core
      - (b) **Her judgement: "The beat goes on"**
        - [1] Treatment of some kind is needed to break the pattern
        - [2] The only model abused children have for parenting is their abusive parents
        - [3] They echo their parents actions in their own lives
- **D The flood**
  - 1 The universal flood is used to show what chaos sin can unleash upon our world
    - a) "Creation" displays God's desire for order, harmony
      - (1) In the "7 Day" Creation Account, God begins to create by bringing order out of chaos
      - (2) Chaos is pictured as water
        - (a) Genesis 1:1
          - [1] In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
    - (b) **Remember: God doesn't create water**
      - [1] We wonder who did
        - [a] **The Hebrews wouldn't; to them it is just the chaos that exists without God**

## **Topic**

- [b] For the Hebrews, water served as the supreme symbol for chaos
  - [c] And according to the thought of their culture, chaos is uncreated -- chaos is the absence of order, a nothing
  - [2] Certainly God, who is all good order (as His Law" reveals) could not create it
- b) **Sin has returned the world to a state of such chaos that God prefers returning it to water, (flood,) rather than retaining man's culture**
- 2 **Man, acting without God, acting alone, once sin (Original or personal) is in the world, returns the world to chaos**
- 3 **There is a reason for the inclusion of the Flood story**
  - a) **A similar story of a universal flood circulated among the Babylonians, a story the Jews heard during the years of their exile in Babylon**
  - b) **The Bible story reveals a definite dependence on the Babylonian flood story**
    - (1) Possibly it was based upon it
    - (2) **If so, the Babylonian story was adapted and cleansed to fit the monotheism of the Jews**
      - (a) A pagan story was used to teach ideas about our God
      - (b) But first it was purged of all pagan hints or references
- 4 **Remember: the Biblical story shuffles together strands from differing traditions of the same story**
  - a) **This shuffling is reflected in the contradictory facts reported in relating the same event**
  - b) The number of animals
  - c) Possibly the length of the flood
  - d) **These conflicts demonstrate**
    - (1) A parable is being told; therefore reconciling details is not important
    - (2) The story was never intended to be taken as an historical accounts
    - (3) And the OT doesn't take it as such an account
- 5 **God's saving love is clearly shown in the midst of evil.**
  - a) **God touches people in the chaos, in the disorder of their lives**
    - (1) **He allows the righteous to float above the chaos of life**
    - (2) He intervenes to save Noah
  - b) **We think in terms of individuals; the whole Mediterranean world thought in terms of groups**
    - (1) We can be disturbed at God destroying most people in order to save a small group
    - (2) The Jews would not have been disturbed; they would have seen
      - (a) **God destroying harmful groups and cultures**
      - (b) And God doing this to save, to protect, the one wholesome group
      - (c) **He is preparing for Israel (His People) whom He intends to protect from the chaos of life**
- **E Babel**
  - 1 **The Jewish elite were exiled for 70 years in Babylon**
  - 2 **During these years of exile, they were exposed to the Babylonian religion**
    - a) This religion wasn't just any religion, it was **the religion of their conquerors**
    - b) The Babylonians felt that when the god was on earth this god resided in his temple in their city
    - c) **A tower, [a "ziggurat,"] was part of each temple, the identifying trait of Babylonian religious architecture**
      - (1) **[CHART]**
      - (2) The god used it to go between heaven and earth

## Topic

- (a) Sort of landing port
- (b) Actually, the tower was the most noticeable and significant feature of temple
- d) These towers became symbols for the entire Babylonian religion
  - (1) Genesis 11:1
    - (a) Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. 2 As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. 3 They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and bitumen for mortar.
    - (b) 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth."
- 3 Once again, the Biblical account was not intended to be taken as history
  - a) The final story explains the origin of language differences
    - (1) Genesis 11:7
      - (a) Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech." 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.
      - (b) 9 Therefore it was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.
  - b) But language differences had already been presented as natural phenomenon all through previous chapter of Genesis!
    - (1) Genesis 10:5
      - (a) From these the coast land peoples spread. These are the descendants of Japheth in their lands, with their own language, by their families, in their nations.
    - (2) Genesis 10:20
      - (a) These are the descendants of Ham, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.
    - (3) Genesis 10:31
      - (a) These are the descendants of Shem, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.
- 4 The teaching of the story is that humanity's pride, as reflected in the Babylonian religion, is responsible for our inability to communicate with each other
  - a) We cannot "make a name for ourselves"
  - b) Trying to be more than we are leads to division and chaos
  - c) We need our God to make a name for us
    - (1) Isaiah 49:1
      - (a) Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the LORD called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name.
- 5 Man's disobedience has kept creation from becoming what God wills for it
- f) God ordered humanity to "fill the earth," developing all of its potential for each of its people
  - (1) But the people do not want to be "scattered"
  - (2) They wish to stay together and hoard the goods they possess
- 7 Pentecost
  - a) The term is used to describe an event that occurred to the whole Church gathered in prayer 50 days after Easter
    - (1) After Easter Jesus stayed with His disciples for 40 days, teaching them about the Kingship
    - (2) Then they remained in prayer, a community of about 120 disciples, with women and Mary, the mother of Jesus

