

***Gospel in Genesis***

Lesson 5: **October 2, 2014**—*trust*

Genesis is the book of beginnings! It is the first book in the Pentateuch accepted by the Jews and the Old Testament of the Christian Bible, and was authored by God with the aid of Moses. And in the New, Jesus referred to this in John 5:46 “*If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.*” Jesus is saying that the ‘testimony’ about Him—Messiah—goes clear back to Moses. This is something we already knew but it’s wonderful to rehearse in God’s own words!

God in Genesis created and commanded mankind, but **we chose our own way!** Even before Genesis, though, out in eternity before, God had made a plan to redeem sinners to Himself. Be sure, the *Gospel* is all over Genesis: from God making coverings out of animal skins for Adam and Eve to the ark God instructed Noah to build before the great flood; from the deliverance of Lot and his family from Sodom to God raising Joseph to power in Egypt to save the people of God from famine. **We’re going to have a full view of the Gospel:**

**I. God made ‘blood’ coverings—*gospel*—for Adam and Eve**, prompted when the two chose to sin against God. He would use the bloody animal skins to cover their physical **and spiritual** nakedness. What if the couple had refused to put on the coverings God had made for them? It was their choice. Remember that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Animals who had not sinned would now die, picturing the sinless Son of God who would come in the New Testament to die and pay for the sins of the whole world.

**II. God instructed Noah to build an ark—*gospel*—**prompted by the “only evil continually” condition of the world. God would destroy them by a flood. It had never rained; there were no arks, but Noah would take the instruction that God gave to him and for 120 years build a structure that would save all souls who were wise enough to enter: only 8 did. And he warned of the coming disaster and urged people to come to the ark of safety. Wonderfully pictured is Jesus—His way, His word and His will—inviting the lost to come to Him and choose to live for Him on earth and with Him forever in heaven.

**III. God miraculously delivered Lot and his family—*gospel*—**from Sodom. The ‘sin’ of Sodom and Gomorrah was so great that God would annihilate these cities, but He would first rescue His people. The God of heaven would send two of His mighty angels to escort Lot and his family from the scene of the coming destruction. Lot attempted to get others to leave, as well, but they would not. It is not God’s will that any should perish, but that all would repent and be saved: be delivered, and be sustained.

**IV. God used Joseph to save the people of God from famine—gospel—**beautifully picturing the coming Christ in the New Testament, the Almighty raised up Joseph to second in command in Egypt. And here is where we will spend some time. There was a great famine coming to the land of Canaan and Egypt, and Joseph would be raised up as a preparer, a deliverer, a sustainer, and a ‘savior’ for the people of God. He is a type of Christ: what does that mean? Listed are similarities between Joseph and Jesus:

1. They had the preferential love of their father (Father)
2. They brought their father (Father) a ‘bad report’ about the brothers
3. They were given a robe by their father (Father);
  - a. Joseph a robe of many colors
  - b. Jesus a robe of righteousness
4. They were mistreated by their brothers and sold for ‘blood money’
  - a. Jesus for 30 pieces of silver
  - b. Joseph for 20 shekels
5. They had false charges made against them
6. They were sent specifically to ‘save’ their people

*Expositor’s Bible Commentary* points out: “Significantly, in all the book of Genesis only Joseph is described as one who was filled with the Spirit of God” (Genesis 41:38). The story of Joseph is retold in Psalm 105:16-22, and the first two verses explain: “*He (God) called down famine on the land and destroyed all their supplies of food; 17and **he sent a man before them—Joseph, sold as a slave.***” It is retold also in Acts 7:9-16, with the first 2 verses here: “*Because the patriarchs (brothers) were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him 10and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt; so he made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.*”

When Jesus met and won the Samaritan woman at a well near Sychar, John 4:5 tells us about that location: “*So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.*” And Joseph is listed in the Hebrews 11 ‘Hall of Faith’—<sup>22</sup> “*By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.*” *EBC* again: “What happens to Joseph foreshadows all that will happen to the sons of Jacob.”

**And God chose a nation by calling out a man!** In between the flood of Noah and Lot’s escape from Sodom was the call of Abram in Genesis 12:1 “*The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.’*” Verses 2-3 record God’s promise to the man: “***I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all people on earth will be blessed through you.***” Wow!

Don't miss the picture of God doing all the work of redemption: God planning; **God choosing**; **God telling the way of blessing** and then **God carrying out the blessing** He had promised. Warren Wiersbe, in *Be Joyful*, said, "God works in us before He works through us." Long before we ever trust God for anything, God is at work in us to bring us to that trust; and even still when we humans can't be trusted for anything, **we can always—eternally—trust God!**

**God had plans for Abram.** Later in Genesis 18:19, speaking of Abraham (renamed in 17:5) God said, "*For I have chosen him (God choosing), so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just (God telling the way of blessing), so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him (God carrying out the blessing He had promised).*"

- ▶ In Genesis 12:6-7—The LORD spoke to the man He chose and the man responded: **1<sup>st</sup> Abram built an altar to the LORD** at the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem.
- ▶ In Genesis 12:8—The man called on the name of the LORD—before and after famine. **2<sup>nd</sup> Abram built an altar to the LORD** toward the hills east of Bethel (Bethel on west and Ai east).

