

Old Testament Survey : 1

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The correct perspective or approach

Lesson 1

A. Introduction

1. Why Old Testament Survey is important.

- a) Just as standing on a high hill allows us to see far more than we could see while standing on the ground, in the same way, Old Testament Survey, which is an overview, will allow us to see a bigger picture of the Old Testament.

We will see the books of the Old Testament and the information each contains in their right relationship to one another.

- b) We will increase our understanding of the New Testament by understanding the Old Testament.

The New Testament fulfils the Old. Indeed, an accurate understanding of either of the two Testaments is impossible without the one considering the other.

- c) We will see God's wonderful plan of salvation for mankind more clearly.

God's Lamb, our Messiah, dominates the Bible from beginning to end and it is around Him that those who authored the Books of the Bible wrote.

2. Important Definitions.

- a) **“Old”**: The dictionary meaning of the word “old” is – longer in existence than another, former, the one before another.

If there is an “old” then there must also be a “new”, and we know that this is true because there is an “Old Testament” and a “New Testament” in the Bible.

- b) **“Testament”**: The word “testament” means a covenant – an agreement or contract between two parties.

In this case, God presents the covenant to man – man can either accept or reject it, but he cannot change the terms of it.

The Old Covenant or Testament was based on the Law of Moses, in which God forgave sins provisionally or conditionally, as a result of animal sacrifices. These sacrifices were only an example of the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ.

But, if the Old Testament is based on the Law of Moses, does this mean there is none of God's grace in the Old Testament? On the contrary, God's grace is seen throughout the Old Testament, over and over again.

- c) **“Survey”**: An overview, a view from a position of high ground, enabling the viewer to see events in their relationship to one another.

3. A Book unlike any other.

- a) The Bible as a whole contains two parts – God’s “former agreement” with man and God’s “new agreement” with man.

The Old Testament, or former agreement, makes up two-thirds of the Bible, and contains 39 individual books, covering thousands of years of history.

- b) It is a Book inspired by God (2 Peter 1:21) and written by men.

- c) Although it is in two parts, it is one story – His story – (the story of God’s Messiah, Jesus, the Lamb of God) and is one complete unit.

That is, we cannot *only* take the Old Testament and leave out the New. We cannot *only* take the truth of the New Testament and leave out the Old.

B. The correct perspective or approach

This is IMPORTANT!

1. The purposes of God are ETERNAL.

(i.e. God *knew before He started* exactly what He was going to do *and knew what man would do.*)

Remember, God is “Omniscient” – **infinite in knowledge**. (Psalm 147:5; Job 42:1-2)

In Him there is no variation, “*no shadow of change...*” (James 1:17).

If there was just *one* thing God did not know, then He would *change* when He did come to know it. Think about that for a moment...

If God did *not* know something, He would be lacking knowledge in that particular area. Then, when He came to know it, He would not be lacking knowledge in that particular area anymore ... *He would have changed!*

He knows everything – including our thoughts! (“You understand my thoughts from far away”, Psalm 139:2.)

Remember, He is able to clearly state what the end will be, right from the very beginning. (Isaiah 46:10) Nothing takes Him by surprise!

God therefore has FOREKNOWLEDGE, but man still has a free will. He can choose as he pleases ... God does not force man to choose one thing or another; however God *knows beforehand* what man will choose. (1 Peter 1:1-2)

People make every decision according to their individual character, and God knows what is in the heart of man.

We are *chosen* according to the *foreknowledge* of God ... “many are called” but “few are chosen” because God knows us before we are even born – what manner of people we will be.

Let’s put that together...

IMPORTANT!

a) **The Beginning:**

Read Isaiah 46:9b, 10-11

i) If we plan a trip, what is the first thing we would do?

We would decide where we wanted to go to – our destination. We would be foolish to start travelling along a road if we had not yet decided where we wanted to go.

Isaiah 46:9b, 10-11 tells us God began at the end – before He started creating the universe, He knew exactly how it would end and He knew everything in between the beginning and the end.

ii) **Where is the “destination”?**

As far as mankind is concerned, we will find the answer to that at the “end” of the Bible – the book of Revelation!

iii) **What is in the Book of Revelation?**

Many things – but one in particular shows us multitudes and multitudes, millions upon millions upon millions, of people who are standing before the throne of God.

Read Revelation 4:11; 5:12

These people, too numerous to count, all recognise that God is worthy, and they are worshipping Him.

b) **Conclusion:**

God starts at the end and then begins at the beginning!

i.e. Before He began He knew what would happen, and He knew what He would do about what would happen.

2. **Did God know Man and Woman would sin?**

Pay attention!

a) **Read 1 Peter 1:18-21. Especially note verses 19 and 20.**

“... with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He was indeed foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead ...”

God’s provision for the sin of mankind was made *before* the foundations of the earth.

Therefore, God did know mankind would sin and be in need of a Saviour.

b) **Read Revelation 13:7b-8.**

*“Authority was given him (the beast) over every tribe, tongue and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him (the beast), whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the **Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**”.*

c) **Read Ephesians 1:4.**

“... just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love ...”

d) **Conclusion.**

God’s love for us is amazing! *His foreknowledge is absolute.* He knew *exactly* what would happen during the time of the Old Testament just as He knows what has happened, is happening and will happen today.

His foreknowledge does *not* mean He makes certain things happen – man always has a free choice regarding his actions. God just knows beforehand what choices each of us will make.

Before God began, He knew mankind would sin and prepared what was necessary for forgiveness. What love! What amazing grace!

Important

C. What the Old Testament means for New Testament Christians

1. **Read 1 Corinthians 10:11.** (Romans 15:4 says the same)

What happened to the nation of Israel during Old Testament times was written down for our instruction today – so that we will not repeat their mistakes.

2. **Read 1 Corinthians 15:46.**

The “natural” is first ... then the “spiritual”.

This is best explained if we look at a few examples:

- i) In the Old Testament, the Law was written on tablets of stone – things you can feel and touch. Today, the Law is “written on our hearts”.

Does that mean if I died and you looked at my heart you would see the 10 Commandments and all God’s statutes written on it? No, of course not!

- ii) In the Old Testament, God’s people were told to take a lamb without blemish to be killed at Passover. They took a real, woolly baby sheep, a lamb, and killed it.

Do Christians do the same today? Take a lamb and sacrifice it? No, of course not! Jesus is our Passover Lamb. He died for us. He is our perfect sacrifice.

- iii) First the natural – physical, literal, historical – for example, a lamb.
Then the spiritual – Jesus, our Lamb.

3. Read Hebrews 10:1. (See verses 1-7)

The Law was only a shadow of the good things to come.

A shadow looks a bit like the real thing but, if we put a chair in the sun so that it casts a shadow, would anyone invite a friend to sit on the shadow? No, of course not! It cannot hold a person up. No one could write with the shadow of a pen, you need the real thing!

The Law is a shadow of the reality of what we have in Christ.

What do we have in Christ? The *New Covenant* – a better covenant – not the letter of the law, but the fullness of the Spirit.

Where are *you* “sitting”? Are you in the Old Testament or the New?

4. Read Hebrews 10:9b.

“He takes away the first that He may establish the second”.

He takes away the natural to establish the spiritual.

He takes away the shadow in order to establish the reality.

5. Examples of Old Testament "Shadows" or "Types".

- a) Persons Adam – a figure of Him to come (Romans 5:14).
 Melchizedek – made like unto the Son of God (Hebrews 7:3).
- b) Objects That rock – was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4).
- c) Events Noah – saved by water – baptism (1 Peter 3:21).
 Abraham received Isaac from the dead – a figure (Hebrews 11:19).

By the use of shadows, or types, God was forming a recognisable picture, not only of the Messiah to come, but also of His own character, ways and purposes.

D. Rules for Interpretation and Understanding

There is a principle God has in revealing His plan for mankind.

