

# A WALK THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT

## TIME FRAME #1 – CREATION TO THE TOWER OF BABEL

### GENESIS 1 – 11:26

## CLASS NOTES

### MAJOR EVENTS

#### EVENT #1 – CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND EARTH (GENESIS 1:1-25)

The Bible starts by introducing us to the all-powerful creator God. The name for God in these verses is 'Elohim'. It means 'Creator, Strong and Mighty'. It is plural, an early indication of the Godhead and doctrine of the Trinity. He is the one and only God. The sun, moon, stars and creatures other cultures saw as gods were in fact created by this one true God. This monotheistic belief set the Jewish people apart.

God created all things through the power of His Word. The creation story also reveals that there is order and design in God's creation. In addition, there is a progression to creation, which will culminate in the creation of man.

#### EVENT #2 – CREATION OF ADAM AND EVE (GENESIS 1:26 – 2:24)

People are created in the image of God, giving us a unique place in creation. We possess a rational mind; the ability to make moral decisions; the capacity to experience a wide range of emotions; the ability to live in relationship with others; the ability to be creative. We were designed to have a personal relationship with God and serve as stewards over His creation. Note that Adam's body was created from the dust of the ground, but his life came from the breath of God (2:7). From the very beginning, Adam had a uniquely personal relationship with God.

Eve was created to be Adam's partner and companion in life. Her uniquely feminine qualities were designed by God to be a perfect fit for Adam's masculine ones. After bringing them together, God institutes marriage. They will enjoy a brief time of perfect transparency and intimacy.

In Genesis 2:5 we are introduced to a second name for God, 'LORD' – Yahweh or Jehovah. It means, 'I Am', and is the personal name of God. It indicates that God is present, accessible and near all who call on Him. As Genesis begins to give the details of Adam and Eve's creation and relationship with each other, God reveals that He is a relational God, and that we are created to be in relationship with Him and with each other.

At the close of Genesis 2, Creation is complete. God looked at everything He had created and determined it was very good. He also instituted the Sabbath, establishing a pattern of Work – Worship – Rest. Finally, He gave Adam and Eve one restriction – they were not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

#### EVENT #3 – THE FALL (GENESIS 3)

We do not know the amount of time that goes by between Genesis 2:25 and 3:1, but most scholars do not believe it was too long. One key event that took place during that time was the fall of Satan into sin. A powerful angel, he chose to rebel against God, taking 1/3 of the angels with him. He now begins his determined agenda of destroying God's work in an attempt to make himself equal to the Lord.

Satan's strategy is to raise questions in Eve's mind regarding God's goodness and motivation. At the root of his temptation is pride: the determination to control our own lives instead of submitting to God. The strategy works as first Eve and then Adam make the decision to eat the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

The destructive consequences begin at once, as they hide from God in shame, seeking to cover themselves. They turn on each other as well, fracturing the intimacy they had enjoyed. They then learn that they will deal with

struggle and pain on their way to actual physical death. They are driven from the Garden of Eden and its friendly confines to a world that had suddenly become a hostile place.

However the Lord quickly establishes a path of redemption through the promised Savior. Satan will be defeated as will death itself. Blood sacrifice is established with animals being the shadow of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross.

#### **EVENT #4 – THE FIRST MURDER (GENESIS 4)**

The effects of sin is passed to the next generation. Cain's sacrifice to God is rejected while Able's is accepted. It is probable that Cain's heart is not soft towards God, resulting in him making a sacrifice of his own choosing instead of what God had instructed. Anger turns to malice as Cain commits premeditated murder. One can only guess at the pain experienced by Adam and Eve as they experience firsthand the devastating consequence of their sin. Seth is then born, and from his line come those who seek after God.

#### **EVENT #5 – THE FLOOD (GENESIS 6-9)**

Through the intermarriage of the lines of Cain and Seth, humankind moves further and further from God. Eventually there is only one family left who do seek God – Noah's. Grieved by this wholesale rejection, God determines to bring judgement and to then start over through the family of Noah.

Showing great faith, Noah spends 120 years building the ark and preaching to the people living around him. In the end no one listens and only he along with his wife and three sons and their wives enter the ark. As the flood begins, it will be a year (370 days) before they will disembark the giant ship and walk on dry ground again.