The man and his wife spent time in Egypt to escape famine in the land—this was way before Joseph's Egypt. God was faithful even when Abram wasn't: Remember that Abram had instructed Sarai to lie about being his wife?

**3<sup>rd</sup> But Abram returned to Bethel and Ai where he had built the altar** and "*There Abram called on the name of the LORD.*"

After this, Abram and Lot split up—Lot to Sodom and Abram remained in Canaan. God made a promise to give all this land to Abram's offspring and God told him to walk every foot of the land—Abram obeyed God, even though he had no visible offspring yet.

- ▶ In Genesis 13:18—**Abram is learning to trust God** implicitly—and it will make all the difference. **4<sup>th</sup> Abram built an altar to the LORD** near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron.

Abram rescued Lot from his captors in Genesis 14:11-12 with 318 trained men he went in pursuit of his nephew. And the king of Sodom came to reward Abram for winning back his people and possessions. And he refused any gift from the King of Sodom for his act of rescue. God was his possession and his provision—in God he would trust!

BUT NOW, at this moment in time, God introduced Abram to Jesus Christ. Genesis 14:18—“Then Melchizedek king of Salem (Jerusalem) brought out bread and wine. He was **priest of God Most High** and he blessed Abram.” Verse 20 says that Abram gave him a tenth of everything! It will help to read about Melchizedek in the New Testament book of Hebrews 7:1-3 “This Melchizedek was **king of Salem and priest of God Most High**. He **met** Abraham (referred to as Abraham here because Scripture is referring back) returning from the defeat of the kings **and blessed** him, and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, **his name means ‘king of righteousness’**; then also, **‘king of Salem’ means ‘king of peace.’** <sup>3</sup>Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, **like the Son of God he remains a priest forever.**” And David in Psalm 110:4 says of Jesus, “The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.’”

In chapter 15 of Genesis, Scripture says that after this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision—and Isaac is promised! CRITICAL in 15:6 “**Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.**” Then God ‘cut’ covenant with Abraham and the nation of Israel was born! I’ve quoted Henry Holly before on this, but he is so clear and concise: “The Old Testament is the story of a nation. The New Testament is the account of a man. The Nation was founded and nurtured of God to bring the Man into the world.” That’s the full-meal deal—the full Gospel from the beginning: Genesis!

For us, the Gospel started in Genesis, with Adam and Eve sinning and God’s provision for covering. Romans 5:14c identifies Adam as one “*who was a pattern of the one to come.*” Verse 17 says: “*For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.*”

By the way, there was another prominent tree in the Garden of Eden that if eaten from would have caused man and woman to live forever. When Adam and Eve sinned against God, He sent them from the garden and protected them from eating from this ‘tree of life’ and living forever in their sin. Genesis 3:22-24 says, “*And the LORD God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us (Trinity), knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.’* <sup>23</sup>So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup>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.**”

But God is not finished with that tree: according to Revelation 2:7 it will be in the paradise of God, and we will be encouraged to eat freely from it! God will not leave undone what he has begun down to the last detail—and for us, we can trust His words in Philippians 1:6 that what He has begun in us, He will finish!

We that have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation **must trust Him as Sovereign God of the Bible**, *Who* fully knows what has been, everything that's going on now, and what's on the horizon. In Jesus teaching His disciples how to pray, He said in Matthew 6:10—“...*your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*” The word of God and the will of God are synonymous! Only the will of God is done in heaven; and when Jesus came to the earth He only did the Father's will, and only His will should be done on earth today, but is it?

Charles Spurgeon on the subject of *Thy will be done*, said, “After praying not to die, King Hezekiah was granted 15 more years of life producing Manasseh who became the most wicked King in Judah. And Hezekiah ended up dying with his heart lifted up in pride.” Ruth Bell Graham said, “If God had answered every prayer of mine, I would have married the wrong man seven times.”

► After reading and studying God's word, our trust-level may seem to be pretty high, but we must be alert to the devil's mocking men. 2 Peter 3:3 says, “*First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desire.*” In *Living With Confidence in a Chaotic World*, David Jeremiah tells about the raised-in-the-church agnostic, comedian Bill Maher and what he tells his audiences about the God of the Bible. Read it and weep (for him):

Maher said: “I believe there's some force. If you want to call it God—I don't believe God is a single parent who writes books. I think that the people who think God wrote a book called The Bible are just childish. Religion is so childish. What they're fighting about in the Middle East, it's so childish. These myths, these silly little stories that they believe in fundamentally, that they take over this little space in Jerusalem where one guy flew up to heaven—no, no, this guy performed a sacrifice here a thousand million years ago. It's like, Who cares? What does that have to do with spirituality, where you're really trying to get, as a human being and as a soul moving in the universe? But I do believe in a God, yes.”

What would Maher's god look like? Paul in 1 Timothy 4:1—“*The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 2Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.*” Again, when we fail to trust God and His every Word, His holy Son, His commands, we will be ripe for Satan's scoffers, who will tear at whatever we have left in our trust reserve. Re-fortify at once with Proverbs 3:5-6—“**Trust in the LORD with all your heart** and lean not on your own understanding; **in all your ways acknowledge him**, and he will make your paths straight.” We must not trust ourselves to listen to the lies of the liar and mistrust him: **In God We Must Trust!** Proverbs 16:20—“*Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.*”