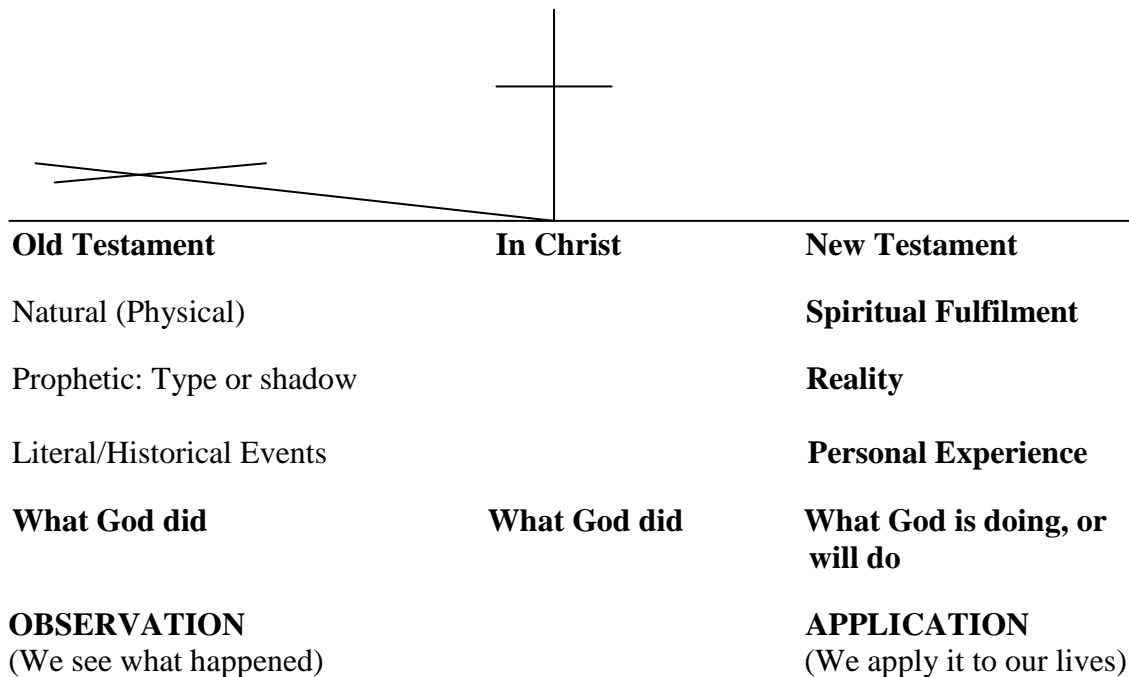
That is, first the natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual.

What is His plan for you and me?

Read Romans 8:29

That we would be like Jesus – do what He would do, say the things He would say, feel what He would feel, etc., in every situation we are in.

E. We can illustrate our approach to the Old Testament



F. Therefore, the Key to studying the Old Testament is to:

- Look at what happened to God's people:** the nation of Israel the people of the Old Testament.

Firstly, the events described in the books actually took place – they are history.

God chose a people (the children of Israel) to show His truth and to preserve a record of what He is like.

The Bible tells us of the origin of sin and how the curse of sin separated man from God. We see how impossible it was (and still is) for the law to bring man the salvation he needs, because “by the law no flesh can be justified” (Romans 3:20-23).

Then we find the promise of a Saviour, one who would “seek and save that which was lost and give His life a ransom for many” (Luke 19:10 and Matthew 20:28).

- Look at the prophetic fulfilment in Jesus Christ.**

Jesus is shown in each Book of the Old Testament, for He fulfils "all" (Matthew 5:17-18; John 5:39).

Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, was crucified and died at Passover and by His death and shed blood we are saved, or delivered.

3. **Then look at the personal experiential fulfilment.**

What it means for us today. The promise of fulfilment to us and to the church.

Example: We are God's people, His Church, once in the world and slaves to sin, but now saved through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, and we joyfully celebrate our Passover Lamb at salvation and remember Him at communion, or "breaking of bread".

NB 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Notice it says "**all**" Scripture, therefore an understanding of both the Old and New Testaments is necessary.

What for?

That the man of God may be perfect – **equipped**.

G. Therefore, in studying the Old Testament, we will consider:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. What happened? | Looking <u>back</u> |
| 2. Did Jesus do it (fulfil it)? | Looking <u>forward</u> |
| 3. Then it's for you and me, too! | Looking at <u>you and me</u> |

Memory Verse

Romans 8:29, *“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified”.*

Teacher's Notes

1. The Word of God is alive and every part is necessary. Every part is inter-related.
2. Therefore we cannot understand what is revealed in the Old Testament without looking in the New.
3. The Old Testament is an account of a nation (The Jewish nation) that God used in order to show the nations of the world what He is like.

He did this so that all mankind would be drawn to Him.
4. Read Genesis 18:18 – God's promise to Abraham was that he would be the father of "nations" and that in him the "nations of the world" would be blessed.

Again, this shows God's greater vision – more than just to bless *one* nation!
5. Read John 3:16-17. Here again we see that God's heart is for *all* mankind.
6. The New Testament is about a Man (The Son of Man) who came that our full relationship with God could be restored.
7. Read Hebrews 9:11-15. The New Covenant is a better Covenant, with better promises and a better High Priest – a perfect one. Our High Priest, Jesus, is not like the old Levitical priesthood, in which a high priest qualified by being first of all a Levite and secondly, descended from Aaron.

Our new High Priest has not based His priesthood on natural birth, for He is of the tribe of Judah. Like Melchizedek, the priest of Genesis, Jesus' priesthood is of a higher order, not based on His genealogy.
8. Read Hebrews 10:9-15. We no longer need to stand far away, bringing our sacrifices to God by means of a priest here on earth, but can approach His throne of grace with confidence – not by the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, but by the perfect sacrifice, the Lamb of God.

The Old Testament is divided into Four Sections

Lesson 2

1. The Law of Moses, or “The Pentateuch”:

The word “**Pentateuch**” is Greek and means “a book with five parts”. Originally, the first five books of the Old Testament were all contained in one book, called “The Law of Moses”.

	<u>Number of Books</u>
Genesis – Exodus – Leviticus – Numbers – Deuteronomy	5
2. History: Joshua – Judges – Ruth – 1 and 2 Samuel – 1 and 2 Kings – 1 and 2 Chronicles – Ezra – Nehemiah – Esther	12
3. Poetry: Job – Psalms – Proverbs – Ecclesiastes – Song of Solomon	5
4. Prophets:	
a) Major: Isaiah – Jeremiah – Lamentations – Ezekiel – Daniel	5
b) Minor: Hosea – Joel – Amos – Obadiah – Jonah – Micah – Nahum Habakkuk – Zephaniah – Haggai – Zechariah – Malachi	12

Let’s look more closely at the above...

First of all, since the books of the Law of Moses, or the Pentateuch, are also historical books:

Pentateuch	5			
History	12	added together	17	books of History

Then there are books of Poetry: 5 books of Poetry

And, finally the Prophetic books:

Major Prophets	5			
Minor Prophets	12	added together	17	books of Prophecy

17 – 5 – 17... That’s an easy way to remember how many books are in each section.

“Major” Prophets and “Minor” Prophets:

What’s the difference between a “major” and a “minor” prophet and their books?

Only *the length of the book* they wrote.

The “*major*” prophetic books are *longer* than the “*minor*” prophetic books.

“Major” prophets wrote large books and “minor” prophets shorter books.

Section 1: The Law – or – The Pentateuch

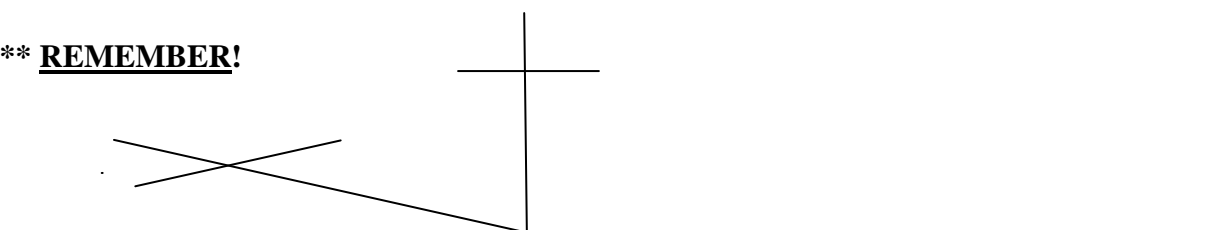
The first 5 books:

GENESIS Part I (Chapters 1-11)	Creation and the origination of the nations. (That is, the beginning)
GENESIS Part II (Chapters 12-50)	The election of a certain nation. (That is, God’s choice of a particular nation)
EXODUS	The redemption of that nation.
LEVITICUS	The sanctification of that nation.
NUMBERS	The direction of that nation.
DEUTERONOMY	The instruction of that nation.

Or, we can study this first section and see the books this way:

GENESIS	BEGINNINGS
EXODUS	REDEMPTION
LEVITICUS	APPROACH (how they were to approach God)
NUMBERS	WANDERINGS
DEUTERONOMY	REMEMBRANCE

***** REMEMBER!**



Old Testament

Shadow

Natural, Physical, Historical

Prophetic

**We look at what happened
to God’s people here**

New Testament

Reality

Spiritual

Fulfilment

**In order to understand
what it means for us today**

***We are not “Old Testament Christians” and still under the Law...
Read Galatians 2:16; 3:10-14***

GENESIS – The Book of Beginnings

GENESIS **The book of *beginnings*. It tells us the beginning of everything except the beginning of God.**

Remember, God is *eternal*. He never had a beginning and He will never have an end.

God is not limited by being within the boundaries of time.

Are you asking, who created God? Of course, the answer is “No one and nothing”, because God is completely self-existent.

There never was a time when He did not exist and there never will be a time when He will not exist.

AUTHOR Moses

KEY VERSES **Read Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 3:15**

As we study Old Testament Survey, you will be given “key verses” for each book. These verses sum up in a general way what each book is about.

It is a good idea for you to underline these verses in your Bible with a coloured pen. That way, you will always have a summary of each book as a quick reminder.