As God instructs them and makes promises to them one can hear an echo from Genesis 1 and 2 and the words spoken to Adam and Eve. This marks a new beginning. But it will follow a familiar path away from God.

#### **EVENT #6 – THE TOWER OF BABEL (GENESIS 11:1-9)**

Instead of obeying God and dispersing to occupy the earth, Noah's descendants decide establish their own kingdom in open defiance to Him. The result is God dispersing them by creating languages and then nations.

## **KEY CHARACTER – NOAH**

### **SPIRITUAL LIFE LESSON – BEING RIGHTEOUS AND BLAMELESS**

#### **THE TIMES NOAH LIVED IN – GENESIS 6:1-7**

- 1) The intermarriage between the godly line of Seth and the pagan line of Cain had produced a steady moral decline over the course of several generations as 'The sons of God begin to marry anyone they chose.' Some Bible scholars believe these 'sons of God' were demons. Others men possessed by demons. Still others men from the line of Cain who began to marry women from the godly line of Seth. Regardless of which they are, these marriages were outside of God's design. The result was a steady moral decline from generation to generation.

The 'Nephilim' were warriors and tyrants and men of violence. They lived by the rule, 'Might makes Right'. This is a period of violence, sensuality and almost universal unbelief in God or His promised Redeemer. This is summarized in Genesis 6:5.

- 2) As God sees the sinful rebellion of people:
  - 'He is sorry He had made man ... Grieved Him to His heart' – At the conclusion of creation God had looked over the work of His hand and saw that 'It was all very good'. Now sin had distorted, tarnished and corrupted it to the point God is now deeply grieved – especially the decision most



people had made to reject Him. Note the pain our sin causes God. Also note that God does not bring judgement out of anger but out of His grief.

- God determines to bring judgement and to then start over.

It speaks of Noah's faith and character that he is able to live in this environment without giving in to their sin or giving up in discouragement.

### **NOAH'S CHARACTER – GENESIS 6:8-9**

- 1) Noah was a righteous man – vs. 9  
He is a man of deep faith who seeks to follow God. This faith results in a life characterized by godliness. This would include attitudes, character and actions.
- 2) Noah was blameless – vs.9  
This is not perfection but a pattern of life that pleases and honors God. One element of being blameless is that when one does sin they respond with repentance.
- 3) Noah walked with God – vs. 9  
Noah had a personal relationship with God that was evident in his everyday life.
- 4) Noah found favor with God – vs. 8  
Noah's life put him in a place where God could bless him.

As we read the story about the Ark, flood and Noah's faithful obedience it is important to realize he did what he did because of his faith and character... he did not have faith and character because of what he did. His actions were the evidence and fruit of his walk with God and impact God had on his life.

### **NOAH'S FAITH – GENESIS 6:10 – 8:20**

- 1) It takes 120 years for Noah to build the Ark (6:3).
  - During that time Noah not only constructed this great ship, he also preached to the people around him.
  - Hebrews 11 includes Noah in its 'Hall of Faith' (vs. 7).
- 2) Noah follows God's very detailed instructions for the Ark and the collection of animals. His faith produced obedience.
- 3) Noah and family are in the Ark for a little over a year. His faith produced patience. Remember, Noah had absolutely no experience to look back on that would help him know what to expect.
- 4) The first thing Noah does upon leaving the Ark is to worship God!

## **NOAH'S FAILURE – GENESIS 9:18-29**

- 1) Noah has a bad moment years after the flood. Getting drunk, he passes out naked in his tent. For all he did right in life, he was still a man with a sin nature. This in no way makes him a failure.
  
- 2) There are a couple of lessons we can take away from this incident:
  - We do need to keep up our guard against the 'sin that crouches at the door'. It sounds simplistic, but the best action available to Noah was to not get drunk!
  
  - Remember, one element of being blameless is repenting when we do make a sinful mistake. While we are not told Noah did this here, we can have confidence that being the man he was, repentance for this did take place.

Being a person who is righteous and blameless is a journey. It is a pattern of godliness in one's life that takes them deeper and deeper with God. It starts with heartfelt faith... that produces godly character... that is then seen in the actions of our lives. If Noah was able to live this kind of life in the times he lived in we can be assured that by God's grace we can do so in the times we live in.