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DAILY *manna*

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GENERAL EDITOR

Rev Isaac Ong

Daily devotions for reading through the Bible

Dear *Daily Manna* readers,

Blessed New Year!

Blessed New Year. The *Daily Manna* is into the seventh year. We praise the Lord that the *Daily Manna* has been well received by its readers both locally and overseas. Over the last four years, we surveyed the whole Bible in greater detail, devoting 2009–2010 to the Old Testament, and 2011–2012 to the New Testament.

As we begin a new two-year cycle (2013-2014), we will dig a little deeper into the Word of God. The hymn writer reminds us that the Word of God “is like a deep, deep mine; and jewels rich and rare, are hidden in its mighty depths for ev’ry searcher there”.

So over the next two years, we invite you to join us as we dig through the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Old Testament to discover the jewels of God’s grace and truth. It is certainly our prayer that the daily reading of the Word of God will nourish your soul for our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake.

Let me also encourage you to write in with your comments as to how we may improve *Daily Manna* (e-mail: calvary@singnet.com.sg). Parents, we want to remind you that *DM Junior* is also available for your children.

A note to new Daily Manna readers

In this book, you will find a reading plan that will guide you through reading the Bible in two years. You will also find a simple exposition based on the reading of the day. From the day’s Bible passages, *Daily Manna* highlights biblical principles which may be applied in the Christian’s daily living. We pray that the *Daily Manna* readings will make your reading through the Bible a more meaningful experience. Over the next two years, our focus will be on the Old Testament with the aim of giving you a more in-depth study of the OT books.

A step-by-step approach

1. Read the day’s Bible chapters assigned in *Daily Manna*.
2. Review the Bible chapters to get an overview of what you have just read.
3. Read the accompanying devotions in *Daily Manna* and reflect on the lessons learnt.
4. Pray and ask God to help you apply His Word to your life.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Isaac Ong
Calvary B-P Church

BIBLE LESSON*Introduction to the
Pentateuch***LESSON****Search the Scriptures****JOHN 5:39**

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Augustine of Hippo said, “The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.” Although Augustine was specifically writing about the doctrine of grace, his statement also points to the unity of the Holy Scripture. The Old Testament can be divided into four major sections: the Pentateuch, comprising the first five books; History, covering the time from Joshua to Esther; Poetry, comprising Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon; and Prophets, comprising the last 17 books.

The Old Testament is preparatory in nature. The Law and sacrifices given through Moses, the narratives of the kings, the poetry of the psalmists and the ministry of the prophets all point to Christ. When our Lord Jesus invites us to “search the scriptures ... they are they which testify of me” [John 5:39], He was speaking of the Old Testament, which He said bore witness to Him.

The first five books of the Bible—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy—are collectively known as the Pentateuch (literally, ‘five-volume book’). To the Jews, the Pentateuch is the Torah (Instruction). It is the backbone and framework of the nation of Israel. Its central role in the rest of Holy Scripture is that, together with the Psalms, they are the most quoted books in the New Testament.

The Pentateuch starts with the Creation and ends with the children of Israel standing on the threshold of the Promised Land. These five books recounts God’s act of creation, His covenant with Abraham, the promise of Canaan, His deliverance through Moses, the giving of the Law at Sinai—all works of God’s grace.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS I
MATTHEW I

THOUGHT

For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. – John 1:17

BIBLE LESSON

Introduction to

Genesis

LESSON

The book of origins

LUKE 16:29

*Abraham saith unto him,
They have Moses and the
prophets; let them hear them.*

Genesis is the book of origins, not just the origin of man but also of sin and death. It records the beginning of rebellion against God. We find here the first murder and the first sacrifice offered as a type of the substitutionary atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. We also see God's righteousness demonstrated in His first judgement against the wickedness of sin as well as His grace manifested in His provision for Adam and Eve and saving Noah and his family from the Flood.

In Genesis, the existence of God is stated as fact. The goodness of God is seen in His creation. There was a beginning. Things did not come about by chance. Life is not the result of some spontaneous act. Life comes from God. The apex of God's creation is man. The creation of man was preceded by a resolution from the Triune God [Genesis 1:26–27].

To know the unfolding drama of God's redemption (Scroggie's book), we must begin with Genesis. Without Genesis, we would know nothing of the origin of the universe and of man and sin; nothing of the flood and of the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph—nothing of the beginning of the Hebrew race or of how God began to reveal Himself to man.

Without Genesis, we would not understand the rest of the Bible, every part of which refers to the facts given here. It covers more than half of the time span of all the Old Testament period, and in it are the gems of all the truths unfolded in the rest of the Scriptures.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 2
MATTHEW 2

THOUGHT

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. – Luke 16:31

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:1

LESSON

In the beginning ...