PURPOSE 1. To show **God as being the Creator of all things and the Redeemer of sinful man.**

2. To show **the origin of all nations and God’s choice of a particular nation**, the Hebrews, to demonstrate His nature, character, love and care to the other nations so that, “they might know that I am God”.

Note: God’s desire is that all the people of the world (all nations) would know Him as Lord and Saviour.

Over and over again, throughout the Bible, we see the phrase, “that they would know that I am Lord”. God does not exclude anyone.

He did not choose the Hebrews in order to keep other people away, but that His righteousness, holiness, love and protection of His people would be a testimony to the nations in order that they would be ***drawn to Him***, not in order to keep them away.

God intended to judge the wickedness of those who refused to come to Him ... but not on the basis of the Hebrew nation’s righteousness. He would judge according to His own righteousness.

READ **Genesis 12:3 and 22:18; Deuteronomy 7:6-10, 9:4-6 and 10:17-19**

THE TWO PARTS OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

1. The beginning of the human race: Chapters 1 - 11

Creation The fall The flood Tower of Babel

ALL NATIONS

2. The beginning of the Hebrew nation: Chapters 12 - 50

Abraham Isaac Jacob

A NATION

Part 1: Creation

1. Chapter 1 – Begins with:

- the creation of light,
- next land appeared from beneath the waters, and there was a separation of the waters above ... and below (It seems there was a canopy of water above the earth and a great reservoir of water under the earth before the flood.)
- the earth and sea were divided,
- grasses, herbs and trees were created
- the sun and moon

Let's look at this more closely:

Notice that the grass, herbs, and trees were created on the 3rd day ... *before* the sun was created!

We must settle it in our minds right from the very outset that God does not do things in the way we think He should.

How could there be “light” before there was a sun? We are told that God *is* light (1 John 1:5).

Remember, nothing is impossible for God. He holds all authority.

2. Creation continues with ...

- creation of the fish of the sea and birds of the air
- cattle, beasts and creeping things, and finally
- the creation of man

3. Man – made in the “Image of God”.

God's creation ended on the 6th day when He brought forth “His image” – mankind.

His commission was to “multiply, fill the earth and take dominion”.

a) What did that mean?

It meant the whole earth would be filled and ruled by “His image”; mankind.

That is, man would rule the way God rules, think the way God thinks, have the same goals He has, do things the way He would do them, etc.

b) **What does it mean for us today?**

Jesus is “the second man” and the “last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45-47).
Jesus is “the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation” (Colossians 1:15).
He said, “If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father” (John 14:9).
Today, we are being transformed into the “image of His Son” (Romans 8:29).

c) **Please Note:**

We bear God’s image, not physically, but *morally* – in our love for those around us, in our compassion for others, in the way we live, as kind loving fathers and mothers, as trustworthy friends and law abiding citizens.

In other words, it is not how big a Bible we carry; not what type of clothes we wear, not what food we eat or do not eat ... it is what our character is like.

It is putting God’s Kingdom first in our daily lives; the way Jesus did – doing and saying the things He would if He were living in the situations we live in today.

d) **Read Ephesians 4:17-32.**

Note: There is ONE goal – to have our *character changed!*

So that we are no longer concerned about ourselves first, our reputations, our position in the church, or what others will think of us.

Our goal is to be conformed to the image of His Son. Ephesians 4:13.
Please note, it does not say that God is trying to get us all into heaven.

We are going to heaven, that is true, however God is intent on changing our character so that we are like Jesus. As you and I think like Jesus, talk like Jesus, saying what Jesus would say to those around us, the whole earth will be “filled” with the image of His Son.

4. **Now for a quick look at the Universe God created.**

The earth is a planet – one of nine planets orbiting (circling around) the sun.

What we call the “sun” is actually a star. Our sun, or star, is one of millions and millions of stars in a galaxy called “The Milky Way”.

It would take *30 million years* to travel across the Milky Way Galaxy **IF** a person could travel at the **speed of light**, which is 299,792.5 kilometres per second! (Or if you prefer, 186,282 miles per second!)

The Milky Way is only one galaxy in a group, or cluster, of 19 galaxies ... **There are millions of galaxies in the universe!**

5. The first Adam.

- a) “Adam” comes from a word meaning “taken out of the red earth”.

Genesis 2:7, “Then the Lord God formed man from the dust from the ground, and breathed in his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being”.

Man’s body is from the earth; his spirit is breathed into him by God.

- b) **Genesis 1:26-27**, “Let us make **man** in our image, in our likeness, and let **them** rule ... So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; **male and female** He created **them**”.

- c) **Genesis 5:2**, “... He created **them** male and female and called **them** “Man”. (King James Version – called them “Adam”) (Original Hebrew – “Adam”)

- d) **The Bible often speaks of “man” in the sense of “mankind”.**

2 Corinthians 5:17, “If any *man* be in Christ, he is a new creation ...” is not exclusive to males. Women also are new creations when they are in Christ.

Again in Hebrews 9:27, it says, “Just as *man* is destined to die once and after that to face judgment ...” does not mean that females do not die or face judgment.

Or again in Acts 4:12, “Nor is there any other name by which *man* may be saved”, does not mean that women are not also in need of salvation through Jesus Christ.

- e) **Male and female both bear the image of God.**

Male and female bear God’s image and together they share in the divine commission that follows – flourishing, filling the earth and exercising dominion over the earth.

- f) **Both are called “Man”.**

This inclusive name helps us understand that God’s ideal for man and wife is not merely that they are somewhat associated with each other, but that they are an indissoluble unit (that is: inseparable, lasting, permanent, solid, unbreakable).

God made them “one flesh” and gave them one name. The two are *one*.

6. Created to “Complete” not “Compete”!

The only thing that God said was not good in all of creation was man’s aloneness.

(See Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31; cross reference Genesis 2:18.)

Therefore it stands to reason Satan would want to destroy the relationship between man and woman ...

... not only in the Garden of Eden, but in the home, the work place and the Church – so that man would once again be in the only state God called “not good”.

7. **God “forms” woman out of man.**

Read Genesis 2:18

a) **The plan for woman came from the mind of God, not from man.**

Woman came from man’s side – Hebrew “tsela” meaning “side” or “curved flank”.

The Hebrew word “tsela” is used 32 times in total in the Old Testament; 31 times it is translated as “side”.

b) **God created *one Adam*.**

Therefore, *all nations, all races, both sexes, EVERYONE* was “in” first ADAM.

God removed a part of Adam and used it to form woman. Genesis 2:22.

As we saw earlier, *both male and female are created in the image of God.*

In other words, *the full image of God is only displayed through both genders, as men and women complement each other, side by side.*

8. **Commissioned to subdue the earth and the enemy, not each other!**

Read Genesis 1:27-28 again

Male and female were made to subdue and have authority upon the earth. The enemy they were to subdue was God’s enemy, Satan.

After their fall into sin, man and woman’s relationship was structured with man becoming the head of the home.

Why was this?

Because prior to sin, they lived in complete unity – same goals, same desires same method of attaining the commission God had given.

Only after sin did friction, self-centredness and strife enter their relationship.

9. **Personal healing and reconciliation.**

Sadly, men and women have wounded each other. The damage in male/female relationships caused by what Satan did in the Garden of Eden still continues today, even in the Church.

Whether you are a man or a woman, your personal views can be distorted concerning the opposite sex and God’s plan for them.

For men – beware of an arrogant attitude towards women that sees them as the “lesser creation”, for the Lord God gave them exactly the same commission and authority He gave you.

For women – do not allow a root of bitterness to spring up in your soul, or unforgiveness to cloud your attitude towards men.

Stop, and make a list of the women or men who have hurt you ... through abuse or control. Bring this list of people before God in prayer and allow Him to heal you.

Be aware of the spiritual battle you are fighting. Satan cannot afford to have Godly male/female relationships restored because that would bring Godly order to the home and the Church.

Memory Verse

2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation. All the old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new!”*

Teacher’s Notes

1. To help in understanding the immense size of the universe, let’s think for a moment about our galaxy, the Milky Way. We said that to cross it travelling at the speed of light (299,792.5 kilometres per second) would take 30 million years. If we work that out mathematically, light travels 9.46 million, million kilometres in one year.

Therefore to put that into our galaxy, let’s multiply $9.46 \times 30 = 283.80$ million, million, million kilometres.

That’s roughly the size of The Milky Way – difficult enough to imagine ... but The Milky Way is not the full extent of the universe, which is *much* larger!

2. Do not rush over the section on God’s creation of man and woman. Much misunderstanding in the Body of Christ regarding the position of women in the home and in ministry comes from replacing Biblical fact with cultural traditions.

Creation – continued

Lesson 3

A. Creation – not an “explanation” but a “declaration”

1. **A “declaration” means a deliberate statement or announcement; a statement of fact.**

God created all things by the power of His word.

He created man to have fellowship with Himself.

Man cut himself off from God by sin.

Only when sin is removed by faith in Jesus Christ, is fellowship with God restored.

2. **Some information about creation is left out.**

Notice that God does not tell us *how* He created the world, only that He did.