## Topic

- (a) Acts 1:12
  - [1] *Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.*
  - [2] *13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.*
  - [3] *14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*
- (3) The place where they were gathered together in prayer was filled with a Mighty Wind, with the Holy Spirit
- [d] Acts 2:1
  - {1} *When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.*
  - {2} *3 Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.*
  - {3} *4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.*
- (5) Outside were Jews from all over the world
  - (a) Each, in their own language, understood what the disciples were saying
  - (b) Babel was undone
- F SUMMARY THUS FAR
  - 1 Evil spreads and spreads
    - a) God vs. humanity: Adam and Eve hid from God
    - b) Humanity vs. self: Adam and Eve became ashamed of their nakedness
    - c) Man vs. woman: Adam and Eve blamed others for their actions (Adam blamed Eve; Eve blamed the serpent)
    - d) **Humanity vs. nature: God cursed the ground with the result that work is not always productive**
    - e) **Humanity vs. humanity: Cain killed Abel**
    - f) All humanity vs. order in creation: the flood returned the world to its original chaos
    - g) Nation vs. nation: Babel -- individual evil became communal separation and isolation
  - 2 While evil is in our world and affects our lives, we remain good!
    - a) Strangely, it is the image of the serpent, Satan, that teaches this truth
    - b) Evil is personal
      - (1) It is not financial or physical
      - (2) **It exists on the level where we exist: the level of being a person, the level of being loved**
        - (a) There is an absence of truth and love
        - (b) So Satan is a liar and is loveless -- one who never acts for our good
    - c) But evil is not us!
      - (1) It affects us
      - (2) It tempts us
      - (3) **But we remain good even when we sin**
      - (4) **The source of evil continues to remain external to us**
    - d) Evil does not flow from within us
      - (1) We act evil

## Topic

- (2) **But we are not evil**
- (3) **We remain "good"**
- (4) **We remain able to be loved**
- e) **So salvation is possible**
- f) **The Bible says very little in the OT about**
  - (1) **Angels**
    - (a) **The word we translate "angels" comes from the Greek word "messenger" which was used to translate a Hebrew word with the same meaning**
    - (b) **In most of the OT**
      - [1] **The only references are to the "Angel of the Lord," "Angel of Yahweh"**
      - [2] **This term was a priestly device to remove God one step away from direct contact with humanity**
      - [3] **Some stories switched from "Yahweh" to "Angel of Yahweh" and back with no explanation why**
        - [a] **God, "Yahweh," was replaced by "Angel of Yahweh" in the "P" Tradition**
        - [b] **This was done in an attempt to distance God from people, to stop God from seeming like a glorified human as He was presented in the "J" Tradition**
    - (c) **The common use of the word "angel" came into prominence only during and after the exile when the Jews were exposed to the Babylonian world of angelic beings**
  - (2) **Satan**
    - (a) **There is no devil in 95% of the OT**
    - (b) **Satan first appears as a member in good standing in God's cabinet in heaven!**
      - [1] **Job 1:6**
        - [a] **One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.**
        - [b] **7 The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going to and fro in it."**
        - [c] **8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no-one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."**
      - [2] **Job 1:9**
        - [a] **"Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. 10 "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.**
        - [b] **11 But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."**
    - [3] **God is too busy to oversee everything**
      - [a] **Like a human ruler, therefore, He farms out the responsibilities of overseeing the details of creation**
      - [b] **Satan, who is and who remains a member of God's cabinet in this story, has responsibility for keeping check on our morality**
      - [c] **He reports our failures to God**
    - [4] **The word "Satan" is derived from a Hebrew word which means "Accuser"**
      - [a] **This meaning explains a text in Revelation**
      - [b] **Revelation 12:10**
        - {1} **Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.**

## **Topic**

- [5] It's easy to see how such a guy would not be liked by people
  - [a] It was an easy step to make our enemy into God's enemy
  - [b] By time of the NT, "Satan" was used as the word for the main foe of God and people
  - [6] However, Satan's fall is not recounted in or hinted at in the OT
- 3 A fascinating Biblical teaching is frequently ignored
  - a) God did not originally intend to set animal life against animal life
    - (1) Genesis 1:29
      - (a) And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed: to you it shall be for food."
      - (b) 30 "Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so.
    - (2) Both animals and humanity were intended to eat plants
  - b) Only after the Flood does God describe humanity as set against other animal life (and presumably other animals against each other)
    - (1) Genesis 9:1
      - (a) So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.
      - (b) 3 "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.
      - (c) 6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.
      - (d) 7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it."
    - (2) Note, however, that God does not set, nor tolerate, mankind against itself
- 4 Here is a summary of the teaching of Genesis 1 – 11
  - a) The opening stories of the Bible tell us about living today
    - (1) There is chaos in our lives and God had nothing to do with putting it there
    - (2) On the contrary, God is acting to remove it
      - (a) He made everything good
      - (b) So the universe is intended to be friendly
      - (c) And it is designed to work together
      - (d) He wants us to live in complete harmony
        - [1] With ourselves
        - [2] With Him
        - [3] And with each other
  - b) We are special
    - (1) We are to use our freedom to oversee the universe
    - (2) But we often misuse our freedom
  - c) This misuse affects and harms our relations
    - (1) With ourselves – we know shame
    - (2) With God – we want to hide all or part of ourselves
    - (3) And with others



**Topic**

- (a) We blame each other
- (b) We harm each other
- (c) We end up speaking different languages ("you" versus "me") even when using the same tongue, English
- d) **Left to ourselves, we are powerless before the spread of this evil**
  - (1) **It never affects our internal goodness**
  - (2) **But it threatens to flood us daily in the waters of chaos**
  - (3) **We are affected**
    - (a) **By the evil we do [Personal Sin]**
    - (b) **And by the evil others do [Original Sin]**
- e) **We need God to act to overcome this chaos, this evil, this sin**
- f) **And this God does decisively in and through the ministry of Jesus who acts to create harmony from our chaos**