GENESIS 1:1

*In the beginning God
created the heaven and the
earth.*

In the English translation, ‘In the beginning’ comprises three words in this phrase. In Hebrew, it is just one word. ‘In the beginning’ marks the beginning of time. Evolutionists claim that life began millions, if not billions, of years ago. This is presented as scientific fact even though recorded history of the human race only dates back to a few thousand years before the birth of Christ.

The Bible, on the other hand, simply states that there was a beginning, and it began with God. The Apostle John, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, penned this profound statement, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” [John 1:1–2].

In the beginning was God. This statement brings us further back in time than what science tries to bring us. It brings us to the time before the beginning. What was it like before the beginning? The simple answer is: before the beginning, God is, and He has created. ‘In the beginning ... ‘ means history; history that proves that we are more than just an advanced form of primeval slime; history that gives man dignity and worth because we are made in the image of God; history that will be consumed in and by the will of God.

When there is a beginning, there will be an end, as well as a journey in between. Knowing our past is in God provides a direction to the end, and that in turn determines a purpose for the present journey.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 3
MATTHEW 3

THOUGHT

Pity the man who believes that he comes from nothing and will return to nothing. Rejoice in that we are God’s.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:1

LESSON

God

GENESIS 1:1

*In the beginning God
created the heaven and the
earth.*

God is the first subject to be mentioned in the Bible. Who is God, and what is He like? The Westminster Shorter Catechism gives this answer: “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.”

‘In the beginning, God ... ‘ means that God is eternal. It means that God is, God has always been, and He will always be. It means that there will never be a time when God is not, and even when time has not yet existed, God is. In Revelation, our Lord Jesus is described as the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” [Revelation 1:8]. Christ is worshipped as the One “which was, and is, and is to come” [Revelation 4:8].

The eternity of God is more than just an abstract concept; it has practical applications for us. That means that He can be trusted to be what He has revealed Himself to be: what He was, He is and always will be. In other words, we need not fear that His love for us would wane. God has promised, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” [Jeremiah 31:3b].

God is eternal also means that He will always be there for us. God has promised, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” [Hebrews 13:5b]. Even though we may be walking through the valley of the shadow of death, He will be with us, His rod and His staff will comfort us [Psalm 23:4].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 4
MATTHEW 4

MEDITATION

God never fails and He is never absent.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:2

LESSON

Without form and void

GENESIS 1:2

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

In the verse, God describes clearly the birth and origin of the earth. There was nothing, only void and darkness. God here reminds us of our beginning—not that of God Himself. He is eternal and has no beginning and no end. Darkness is the absence of light. It was completely pitch black before time.

This verse is straightforward and simple. Though we may have been taught differently on the origin of the universe and earth, we should only believe the Word of God. Any other ideas are but theories that keep changing.

The Bible has only one true version describing the whole and complete process of the creation in very plain and simple terms. There is no ambiguity and it never changes regardless of what man may have to say. There is no such thing as ‘Mother Earth.’ The theory of evolution of creatures from simple organism cannot and does not make sense. Nobody has ever created something out of nothing. Only God can. God created everything and He wanted us to know our origin. In this account, water existed but the only Being Who moves is the Spirit of God Himself. The water was not divided into different states yet. God was about to create the universe and the system that sustains it.

We should not forget where we come from. We should always acknowledge that life comes from God. We are answerable and have to be obedient to our Maker. Without Him, we could not have existed in the very first place.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 5
MATTHEW 5

THOUGHT

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. – John 1:3

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:3

LESSON

Let there be light

GENESIS 1:3

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Light is the source of all life and God is the source of light. Light and life are both created by God. God therefore is life. The Almighty God planned so well that He wanted the world to have this source of light first. Creating light is logically the initial step to an eco-system of life.

The first creation is light. From the Gospel of John, we learn that Jesus Christ is the Word of God and by Him was light made. In Him is light and he is the true light of the world. The light from Jesus is divine. This light shines into the heart of the believers and thus we are enlightened to understand the truth. We therefore should shine so that we can also be the light in darkness.

God's Word is simple. Unless the light of God shines into your heart, you cannot understand the divine truth. The Bible would then appear like any other book to you. Once you allow Jesus to shine into your heart, you will see the truth revealed in the Bible.