Read Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong to God. The things He reveals to us, belong to us.

Trying to fill in what we are not told can lead to errors and untruths.

B. Origin of sin

1. **Adam and Eve were created with the power of choice.**

They were created without sin.

They had a free will, or decision making ability. They could make choices. They could choose to obey God or not to obey Him.

If God had not given man a free will, man would only have been a living puppet, or a living machine ... able to do only what God decided. That is not a quality relationship.

2. **Evil came through Lucifer, one of God’s creations.**

- a) **Read Ezekiel 28:11-19.**

This passage speaks of “the king of Tyre” but is descriptive of the devil.

Notice: he was “in Eden”	verse 13
he was “created”	verses 13 and 15
and was perfect, “full of wisdom and perfect in beauty”	verse 12

he was an anointed cherub	
serving on the steps of God's throne	verse 14
he was "blameless"	verse 15
"until unrighteousness was found in him"	verse 15
he sinned	verse 16
because of his beauty	verse 17
and there will come a time when you	
and I will see him	verse 18

b) **Read Isaiah 14:12-17.**

This passage speaks of the "king of Babylon" but is referring to the devil.

"Lucifer" means "son of the morning, or light-bearer".

he fell from heaven	verse 12
to earth	verse 12

Notice what he said...

I will ascend to heaven	verse 13
I will raise my throne above the stars	verse 13
I will sit on the mount	verse 13
I will ascend above the clouds	verse 14
I will make myself like the Most High	verse 14

"Like the Most High", in other words, like God!

And we hear him say exactly the same thing to Eve, "You shall be like God". Genesis 3:5.

3. **The name "Satan" means "adversary of God". That is, opposing all that God does.**

For example: God says love each other – Satan wants everyone to hate each other.
 God says we should give – Satan wants us to get things and keep them for ourselves.
 God says forgive – Satan says get revenge, etc.

C. Sin in man

Notice that God did not ask man and woman not to eat from the Tree of Life, only from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

God did not do this to tempt Adam and Eve. He prohibited eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil because he knew if they ate, they would die.

1. **What was the reason for eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil?**

- a) **It would allow man to be *independent of God*.**

Man and woman were totally *dependent* on God.
They had no knowledge of good or evil.

“You shall be like God, knowing ... good and evil ...”

- b) **It appealed to their pride.**

Satan had fallen because of his pride. He now appealed to the pride of man.

- c) **The fruit of the tree of knowledge kills.**

God did not say, “If you eat the fruit of that tree, *I’m* going to kill you”.
He said, “On the day you eat from it you will die”.

This knowledge brings death because it distracts man from God, the source of life.

It caused Adam and Eve (and can cause us today) to focus attention on themselves. After eating the fruit, their first response was self-examination – and they discovered they were naked.

Before eating, they had not noticed their nakedness – their attention was focused on the Lord and the purpose for which He created them.

- d) **Knowledge of *good and evil*.**

Both *good* and *evil* are part of the tree of knowledge. Eating its fruit makes us think we know what is good ... as well as what is evil.

Much of what *man* thinks is “good” God does not agree with.

For example: mankind thinks:

You should look out for yourself first.

Success is measured by how much money a person has.

It’s much better to have someone give *you* an expensive gift than expect you to give one away.

Believing we know what is good for ourselves and for others, causes us to act without God.

Not everything we believe to be “good,” is what God intends.

For example:

- i) David wanted to build God a house. 1 Chronicles 17:1-3.

That seemed like a good thing for David to do, wouldn't you agree?

But God disagreed. His plan was for Solomon, not David, to build the temple. 1 Chronicles 17:4, 11-12.

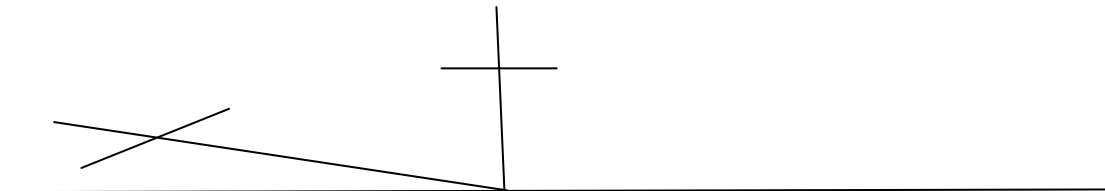
- ii) Jesus began to show His disciples how He would go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed ...

Certainly that did not seem like a "good" thing to have happen.

But, when Peter took Jesus aside and said, "No, no! God forbid that this should happen to you", Jesus rebuked Peter.

What seemed "good" to Peter was not God's plan.

2. The Tree of Knowledge today.



Old Testament
natural, physical

the letter
rules, laws, commands

New Testament
spiritual

the Spirit
relationship

We often think that the Old Testament is the Law, and the New Testament is Grace, but that is not necessarily true.

The Old Covenant is "the letter" (which kills – 2 Corinthians 3:6), the New Covenant is the Spirit, who gives life.

If we read the New Testament with an Old Testament heart, it will just be law to us. We then have a "dead" religion, based on complying with written commandments instead of a living relationship with God.

"You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me" (John 5:39).

Here is John 5:39 from another version:

"You have your heads in the Bible constantly because you think you'll find enough rules there to give you eternal life. But you are missing the point. These Scriptures are all about ME! I'm the One who will give you eternal life. And here I am, standing right before you, and you aren't willing to receive from Me the life you say you want".

It goes on... "How do you expect to get anywhere with God when you spend all your time trying to get the best position, looking at all your rivals and trying to see if they are making better progress than you, and ignoring God?"

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It is true that the Bible is a wonderful book, given to us by the Lord God, but knowing the book is not our goal. Our goal is to know the Lord of the book.

Our spirituality is not measured by how well we conform to the instructions and rules contained in the Bible – *but on how we conform to the likeness of Jesus.* (Even a parrot can learn to say and do certain things ... but that only changes outward behaviour!)

3. Conclusion.

Satan, the author of sin, acting through a serpent, tempted Adam and Eve to disobey.

They yielded to the temptation of being independent from God, able to make their own decisions, thereby sinning.

Satan still influences mankind to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

4. Man versus Fallen Angels.

- a) **Lucifer fell along with one-third of the angels in heaven who rebelled. Read Revelation 12:4, 9.**

God created angels perfect and they were originally uncorrupted. At the same time, they had a free will and were susceptible to temptation and sin.

- b) **Man is redeemable, but the fallen angels are not. Why?**

i) Sin did not originate with mankind but with Lucifer. Man was tempted and chose to rebel, but was not the first of God's creation to do so – Lucifer was.

ii) Man and woman did not identify with sin. They hid, knowing they had displeased God. They were not aggressive towards God, having the attitude, "Well I sinned, so what". They knew they had done wrong.

iii) **Man could die.** The penalty for disobedience was death, Genesis 2:17.

However, the penalty – death – was also the means of deliverance.

If man could die, someone (Jesus) could die in his place.

iv) Angels cannot die. Therefore *they live forever in their fallen state.*

This is the reason that God in His love and mercy for man and woman banished them from the Garden of Eden, "in case he stretches out his hand, and takes also from the Tree of Life and eats ... and lives forever ..."

If man had eaten from the Tree of Life, he would have lived forever a sinner, forever removed from fellowship with God, forever lost.

God in His gracious love and compassion, sent Adam and Eve out of the garden and made sure they did not return by placing cherubim to guard the entrance.

5. Why does God allow Satan and sin to remain?

- a) Before punishment, God first shows mankind and all of heaven, just how terrible sin is.
- b) God will show the wisdom of His ways in the eyes of all His creation.
- c) God will prove that Satan is *wrong*. Satan will *not* raise his throne above the stars; he will *not* sit on the mount, or ascend above the clouds; and he certainly *will not make himself like the Most High!*

Note: If God, in His authority, had simply destroyed Satan, it would only have proven that He was *stronger* than Satan, not that He is the supreme and only God, or that He is *right, wise*, etc.

6. God's plan is for a "New Creation" to fulfil His purposes, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

- a) God will have men and women who choose to love and serve Him.
- b) Men and women who will overcome evil and the temptations of the devil.
- c) Men and women who will take dominion and rule.

D. The results of sin – curses

Today we live in an abnormal world. It is a world that has experienced drastic changes since its creation. The earth has been subject to death, decay and disorder.

Mankind's sin does not only affect himself. "All creation groans..." Romans 8:22.

Not only does mankind die; trees die, flowers die, birds and animals die, stars fall, etc.

1. Genesis 3:14-19. (Please read these verses *carefully*.)

- a) The curse fell on the serpent verse 14
- b) The curse fell upon the earth verse 17
- c) **The curse *did not* fall on man or on woman! (Read it again if necessary)**

2. To the man God said:

- In sorrow he would eat of the ground verse 17
- He would experience hard labour verse 18
- He lost his dominion over creation verse 18
- Death would finally claim his physical life verse 19

fell into sin	resisted	able to resist
disobedience	obedience	able to obey
lost authority to the devil	regained authority Adam lost	authority in Jesus' name
brought death	brings resurrection life	abundant life
failed	succeeded	can do all things through Him
brought condemnation	brought justification	justified
slave to sin	freedom and righteousness	righteous and free indeed
perishable	imperishable	eternal life
earthly	heavenly	destined for heaven
all die	all made alive	eternal life

Remember: We are New Testament believers, followers of Jesus Christ and His example, no longer slaves to sin and unrighteousness, but experiencing freedom, righteousness and success.

For references to the above, READ:

Romans 5:12-19

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 and 45-49

Luke 4:1-13

Memory Verse

Luke 6:43-44, *“For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit; nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its fruit”.*

Galatians 5:22, *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against these things there is no law”.*

Teacher’s Notes

1. It would not matter what kind of tree the Tree of Knowledge was. It wasn’t whether its fruit was a banana, orange, apple or grapefruit, etc. What brought sin into the world was disobeying God’s instruction, not a certain type of fruit.

On the third day of creation, God established a physical and spiritual law: He ordered that trees would only bear fruit after their own “kind” and produce seed after their own kind. (Genesis 1:11-12)

We can physically see that law: banana trees only produce bananas. They never produce macadamia nuts or avocados. Trees that grow lemons never bear peaches. If you plant a peach seed, you will never find it produces an oak tree. Peach seeds always produce peach trees!

In the same way, we cannot bring forth fruit that is life while partaking of the tree of knowledge.

Teacher's Notes Continued

When Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, they set in progress the continuation of the fruit of that tree in their descendants – consequently death spread throughout all who came from them.

But God, in His great love and mercy, determined to redeem mankind. The Lord promised transgressing woman that a seed would come from her that would crush the head of the serpent that had deceived her.

2. It may help to have volunteers to play “the ground”, “Adam”, “Eve” and “the serpent”. As soon as they hear if they are “cursed” they sit down. Who did *not* get cursed? The ones who remain standing – Adam and Eve.

Note that Adam and Eve experienced *results from their sin* – they lost fellowship with God; strife now entered their own relationship; the ground would not easily provide food; there would be pain in childbirth ... but *they* were not cursed.

3. The husband/wife relationship is given structure after the fall. Man was given the leadership role for his family. Out of this relationship would flow love, protection, security and stability for his wife and for their children.
4. The sin of man was disobedience, not sexual intercourse. It is obvious that man and woman were created with different physical bodies. Those bodies were purposefully created by God. Sexual intercourse is not, nor has it ever been, sinful when it occurs within the boundaries set by God – that is, within marriage.

The commission God gave man and woman in Genesis 1:28, *prior* to sin, was that they “be fruitful and multiply”. This necessitates sexual intercourse in order for the woman to conceive.

God has a pure mind and would not instruct anyone to sin. God created sex and said everything He created was “good”.

Although woman was to experience pain in childbirth, she was created with sexual desire and would “turn to her husband”. Otherwise, most women would have sex only before bearing their first child ... the pain of that birth would ensure she would seldom desire sex again.

5. We do not live in a contest between God and Satan. God did not lose to Satan; *Adam lost the authority God had delegated to him.*

Matthew 28:18, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven *and on earth*”.

That is the authority Jesus took back! When Jesus died and rose again, He regained the authority Adam had lost.

The way of God and the way of the world

Lesson 4

In Adam and Eve's children, Cain and Abel, we see *two different types of character*.

Read Genesis 4:1-10

1. The character of Cain.

- a) **He was of the earth, a “tiller of the ground”.** Genesis 4:2.

A ground which had been cursed remember?

His offering was the result of working the ground, produced by the “toil” and “sweat of his face”. Genesis 3:17-19.

Cain's offering of grain was the fruit of his own hard work.

Cain thought that what he had produced by his own efforts should be acceptable as a sacrifice to God.

- b) **The sacrifice is the point of conflict.**

Cain wanted to offer God a sacrifice, produced by his own efforts, and was angry because that was not acceptable to God.

Please Note: We cannot bring a sacrifice and say, “This is what *I* have decided to bring, and it must be acceptable to You, God”. *God* decides what is acceptable and what is not.

2. The character of Abel.

Abel tended sheep.

Abel did not give the sheep life, God did.

Abel did not make the grass grow for the sheep to eat, God did.

Abel did not make the water for the sheep to drink, God did.

Abel did not make that baby lamb grow, God did.

Abel offered a sacrifice, the first of his flock. An innocent animal shed its blood.

This is prophetic of redemption through Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Abel presented his offering *by faith*. Hebrews 11:4.

3. Cain's reaction.

Cain responded to God's rejection of his offering by getting angry.

Please note: God did not reject *Cain*. *He rejected what Cain was offering*. When told “to do what is right”, he refused.

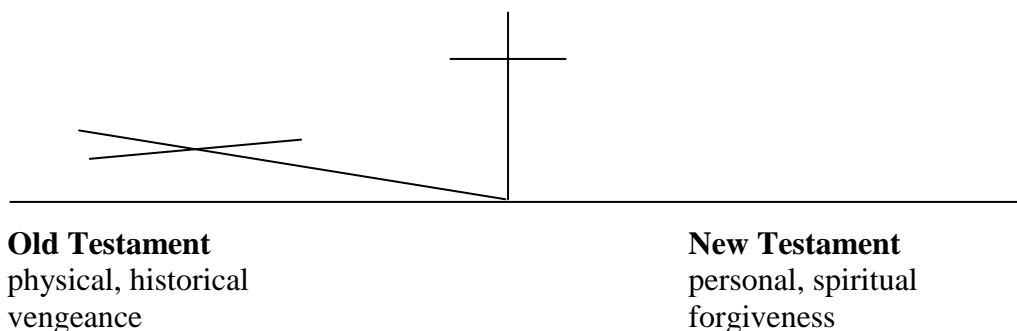
In his anger, Cain murdered the one who had found favour with God – Abel.

4. Abel's death.

He is compared to Christ. Hebrews 12:24.

Please Note: Abel's blood cried out for vengeance BUT Christ's blood was shed for forgiveness. (Romans 3:23-25)

a) **Remember ...**



b) **What is acceptable to God today?**

Not what you or I decide is “good”.

(“Lord, see how well I preach to the congregation ...” meanwhile God is asking you to teach children in Sunday School. Even if you take hours and hours to prepare your sermon, will your “sacrifice” of preaching be acceptable to God? No. You can only offer Him what He requires – the time spent with the children. “But I don’t *like* teaching the children, Lord! And I’m so *good* at preaching!” Is that what you are saying? Remember, God decides what He will accept. It is His decision, not yours.)

God requires a sacrifice of ourselves – “losing our lives” to follow Him. Matthew 16:24-25.

Please Note: When Cain started out, what he was doing did not look so bad ... but, it ended in murder. We must get to the point where the only thing we bring is what is acceptable to God.

5. In the New Testament:

The religious leaders, the Pharisees and Sadducees, opposed Jesus’ teachings.

They opposed everything He did, including the miracles they saw with their own eyes.

Jesus had no regard for their position and authority, but repeatedly told them that they had missed what God intended, focusing only on the letter of the Law ... which kills.

Sinners – murderers, prostitutes, traitors, even the demon-possessed, *humbled themselves before the Lord Jesus* ... but the “fine citizens” of the day held Him in contempt.

Remember, *sinners did not crucify the Lord – Israel’s most upstanding citizens crucified Him!* The Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes and teachers of the Law

of Moses that “criminals and prostitutes” would get into the Kingdom of God before them. Matthew 21:31.

They even believed that God should be pleased that they had crucified Jesus. Matthew 27:41-43.

No wonder the Bible says, “Woe to them, for they have gone the way of Cain ...” Jude 11.

6. The “Mark of Cain”. Genesis 4:15.

Again we see the character of Cain – he is far more concerned with his sentence than with his sin. “My punishment is too great for me to bear!” Genesis 4:13.

Cain was not concerned that his relationship with God was broken because of his sin. What concerned him was that, because he was away from “God’s face”, he had lost God’s protection and could be attacked.

Can you see the “self-centredness” once again? Cain is not remorseful. He is worried about himself.

God is merciful and a “mark” or a “sign” was given to him, indicating that he must be spared bodily harm.

What was this mark? The Bible does not say.

Would it matter if someone had a certain mark today? No, because it is not outward, physical marks that God is concerned with. He looks at “the heart”, the inner character of man. We are New Testament people.

7. Cain marries a wife!

We do not know how old Cain was when he killed Abel.

But we know Adam lived to be 930 years old! Genesis 5:5. Many other sons and daughters were born to Adam and Eve. Therefore, at some time, brothers and sisters were married to each other.

Cain married one of Adam’s descendants.

8. Genesis Chapter 5.

Genesis chapter 5 gives a review of the genealogy leading up to the next great event of Genesis – the flood.

9. The Righteous Line continues through Seth.

Seth replaces both Cain, the firstborn, and Abel the one with Godly character.

He carries Adam’s image ... “a son in his own image”. Genesis 5:3.