The same goes for our salvation. The Gospel message is straightforward. Jesus died for all sinners and those who trust in Him will have a place in heaven. Unless we accept and allow the light of God to shine into our hearts, we will not be able to comprehend this eternal truth. God sustains physical life and also enlightens us with spiritual sight to follow the path of righteousness that leads to heaven.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 6
MATTHEW 6

THOUGHT

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. – Psalm 119:105

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:5

LESSON

The first evening and morning

GENESIS 1:5

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

God saw the light and He said that “it was good”. Then He divided light and darkness and called them ‘day’ and ‘night’. This constitutes a complete day, the first day of the creation. The length of the first day is just like any of our days now. It has a period of lighted day and a period of dark night.

Darkness is associated with uncertainty. Some of us are afraid of the dark. As such, we often associate darkness with the unknown and with evil. However, to those who trust in God, darkness is but just another phase of the day. If there is no darkness, we will not be able to appreciate light.

God knows that we need rest and have allowed us to recharge in comfort when we sleep when it is dark. “I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for Thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety” [Psalm 4:8]. There is no difference to God whether it is day or night, as He can see in darkness. He guards us even when we are asleep. “Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” [Psalm 121:4].

Heaven, on the other hand is lined with gold and jasper, and it is always bright. How marvellous it will be to enjoy fellowship with our Creator there! Have you already reserved a place there? “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” [John 8:12].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 7
MATTHEW 7

THOUGHT

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. – Psalm 121:6

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:6

LESSON

Firmament

GENESIS 1:6

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

After creating light, God created water and air. These elements are needed to sustain all living things and plants. The scientific content of water is oxygen and hydrogen. God in His wisdom is able to let these two elements come together to make a total new compound that we know as water. He went further to allow water to exist in three states: solid, liquid and vapour.

Water is essential for life. There is a Chinese saying: “When one drinks water, he must remember the source.” God is the source of water (and everything as well). God has given us the source of life. What have we given Him in return?

Jesus is the living water. He said that when we drink water, we will be thirsty again. But when we drink of the living water, we will never thirst but will have everlasting life. Jesus is referring to Himself as the water of life. “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” [John 7:38].

The firmament includes air and the moisture in it. There is a distinct separation between water and air. Air is equally important to life. Without air, nothing can survive, too. God created everything but He only breathed into the nostrils of man. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” [Genesis 2:7].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 8
MATTHEW 8

THOUGHT

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. – John 4:14

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:9

LESSON

Waters under heaven

GENESIS 1:9

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

Now that there is a separation of air and water, God on the third day separated water from land. He created a barrier so that the water could be contained. We dwell on land but there are also many living organisms that live in the water. It pleased God to make deep places to hold the excess water.

We have not been able to understand the depth of the seabed and man have never seen some of the creatures of the deep yet. Wherever these creatures may be, God can be there, because even the deep is accessible to God. "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there" [Psalm 139:8].

We often think of the sea as mysterious and those who sail are often taught to respect the sea. Waves can be fearful and destructive. For this reason, there are people who worship the sea and believe that there are spiritual beings in the underwater world. However, we learn that the creation of the deepest sea is but the act of God.

More importantly, God has also warned us that there is a place called hell, which is deep and has a bottomless pit. God does not want anyone to go there. By His grace and mercy, He has made a way out of it for us. He has also made the heaven above where there is hope and eternal life. We can get there if we trust and accept Jesus as our Saviour.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 9
MATTHEW 9

THOUGHT

Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. – Psalm 135:6

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:14

LESSON

Seasons

GENESIS 1:14

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

This verse holds the historical account of God's amazing work on the fourth day: the creation of the sun, the moon and stars. In relation to the earth, these bodies serve as sources of light. Here is that garniture which is not only so much the beauty of the upper world but the blessing of this lower one.

There had been light before [Genesis 1:3] but now it is to be realised. It is to become brighter, clearer, fuller, collected and made into several luminaries, rendered more glorious and serviceable. They must be for the distinction of times, of day and night, of summer and winter.

The moon, by her four quarters, each of which lasts a little more than seven days, measures for us the weeks and months. The sun, by its apparent path in the sky, measures our seasons and our years, whilst by its daily rotation through the heavens measures the days and the hours. This it does so accurately that the best watchmakers in Geneva regulate all their watches by its place at noon (*Preacher's Homiletic Commentary*), as in the sundial of Ahaz [Isaiah 38:8; 2 Kings 20:11].

One look into the heavens is enough to overawe us with a sense of divine majesty. We see the wisdom of God in this complicated arrangement, continual motion and harmony. How terrible the Creator of the sun must be! How tranquil that Being Who has given light to the moon must be! How unutterably great the Author of that vast solar system must be!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 10
MATTHEW 10

HYMN

**God of our fathers, whose almighty hand,
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band,
Of shining worlds in splendour through the skies,
Our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:16

LESSON

Greater light lesser light

GENESIS 1:16

And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

The lights of heaven are the sun, the moon and stars, and this is the work of God's hand. The sun is the greatest light of all, and the most glorious and useful of all the lamps of heaven. It is one of the most kindly gifts of God to the world. It makes the home of man a thing of beauty—an invaluable blessing to the creatures of this lower world.