10. Adam's "Image".

We referred to this earlier, as **the doctrine of "original sin"**.

Memory Verse

Philippians 3:8b-9, "... *in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith*".

Teacher's Notes

1. If we trust in our own knowledge and understanding of what is good or evil, we will be easily deceived. There is just as much danger in what appears "good" as in what seems to be "evil".

For example, what would be the popularity of a political leader today if he promised safe streets, a strong currency, an end to unemployment, and restoration of national dignity and military strength? What if he was able to deliver on all these promises? Would that be "good"?

Be careful! A man named Adolf Hitler promised all this to Germany and delivered on every single one ... and led his country into the most disastrous global war the world has ever known (World War II). *Thirteen million people died* as a result of Hitler's leadership and the world still trembles at the atrocities his government committed.

The Christian Church leaders in Germany believed Hitler would be the "saviour of the German people". How terribly, terribly wrong they were.

There is only *one* Saviour. Their superficial understanding of God's redemption opened the door to a terrible, shocking deception.

2. Salvation is dependent on genuine repentance. To repent means more than to have feelings of remorse, it means *to turn around; to turn away from sin*.

Sin is not the few wrong things we have done. Sin is the very nature of natural man. It means turning from our transgressions ... *and also what we consider to be our righteousness*.

Read Philippians 3:2-9

Paul's righteousness, based on keeping the Law, brought him into direct conflict with the Truth.

Cain had attempted to force God to accept an offering he had produced by his own efforts, his own "righteousness". He murdered Abel, who truly was righteous and who offered back to God only what God had first given. *In exactly the same manner, Paul persecuted the true worshippers, killing many. In the same way, so do all who try to live by the Law.*

The righteousness of God is based completely on Christ's atonement at the Cross of Calvary. The Cross strips aside all of man's so-called "goodness" and reveals pride. The Cross is the greatest threat to man's self-centredness. Paul said he had to give up everything he valued in life ... now considering it all rubbish, when he saw the righteousness of Jesus. May we follow his example!

The Flood

Lesson 5

A. Introduction

The Bible shows us that the human life span was very long before the Flood. After the Flood, it grew rapidly shorter. Today, human life is very rarely longer than ninety or one hundred years.

By Genesis chapter 6, the wickedness of man had increased until “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”. Genesis 6:5.

1. The “Sons of God”. Genesis 6:1-4.

- a) The term “sons of God” is used a few times in the Old Testament in reference to *heavenly beings, or angels*. Genesis 6:2; Job 1:6, 2:1 and 38:7; Psalm 82:6; Daniel 3:25.

There seems to have been sexual relationships between these beings and humans.

- b) The result of this union was a group known as Nephilim; people of great size and stature.

The Hebrew word “Nephilim” means “fallen ones”.

In men’s eyes they were “mighty men, men of renown”, but in God’s eyes they were “fallen ones”, ripe for judgment.

- c) Jude 6 may give some understanding, as it speaks of angels who did not keep their positions of responsibility and authority assigned to them by God.

The result is that they have been “kept in chains for judgment”.

- d) Whoever these “sons of God” were, their behaviour was not pleasing to God.

2. Noah.

- The 10th man from Adam.
- He was righteous, blameless and walked with God. (Genesis 6:9)
- He did all that was commanded him.
- He was a man of faith and a preacher of righteousness.
- His godly life was a powerful contrast to the wickedness of those around him.
- He was also the first man to build an altar.

3. The Flood.

The judgment of God is preceded by **Grace**.

Noah “found favour” in God’s eyes. Genesis 6:8.

This is the first time the word “grace or favour” is mentioned in the Bible. It comes in the midst of sin and wickedness.

The flood did not come until:

- a) The world was given good warning and an opportunity to change their way of living. (Noah warned them for 120 years – the time it took to build the ark.)
- b) Provision for a way to save the righteous was made.

The waters of the Flood did not fully recede for one whole year. Genesis 7:11 and 8:14.

4. God’s Covenant with Noah.

Read Genesis 9:1-17

5. A New Beginning.

Read Genesis 9:1-3: God once again gives creation to man to rule over.

The relationship between blood and life:

Read verse 4

God is the great defender of human life.

He declares that “life is in the blood”.

He institutes a “life for a life” with regard to the sin of murder.

6. Noah’s vineyard and the sin of Ham.

Read Genesis 9:20-27

Noah planted a vineyard, an act which did not anger God. (Read it again, if necessary.)

Noah then made wine and drank it, making himself drunk. While Noah lay down drunk and was either sleeping or unconscious, Ham called his brothers so that they could all view their father’s nakedness. He made public and mocked his father’s nakedness, rather than cover it as Shem and Japheth did.

Love covers ... Ham exposed. 1 Peter 4:8.

Noah perceived the heart of Ham and prophesied the nature of his children.

From this line of Ham would come a kingdom (built by Nimrod) which opposed God’s Kingdom. This kingdom had its centre in a place called “BABYLON”.

B. The Tower of Babel

Read Genesis 9:7 and Genesis 11:1-9

After the Flood, the world was given a new start. However, instead of spreading out and filling the earth as God had commanded, they started building a great tower. They thought they could, first of all, get into heaven without God, and secondly, establish an empire independent of God.

In one sentence, we clearly see the motivation of the carnal nature of man:

“Come let us *build for ourselves* a city and a tower whose top will *reach into heaven*, and let us *make a name for ourselves*; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth. Genesis 11:4.

1. God was not angry about their desire to get to heaven.

Read Genesis 11:5

Heaven as a goal is not wrong.

2. What was wrong was their *method*.

They were attempting to reach heaven *by their own works*. It is a profound example of the pride and selfish ambition of man.

The men actually believed they could reach heaven by their own efforts ... this is an echo once again of the devil’s temptation of Eve ... that she could become like God without God.

Remember Satan’s own fall from heaven ...

“*I will ascend to heaven. I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly ... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High*”. Isaiah 14:13-14.

3. What was wrong was their *attitude*.

Their attitude was to attain self-perfection – by their own efforts.

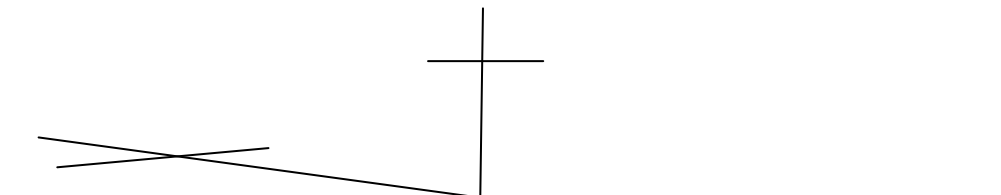
The Lord *wants* us to sit on the mount of the assembly, He *wants* us to be seated above the clouds, *He wants us to be like Him* (to have His nature), *but He has done this for us through His Son*. Without Him, we can do nothing.

4. God’s response.

The Lord looked at the men of Babel and determined that the scattering of their languages was the best solution to their foolishness.

“Babel” actually means “confusion”.

5. **What the Tower of Babel means for us today**



Old Testament natural, physical, historical	New Testament spiritual, reality
<u>Man's Attempts</u> build a city by our own effort brick and mortar a tower to make a name for ourselves pride	<u>Man's Attempts</u> build a church by our own effort using people the biggest to make a name for ourselves pride
<u>The Result</u> thousands of different languages separated by physical language disunity and confusion	<u>The Result</u> over 5,000 different church groups and denominations separated by doctrine disunity and confusion
<u>Babel</u> scattering confusion of men's languages man's works	<u>Pentecost (Acts 2)</u> uniting common heavenly language given to men "wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:11)

Memory Verse

Romans 12:2, *"And do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect".*

Teacher's Notes

1. The wickedness of mankind as described in Genesis 6 is truly remarkable if one considers the genealogy given in chapter 5. Specifically, that:

Adam lived 930 years, making him 817 years old when Methuselah was born.

Methuselah was 113 years old when Adam died, and was 369 years old when his grandson, Noah, was born. In all, Methuselah (the man who lived the longest) lived for 969 years.

This means that Noah's generation knew a man who knew Adam – the one who had experienced the world without sin, knew what it was like to walk in the perfect Garden of Eden with God, knew what had been lost through rebellion.

Can you imagine what *your* actions would be if *today* there was a man who had known Adam? What if he lived just down the road from you?

Well, I don't know about you, but I would be at his house all day, every day! I would have thousands of questions to ask him. What did Adam say God is like? What does He look like? What did He say, exactly? What was the garden like? ... and the animals?

And yet, "the wickedness of man was great in the earth". Mankind was not interested in God.

2. In Genesis 6:3, God says His Spirit will not strive with man forever, and He lowers man's lifespan to one hundred and twenty years.

Before the flood, men lived for hundreds and hundreds of years, but we see life spans decreasing dramatically after the flood:

Shem lived 500 years
Abraham lived 175 years
Joseph lived for 110 years
David lived for 70 years

Part 2: The beginning of the Hebrew Nation

Lesson 6

A. God begins with One Man


Read Genesis 12:1-3 and Joshua 24:2

Abram came from the city of Ur and from a family of idol worshippers.

However, in contrast to other men who sought to live without God, like the men of Babel whose goal was to build for themselves an eternal city and a huge tower that would get them to heaven without God's help, Abram put his trust in the Lord completely.

Because of Abram's faith, God gave him all that the men of Babel had tried to get for themselves – a name that would be esteemed for all generations, a city that would last forever.

Although the Lord had said to Abram to "leave his father's household" (Genesis 12:1) who did Abraham take with him?

_____ 

1. The call of Abraham.

Read Genesis 12:1-4

Abram – 75 years old. Genesis 12:4.

The Promise:

- a land
- a great nation – pay attention to the words, "*I will make you ...*"
- a great name
- a great blessing
- God's protection – blessing for blessing; curse for curse
- a blessing to the nations of the earth

2. The Promise had a Condition.

Read Genesis 12:1 and then read verse 4

Were you able to pick out the condition?

Yes. Abraham had *to leave* ... his home and family

and go to the land God would show him.

3. **Abraham was righteous before he was circumcised.**

a) **Read Galatians 3:6-9.**

IMPORTANT!

Abraham established a relationship with God because he *believed* God. His righteousness was not based on anything physical, but on his *faith*.

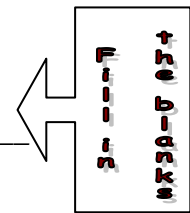
Abraham is called the “father of faith” because of his example of trusting God and obeying Him, even though he did not know where God was leading. Romans 4:9-12.

b) **Read Galatians 3:16 and verse 29.**

“seed” – singular – one, and that seed is Christ. We are Abraham’s seed if we belong to Christ.



And heirs *by* _____ *not by race*, *by* _____



4. **Abram had times of failure.**

a) **Egypt. Read Genesis 12:11-13.**

There was a famine, but Egypt’s food supply was good due to the Nile River.

Sarai truly must have been beautiful (verse 11) for, although she was 65 yrs old, she was taken into Pharaoh's house!

b) **Pharaoh.**

The word “Pharaoh” means “great house”, and is the name of the royal family in Egypt. Many different Pharaohs ruled Egypt during the Old Testament period of time.

c) **God protected Sarai.**

Before Pharaoh added Sarai to his group of wives, he would have killed Abram.

Abram preferred to dishonour his wife rather than face danger, or trust God for protection.

Sarai was his half-sister, but more importantly, Sarai was his *wife*. (Make no mistake, a “half-truth” is a lie. Later we will see Abraham repeating this behaviour – Genesis 20: Abraham and Abimelech. Sarah, then nearly 90, was still a tremendous beauty!)

God protected Sarai by sending serious diseases on Pharaoh’s household and she was sent back to Abram.

5. **Abram and Lot separate.**

Read Genesis 13:8-12

Abram was the one God had made promises to, yet Abram allowed Lot to choose ... and even when Lot chose the better part, Abram did not object.

Here we see Abram's character and his total trust in God to do what He had promised.

Later Abram did not hesitate to rescue Lot, who was being attacked, and later again, he interceded for Lot regarding the destruction of Sodom. Romans 12:9-14.

6. Abram meets Melchizedek.

- a) **Read Genesis 14:17-20 and then Hebrews 7:1-6.**
Melchizedek was both a king and a priest.

In the Old Testament kings came from the tribe of *Judah*.

Priests came from the tribe of *Levi*.

But Melchizedek's kingship and **priesthood did not rely on his genealogy** – that is, it did *not* depend on *who his mother or father was*.

"Without mother and father" does not mean he did not *have* parents, but that his priesthood was not dependent on who they were. He is a priest *without* genealogy.

- b) **Read Hebrews 7:3.**

“... *made* like the Son of God”.

Read verse 4 (still Hebrews 7)

“Observe how great this *man* was ...”

Read verse 5 (still Hebrews 7)

When the priesthood began in the Old Testament, priests had to be *Levites*. In other words, their priesthood *did* depend on a genealogy.

But Melchizedek's priesthood is prophetic of Christ's because Jesus, both King and our great High Priest, was from *Judah*, not *Levi*, yet He lives a Priest forever. Jesus' priesthood does not depend on His genealogy.

7. The Abrahamic Covenant.

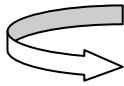
- a) **God's Covenant with Abram.**

Read Genesis 15:1-4

See verse 4, God promises “one from your own body”.

Read Genesis 15:6

b) “How may I know”?



Read Genesis 15:9-19. This is the “Abrahamic Covenant” as God pledges to bring about all He has promised.

Important: Read verse 15 again. You will need to remember it later.



8. **Ishmael and Isaac.**

a) **Read Genesis 16:1.**

Read Genesis 16:11-12

Read Genesis 17:1, then verses 5-7

Now Read Genesis 17:15, 17, and 19 ... then 20-21

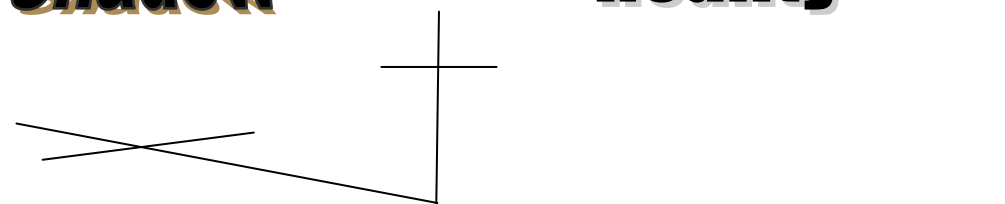
It is clear that God would not accept Ishmael, a son Abram had produced by his own efforts.

The “son of promise” would be born when neither Abram *nor* Sarah were able to have a child without God’s supernatural intervention.

b) **Read Romans 4:18-24.**

Shadow

Reality



Old Testament

Jesus

New Testament

Physical

Spiritual Experience

Abraham and Sarah, conceive Isaac by a supernatural work of God

You and I, being “fruitful” for God, as He gives us the ability and power to do what He calls us to do

Abraham and Sarah had absolutely no hope of accomplishing, by their own ability, what God had promised them. They were old now – Sarah, 90; and Abraham, 100. The son they had produced by their own efforts was not acceptable to God.

Only when it was obvious that they would never be able to fulfil God's promises in their own strength, did God do what He had promised. Abram would have descendants.

9. **New Names: Abram to Abraham** (Genesis 17:5) **and Sarai to Sarah** (Genesis 17:15).

Abram – “exalted father” / Abraham – “father of a multitude of nations”.

Sarai – “princess” / Sarah – “queen”.

10. **Circumcision, the sign of the Covenant.**

a) **Read Genesis 17:10.**

HEBREW
+30+303H



Circumcision was to be a sign that the Lord alone would be Abram's God and Abraham would trust and serve Him.

It was an *external sign of an internal work*, a sign of covenant relationship. That is so important, let us read it again



Circumcision was an *external sign of an internal work*, a sign that the person was in covenant relationship with God.

What was important? The physical mark? ... or what it represented?

Yes! What circumcision *represented* – a relationship with God. Circumcision itself was only a *sign*.

Remember the example about making a trip to Johannesburg?

What if I told you I was going to Johannesburg and you saw me start on my way, but as soon as I saw the first sign saying "Johannesburg 600 Kilometres", you watched me as I ran to the sign, threw my arms around it with great excitement, and said, "Oh Johannesburg!! This is wonderful!".

You would tell me, "No, no, no ... that is only a *sign!* It is not the real thing, it is just a *sign!*"

Is the sign meaningful? Yes! The sign is meaningful – but only because *it points the way to what is really important.*

b) **What about circumcision as a covenant sign today?**

Read Romans 2:28-29

11. **Isaac, the Son of Promise.**

Read Genesis 21:2

Read Genesis 22:1-5

The test – will Abraham give back to God what He has given?

Notice the word "we" in verse 5, "we will worship and we will return". Already Abraham was believing God would keep Isaac safe.

Read Genesis 22:10-14

12. **What did Abraham believe?**

Abraham obeyed God. He even built an altar and placed the son he loved so much on it. What do you think Abraham thought God was going to do?

Remember, Isaac was the "son of promise", the one who would bless Abraham with descendants, the one in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed.

There really are only two possibilities:

1) Somehow Isaac will not die.

- a) God will stop me before I kill him or perhaps
- b) Even if I put the knife in him, somehow he will remain alive.

The other possibility:

2) Isaac will die ... but God will raise him to life again!

Read Genesis 21:12

Read John 8:56-58

Read Hebrews 11:18-19



What does Hebrews 11 say Abraham believed?

B. Isaac a "type" or example of Christ

In his supernatural birth, his "obedience unto death" and in his marriage, Isaac is one of the greatest illustrations of Christ in the Old Testament.