The moon is a lesser light, but excellent in respect of its usefulness to the earth. It manifests the comfort of light, allowing refreshing dews to fall upon the earth, setting bounds to man's labour. God made the stars also, which are mentioned here only in general.

Now, these lights are said to rule, not that they have a supreme dominion as God has, but they are rulers under him. Thus the heavenly bodies rule, not only to give light but also to indicate and regulate the time of man, that he might be reminded of the mighty changes and rapid flight of life. But the recurrence of day and night also proclaims the need of exertion and repose, and hence the call to work as well as the reminder of the grave.

At the command of God, the lamps of the universe were lighted for the convenience and utility of man. They are unrivalled, and should be highly prized, faithfully used, carefully studied and devotionally received.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 11
MATTHEW 11

HYMN

**Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam!
Ye lights of evening, find a voice!
With nature all, in praise rejoice!**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:20

LESSON

**Moving creatures with
life**

GENESIS 1:20

*And God said, Let
the waters bring forth
abundantly the moving
creature that hath life,
and fowl that may fly
above the earth in the open
firmament of heaven.*

Each day, hitherto, God has created very noble and excellent beings, which we can never sufficiently admire. But we do not read of the creation of any living creature until the fifth day. Here we get a sublime lesson on the origin of life.

It was on the fifth day that fish and fowl were created, and both out of the waters. Not as if the waters had any productive power of their own, but, "let them be brought into being, the fish in the waters and the fowl out of them" (Matthew Henry). The various sorts of fish and fowl, each after their kind, and both of great numbers, were produced, for the waters brought forth abundantly. The power of the First Cause can produce very different effects from the same second causes.

Before the existence of animal life, there had been created land, light, water and heavenly bodies that illumine the universe. But life was not quickened by the combined agency of any of these which modern unbelieving scientists would have us believe so. Matter is capable of many pleasing and useful combinations but it has no life-producing properties. God alone is the Giver of all life, and life in varied forms.

The work of creation not only proceeded gradually from one thing to another, but rose and advanced gradually from that which was less excellent to that which was more so, teaching us to press towards perfection and endeavour that our last works may be our best works (Matthew Henry).

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 12
MATTHEW 12

THOUGHT

**O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom
hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy
riches. – Psalm 104:24**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:24

LESSON

Cattle and man

GENESIS 1:24

And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

We have here the first part of the sixth day's creation work. On this day were made the beasts of the earth, cattle and the creeping things of the earth.

These creatures come into being upon the earth, and out of it, in their respective kinds, not only of diverse shapes but also of diverse natures, manners and fashions. Not as if the earth had any such prolific virtue as to produce these animals or as if God had resigned His creating power to it, but "let these creatures now come into being upon the earth, and out of it, in their respective kinds, conformable to the ideas of them in the divine counsels concerning their creation" (Matthew Henry).

The living creatures that were made out of the earth were distinguished into three classes: the different kinds of cattle (the herbivorous type capable of labour or domestication), the various forms of creeping things on earth (from huge reptiles to insignificant caterpillars) and beasts of the earth (wild animals, which ravenous natures were then kept in check). But the Lord, a while after, assigns herbs to them as their common food.

Many of these animals were later intended to be food for man. Their death is their highest ministry. So is the death of deaths, in the death of Christ, bringing untold and unspeakable blessings to mankind, both now and for all eternity! Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ [Ephesians 1:3].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 13
MATTHEW 13

HYMN

**His glories now we sing, who died and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring, and lives that
death may die.**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:26

LESSON

Making man in our own image

GENESIS 1:26

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

The last and final part of the sixth day's creation work is the creation of man. Hitherto, God had been commanding all His creative works, but now we read of a consultation, held by the three Persons of the Trinity, Who were One in the creative works. It is a deliberation about the creation of man, the most excellent of all God's works, not because of any difficulty attending it but as an expression of His honour and dignity.

Man is the principal part of the creation and for the sake of whom the world and all things in it were made, being finished, is introduced into it with whole visible creation before him, both to contemplate and to take the comfort of. It is as if a house is already prepared and furnished for him.

Unlike animals, man is made in the image of God. Man was originally God-like but with certain limitations. In what respect was man created after the image of God? One commentator explains: "Being in God's image means that humans share, though imperfectly and finitely, in God's nature, that is, in His communicable attributes (life, personality, truth, wisdom, love, holiness, justice), and so have the capacity for spiritual fellowship with Him."

The three Persons of the Trinity consulted over it and concurred to it because man, when he was made, was to be dedicated and devoted to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Into that great name we are, with good reason, baptised, for to that great name we owe our being (Matthew Henry).

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 14
MATTHEW 14

THOUGHT

God's image in man is His greatest glory.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:28

LESSON

God blessing them

GENESIS 1:28

*And God blessed them,
and God said unto them,
Be fruitful, and multiply,
and replenish the earth,
and subdue it: and have
dominion over the fish of
the sea, and over the fowl
of the air, and over every
living thing that moveth
upon the earth.*

God, upon creating man, created them male and female. He blessed them with all the blessings of nature and providence; with all the good things in life; with His presence and with communion with Himself. He marked them as being under His special protection, and gave them power to propagate and multiply their own kind on the earth, and have dominion over it.

A very important institution is brought into being at this point—the institution of marriage. This shows that marriage is an ordinance of God, instituted in paradise, and is honourable. Hence procreation is a natural action, for the increase of mankind, and for the filling of the earth with inhabitants, which was the end of its being made. Man's perpetuation of the human race, fruitfulness and increase is made to depend upon an effective divine blessing, as in the case of other creatures [v. 22].

God gave man dominion over the earth and over all inferior creatures. Though man provides for neither, he has power over them, which are under his care and within his reach. God designed to put this honour upon man. Though this dominion is very much diminished and lost in the Fall, much of God's providence continues to the children of men, as necessary for the safety and support of their lives.

God gives us not only dominion but richly all things to enjoy. We are to use this world rightfully instead of abusing it [1 Corinthians 7:31a].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 15
MATTHEW 15

THOUGHT

It is a great blessing to enjoy the creation of God, but an infinitely greater blessing to enjoy the God of creation.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 1:29–31

LESSON

Good and very good

GENESIS 1:31

*And God saw every thing
that he had made, and,
behold, it was very good.
And the evening and the
morning were the sixth day.*

Six times in this chapter, God said that what He had created was “good”. Now that He had completed His work, before settling down to “rest”, He looked back and surveyed all that He had created, and He declared, “Behold, it was very good.” The word ‘behold’ calls attention to what God was about to pronounce. What do you understand by His assessment of ‘very good’?

What it means is that there could not have been millions of years of evolution before man finally arrived at the scene, where death, violence and disease resulted in the ‘survival of the fittest’. The evidence of disease and violence seen in the fossil records could not have occurred prior to God’s pronouncement in Genesis 1:31.

Hence, evolution is completely incompatible with Holy Scripture. Modern liberal Christians who do not want to look ignorant in the eyes of the unbelievers have tried to fit evolution into God’s time table clearly only to “err, not knowing the scriptures” [Matthew 22:29]. Worse still, they are “willingly ignorant” [2 Peter 3:5].

But Christians should take comfort in the promises found in God’s inerrant and infallible Word. The sad condition of this sin-cursed earth will not last forever. One glorious day, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will return and set up His millennial kingdom. At that time, “the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock ... They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord” [Isaiah 65:25].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 16
MATTHEW 16

PRAISE

**O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom
hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy
riches. – Psalm 104:24**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 2:1–3

LESSON

God resting

GENESIS 2:3

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made

Have you ever wondered why God needed to ‘rest’? Was He exhausted from the hard work of the previous six days? The answer, obviously, is no. God does not get tired. “Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?” [Isaiah 40:28a] In fact, He could have accomplished His work of creation in six hours or even six seconds if He wanted to, but as explained in Exodus 20:8–11, He wanted to set a pattern for mankind.

The word ‘rested’ means to stop or cease from working. The idea is that God had completed and perfected His work of creation. Therefore, He stepped aside with a sense of quiet peace and accomplishment. Man ought to follow God’s example. Throughout the week, we labour diligently and faithfully, and on the seventh day, we can look back with a sense of satisfaction.

Furthermore, God blessed and sanctified this special day. He set it apart and made it holy. Likewise, man should set aside a special day in the week for worship and blessing, for praise and thanksgiving, and to concentrate on God.

Unfortunately, in today’s fast-paced, activity-packed society, many of us allow our work and ‘cares of the world’ to encroach onto this holy Sabbath day. We need God to help us in our time management. Above all, we need His Holy Spirit to guard our hearts so that we would desire to honour Him and obey His commandment.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 17
MATTHEW 17

REMINDER

Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. – Isaiah 56:2

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 2:4–7

LESSON

Living soul

GENESIS 2:7

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Chapter 2, beginning at verse 4, is actually a review of Chapter 1, giving further details of significant events. The highlight of those events, of course, was the creation of man, the highest of God's creatures. Notice that the personal name of God, the Lord God, Jehovah Elohim, is now used, signifying that God wants a personal relationship with man, who possesses His image, making him different from the other creatures which he was tasked to rule over.