His marriage to Rebekah:

Read Genesis 24:1-4

Read verses 8-10 and verse 14

Read verse 15 and 18-19, and then 22

Read verses 32-39 and verse 58

Here we can see a beautiful picture of God the Father (seen in Abraham), sending the Holy Spirit (seen in Abraham's servant), for a Bride (the church) for His Son (seen in Isaac).

Abraham's servant goes to those who belong to his Master's family (the Father's) and there finds a young lady (the potential bride) who is willing to serve (watering 10 camels – verse 10 – at 40 gallons per camel would not be easy work).

The servant tells her of his Master, a very wealthy man, with only one son ... one son who will inherit all his father's possessions.

The servant gives her gifts to attract her to the possibility of marriage ... and he gives her family gifts as well.

Although her family wanted her to remain with them a little longer, the bride agreed to the proposal of marriage and leaves ... travelling a long distance to marry a young man she had not seen, but loved from afar.

"... and you, though you have not seen Him, love Him ..." 1 Peter 1:8.

C. Jacob and Esau

Real Genesis 25:21 – Rebekah was barren

Read Genesis 25:23-34

1. **The name "Jacob" means "Deceiver".**

Read Genesis 27:1-10,

then verses 18-24 and verses 41-43

2. **Read Genesis 28:10-22.**

God repeats the same promises He made to Abraham when He covenanted with him – now making those promises to Jacob.

3. **Jacob's response to God.**

Read Genesis 28:19-20 and count the number of times Jacob says, "If.. and if"

Jacob responds to God by saying, "If You will do this ... and this ... and this then You will be my God".

4. **The deceiver is deceived.**

Read Genesis 29:18-30

D. Jacob's 12 sons

1. **Rachel was barren.**

Read Genesis 29:31

Twelve sons and one daughter are born to Jacob.

2. **At last Rachel had a son, Joseph.**

Read Genesis 30:22-24

E. God changed Jacob's name

1. **Read Genesis 35:1 then verses 9-15.**

Jacob means "deceiver".

Israel means "God's prince; a ruler with God".

2. Rachel's death.

Read Genesis 35:16-19

Memory Verse

Genesis 28:15, "And behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you".

THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL: Jacob's 13 children had 4 mothers:

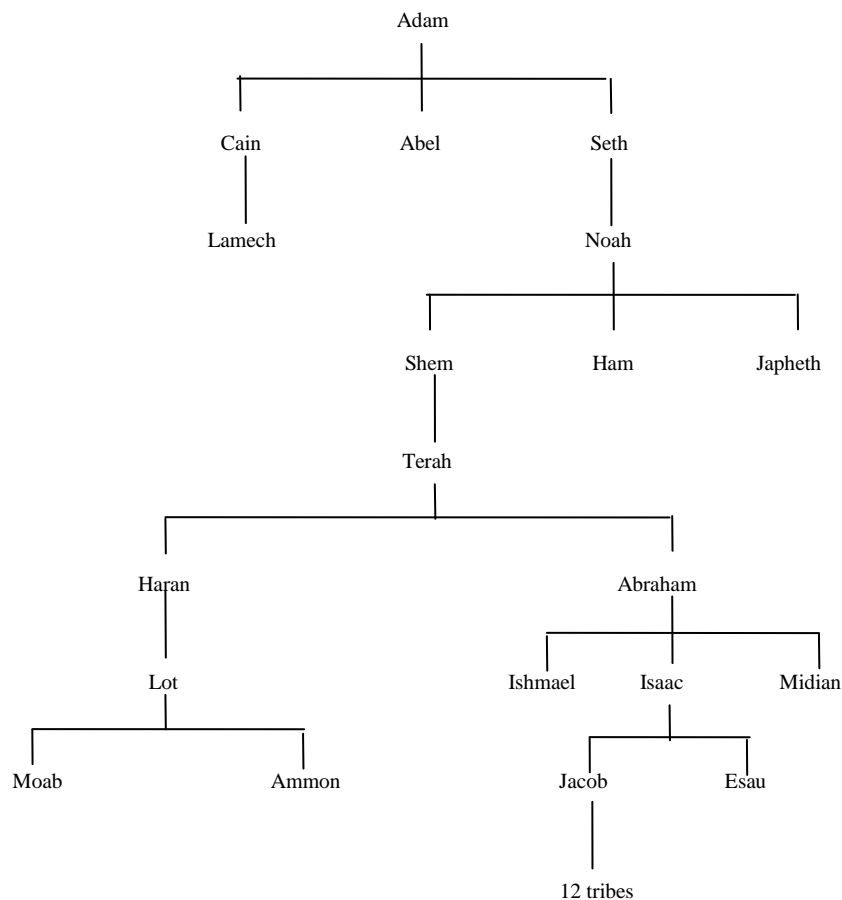
Rachel, Laban's daughter, had Joseph and Benjamin

Bilhah, Rachel's servant, had Dan and Naphtali

Leah, Laban's daughter, had Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun and Dinah

Zilpah, Leah's servant, had Gad and Asher

FROM ADAM TO THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL



Teacher's Notes

1. Remember, circumcision in the Abrahamic covenant, is the same as the rainbow in God's covenant with Noah – both are *signs*.

Signs are outward symbols which have spiritual significance. When we see them, they confirm, strengthen and help us remember the true meaning of what they represent.

2. When Abraham allowed Lot to choose the best of the land, leaving Abraham the mountains which were not as good for growing crops, it shows us Abraham's tremendous faith that God would bring to pass all that He had promised, no matter what his circumstances were.

Abraham could have said to Lot, "Listen, *I'm* the one God made those promises to, not you! He promised *me* this land, it is mine. You started out with me and you will have to stay with me, or else if we are going to separate, then I am going to choose first and you must be content to have whatever I don't want".

No, Abraham allowed Lot to take the best.

What do you think would happen if pastors had the same attitude Abraham had?

F. Joseph – from Shepherd to a Ruler in Egypt

1. **Joseph as a youth – A dreamer of dreams.**

Read Genesis 37:1-11

Read verses 13 and 18-24 and then 27-28

Read verses 31-36

Joseph was Jacob's favourite son. He was sold as a slave into Egypt because of the jealousy of his brothers.

2. **Joseph in prison.**

Read Genesis 39:1-4

Verses 7-9, then 12-16 and 19-23

Joseph was falsely accused, put into prison ... but God was with him.

3. **Joseph – An interpreter of dreams.**

- a) **The Cupbearer's dream.**

The cupbearer was to be restored to his position within three days.

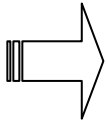
Read Genesis 39:14-15

- b) **The Baker's dream.**

Within three days, the baker was to lose his head.

Read Genesis 39:20-23

c) **Pharaoh's dream.**



Read Genesis 41:1-8

Note verse 1 "*at the end of _____!*"

The cupbearer remembered that Joseph could interpret dreams. He was released from prison and brought to Pharaoh.

Read verse 16

Read Genesis 41:29-40

The ability God had given him to interpret Pharaoh's dreams and Joseph's wisdom served to promote him to the highest office in the land – second only to Pharaoh.

Read Genesis 41:45, then 50-54

4. Joseph – Overseer of Egypt.

a) **The first trip to Egypt.**

Read Genesis 42:1-8 and 17-20

Read verses 26-38

b) **The second trip to Egypt.**

Read Genesis 43:1-9, then verses 26-28

Joseph's brothers returned to Egypt to buy more grain, this time bringing Benjamin with them. Remember, both Joseph and Benjamin were Rachel's children, which was the reason Joseph was so interested in Benjamin.

Read chapter 44:1-4, 12-13, 32-34

c) **Joseph and his brothers.**

Read Genesis 45:1 and 10-13

G. Jacob and his family journey to Egypt

1. God reassured Jacob.

Read Genesis 46:1-4

Read Genesis 47:11-12

Joseph's brothers and father settled in Goshen, in the north of Egypt.

2. **The famine increased.**

Read Genesis 47:13-20, 25

H. Jacob's blessing

1. **The promise:** Read Genesis 47:28-31

2. **The blessing:** Read Genesis 48:13-14
Read verses 17-22



Jacob gave Joseph a double portion – both Joseph's sons take his place in the tribes of Israel.

3. **Jacob blessed and prophesied over all his sons.**

Note: Genesis 49:10 "... the sceptre shall not depart from Judah ..."

("Sceptre" – a short staff, or cane, symbolizing royal power; a short stick carried by kings and rulers symbolizing authority.)

I. Joseph forgave his brothers

Read Genesis 50:18-20 and then read Romans 8:28

REMEMBER:

4 great events in Genesis
4 great people

Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and the Nations
Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

Genesis – the book of beginnings

In Genesis we find the first ...

lie, sin, redemption, love, mention of a Messiah, curse, sacrifice, fear, bloodshed, boat, marriage, polygamy, birth, mother/father, child, family, Sabbath, worship, death, twins, city, birthright, prophecy, clothes, dream, languages, promise, covenant, adultery, famine, murder, idolatry, grace, strife, envy, altar, rain, flood, vision, child born to barren woman, wine, drunk, change of a name, war, nations, miracle, God's provision, rainbow, jail, human government, false accusation, jealousy ...