Evolutionists believe that life began when the correct combination of lifeless chemicals happened to come together, under the right conditions, in a 'primordial soup'. However; if you look at the corpse of a man who has just died, all the right chemicals, cells and tissues are still there and have not changed essentially. But he does not have life.

Man becomes a living soul only when the living God breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. What was previously lifeless dust becomes an animated, breathing, self-conscious and living being. Man has a spirit because God has given man His very own breath. As such, only man—not animals—has the ability to discern right and wrong. Only man has a built-in desire to worship his Creator. Furthermore, he is now an immortal creature, which will exist forever and ever.

We did not evolve from lifeless chemicals, and we certainly did not descend from apes. We were specially created by God to have a relationship with Him. Our chief end in life is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 18
MATTHEW 18

REMINDER

God commands; "I am the Lord thy God ... Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 2:8–14

LESSON

The Tree of Life

GENESIS 2:9

*And out of the ground
made the LORD God to
grow every tree that is
pleasant to the sight, and
good for food; the tree of
life also in the midst of
the garden, and the tree of
knowledge of good and evil.*

God so loved the man whom He had created. He placed the whole world under his dominion. He abundantly provided for his every need and set aside a special corner of a paradise to be his home. Here, in the perfect environment of the beautiful Garden of Eden, Adam could eat the best fruit imaginable, which obviously far exceeded what we have today in terms of variety and quality. Above all, God provided Adam with the Tree of Life. Eating the fruit of this special tree would enable Adam to live forever.

It is worth noting that, judging from the description of its location and environs, the Garden of Eden was a real place, and the Tree of Life was a real tree. But, tragically, Adam soon lost the right to partake of the fruit of this tree.

However, we thank God that the Tree of Life will be found in the restored paradise [Revelation 22]. God has promised “to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” [Revelation 2:7].

How can we gain access to this tree and thus attain an eternal life of blessedness? There is only one way; and it is the way God has appointed, through His Son, Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 19
MATTHEW 19

REMINDER

Our Lord says: “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever” [John 6:51a].

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 2:8–14

LESSON

The Tree of Knowledge

GENESIS 2:9

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Besides the Tree of Life, there was another special tree in the Garden of Eden: the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. What kind of a tree was it? Its fruit was “good for food and ... pleasant to the eyes” [Genesis 3:6] and it enables the person who eats it to “know good and evil” [Genesis 3:22], meaning that the effect of eating the fruit was to open one’s eyes to the existence and understanding of evil. Before that, both Adam and Eve knew and understood only good.

It was once pointed out that the difference between man before and after his fall was the internalisation of the inclination to do evil. Any desire towards evil came from an external source. Before eating from the tree, Eve had to be convinced by a snake to disobey God, and Adam, in turn, had to be convinced by Eve. Neither would have sinned on his or her own.

Before Adam sinned, he did not have the ability of choosing good or evil. By eating from the tree, man’s desire to do evil entered the person himself to the point that it appeared that he really wanted to do it.

Eating the fruit of this tree shows that man wanted to be the judge of good and evil. Man wanted to be his own judge of what good and what evil is. God was kept out of the picture. This is the greatest rebellion against God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 20
MATTHEW 20

THOUGHT

In whom [Christ] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. – Colossians 2:3

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 2:15–17

LESSON

The command

GENESIS 2:17

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

God is a God of love. Man was created at God’s will and pleasure, and He intends to demonstrate the exceeding riches of His grace on man’s behalf through ages to come [Ephesians 2:7]. Thus, there can be no doubt that God’s nature of love was central to His purpose of creating man.

God created people for the purpose of bestowing His love on them. His purpose must also have included a mutual love and reciprocated love on their part. Love, by its very nature, must be voluntary. Hence, unlike animals, man was created with intelligence and a free will. Adam was given a chance to reciprocate God’s love through obedience.

Here in the Garden of Eden, at the dawn of history, God gave Adam a simple command. There was no ambiguity as to what was expected, or the consequences of disobedience. Thus, Adam clearly did not have any excuse to justify his disobedience. He could not claim ignorance. Neither could he say that he had no choice because he could freely eat of the finest fruits in the Garden of Eden.

God desires that we love Him and demonstrate that love with our obedience. We can choose to obey or disobey God’s commandments. To fallen men, He has given His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. But we have to make a choice. Choose wisely. To those who have decided to follow Christ, He says; “If ye love me, keep my commandments” [John 14:15].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 21
MATTHEW 21

THOUGHT

How would you answer the Lord if He were to ask you the question He put to Peter by the Sea of Tiberias in John 21: “Lovest thou me?”

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 2:18–22***LESSON****God's provision of a life partner****GENESIS 2:18**

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

In God's wisdom, man should not be alone. Since He made them, He knows very well what is needful for mankind. So it is not surprising that the family unit, consisting of a man, a woman and their children, forms the basic unit of any society in this world.

The keyword in this verse is 'help meet', a counterpart of Himself, one formed from Him and is very much like Him. This implies that the woman is to be a resemblance of the man, possessing neither inferiority nor superiority, but being in all things like and equal to him.

It is also worth noting that man was first created as an individual. His partner, by a subsequent operation of creative power, was produced from him, not as an exact replica but one who complements him.

As man is made a social creature, it is not proper that he should be alone. To be alone, that is, without a matrimonial companion, is not good. This is because a single person might be vulnerable to more temptations compared to a married one. We can think of at least three reasons for the creation of the family unit: (a) mutual support and comfort; (b) the propagation of the human race; and (c) the expansion of the Church of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 22
MATTHEW 22

THOUGHT

Although God pronounced that all was good in His creation [Genesis 1:31], it was not good for man to be alone.

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 2:23–25

LESSON
Bone of my bones

GENESIS 2:23

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

The design of God in the creation of the woman was perceived by Adam as soon as he awoke, when the woman was brought to him by God. Without any revelation from God, he deemed the woman as “bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh”. These words expressed his joyous astonishment at the existence of a suitable helpmate, whose name and relation to him he describes in these words: “She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

The words which immediately follow, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh”, is Adam’s prophetic utterance of his perception of marriage, for he could not with propriety have spoken of father and mother. These words bring out the truth that marriage is the deepest corporeal and spiritual unity of man and woman. They also hold up monogamy as the form of marriage ordained by God.

By leaving one’s father and mother, the conjugal union of man and woman is shown to be an attainment of spiritual oneness—a vital communion of heart as well as of body in designed consummation. This union is of a totally different nature compared to that of parents and children.

Marriage itself is thus a holy appointment of God, to be entered into prayerfully and solemnly.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 23
MATTHEW 23

THOUGHT

The Sabbath and marriage are two ordinances instituted in innocence: the former for the preservation of the Church and the latter for the preservation of the world of mankind.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 3:1–5

LESSON

Satan’s lies

GENESIS 3:4

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.

This narrative of the Fall is of interest not only as a record of how mankind became sinful but also as showing the working of the lie [2 Thessalonians 2:11] by which the tempter continually seeks to draw men [2 Corinthians 11:3]. Eve’s temptation is, in substance, our temptation. Eve’s fall illustrates the danger we face, and gives us matter whereby to try ourselves and mark how far we walk by faith.

The temptation works essentially through suggesting doubts (a) as to God’s love and (b) as to God’s truth. Point (a) leads to self-willed desire and point (b) gives force to the temptation by removing the restraining power. Self-will and unbelief act and react upon each other.

When we turn away from God’s decrees, doubt finds an entrance. And having entered, it strengthens self-will [Romans 1:28]. Unbelief is often a refuge to escape from the voice of conscience. The suggestion by Satan is not so much of “God has not said” but more often “It will not be so”, “It’s not as bad as you’ve imagined” or “You have misunderstood God”. It is very easy for us to find excuses for sinning. We only have to say to ourselves, “This is just a moment of weakness”, “Let’s make a special exception” or “Just this once and I promise not to do so again”.

A man may live knowing God’s Word, yet habitually breaking it, deceiving himself that all is well.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 24
MATTHEW 24

THOUGHT

Man fell away from God, from peace, and from holiness, through doubting God’s love and truth. We are restored to peace through believing and having faith in Jesus, and it is this belief that binds us to God in loving service.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 3:6***LESSON****The tree that is good for food****GENESIS 3:6**

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 25
MATTHEW 25

Although the tempter was a serpent, the person behind the reptile was actually Satan. The devil can always find a tool adapted to the work he has in hand. He is pre-eminently styled “the tempter” [Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5]. Since the days of Adam, he has been engaged in attempting to seduce the saints such as Job [Job 2:7], David [1Chronicles 21:1] and even Jesus [Luke 4:13]. At the present moment, he is labouring to deceive the whole world [Revelation 12:9].

Satan’s mode of operation can be listed in these points:

1. He began with the woman. Be mindful of your weakness.
 2. He attacked her when alone, the best time for temptation. Beware of solitude.
 3. He selected the best ground for delivering his first blow. Be careful of what you see and of a covetous attitude.
 4. He was extremely cautious so that his onset does not alarm. Beware of the onset of doubt.
 5. He advanced by degrees as he obtained a footing in the woman’s heart. Beware of the small steps of departing from God’s truth.
 6. He never revealed the proper scope and drift of his observations but always couched them in obscure and ambiguous language.
 7. He never seemed to lead, but always to be following the woman’s thought.
 8. In all he said and did, he pretended to be seeking his victim’s good.
 9. He chose the best of all possible baits to captivate the woman’s fancy: excite her curiosity of knowledge.
- We must be careful of Satan’s subtlety.

THOUGHT

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. – 1 Peter 5:8

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 3:7–8

LESSON

Hiding from sin

GENESIS 3:8

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

When Adam and Eve discovered their nakedness, that is “the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked”, they felt ashamed, and sought to conceal it by outer covering.

Before the fall of Adam and Eve, had they heard the voice of the Lord God coming towards them, they would have run to meet Him, and with humble joy welcomed His gracious visit. But, things had become different after the Fall. God had become a terror to them, and they were full of confusion. Their own conscience set their sins before them. No amount of covering could hide their guilt.

The impulse of sinners is to hide from God or to get rid of thoughts about Him. God hates sin. The whole creation is trapped in sin. Yet, man does not know of any mediator between him and the angry God. Nothing remained but a certain judgement. Convicted of their sin, the guilty dare not stand trial. Instead, they flee from justice. The falsehoods, frauds and fallacies of Satan are clearly seen.

Satan promised Adam and Eve knowledge but they were now at a loss, hiding among bushes. He promised them that they would be as gods, great and bold, but they were now like criminals exposed, hiding and trembling, and seeking a way to escape.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 26
MATTHEW 26

THOUGHT

Just as God had pursued Adam and Eve in the garden by His voice [Genesis 3:9], Jonah in the deep by a wind [Jonah 1:4] and David by His prophet [2 Samuel 12:1], He still does so in His providence, through the ministry of His Word.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 3:9

LESSON

Where art thou?

GENESIS 3:9

*And the Lord God called
unto Adam, and said unto
him, Where art thou?*

Adam's absence was a clear proof that something was wrong. Previously, he had always welcomed the Divine approach. "Where art thou?" asked God, not as if ignorant of Adam's hiding place but to bring him to a confession. Those who have gone astray from God should seriously consider where they are. They are afar off from all good. They are in the midst of their enemies, in bondage to Satan and on the high road to utter ruin.

This enquiry to Adam may be looked upon as a gracious pursuit, in kindness to him, and in love towards his recovery. If God had not called him, his condition would have been as desperate as those of fallen angels. This lost sheep would have wandered endlessly. The good Shepherd had sought after him to bring him back. He had reminded him where he was and where he should not be.

It is needful to ask, "Where art thou?" to lead men nearer to Christ. We want to stir up easy-going disciples, to make Christians consider their calling, and to rouse them to a higher life and work.

Our Saviour's call is, "Follow me". How are you doing this? We have pledged to be His soldiers. What reality is there in your fighting? What are you doing for Christ? You have your Bible. Is it studied and prayed over? Have you spread the truth of God's Word?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 27
MATTHEW 27

THOUGHT

**If sinners will but consider where they are, they
can never rest till they return to God.**

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 3:10–13

LESSON
Beguiled

GENESIS 3:10

And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

Adam and Eve chose not to obey the commandment of God [Genesis 2:17]. They sinned against God. Like sinners today, they decided to hide and turn away from God. Sin disturbs our relationship with God. Due to Adam's foolish desire to be as wise as God, he fell into the trap of Satan and rebelled against God. Adam was no longer perfect. He lost his glory and righteousness.

Adam was shameful and afraid to see God. However, he did not immediately admit his wrongdoing nor confess to the Lord. He said that he was afraid because of his nakedness. However, this was not the true reason, as he was naked from the day God created him. Adam concealed the true cause, which was disobedience, the sin that stripped off his holiness. Therefore Adam had to hide himself, as he was fearful of God's wrath and judgement. He knew the penalty of sin was death.

When God questioned Adam about his wrongdoing, Adam laid the blame on God ("The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me") and Eve blamed the serpent. Neither was prepared to confess. Beware of blaming God or others when we commit sin.

God holds each of us responsible for our own acts. Do not attempt to find excuses to justify why you committed sin and try to escape from guilt by blaming others, be it family or friends, employers or the government, society or circumstances. Acknowledge your personal weakness, confess your sins, repent, and ask God for forgiveness.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
 IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 28
MATTHEW 28

THOUGHT

Do you put your trust fully in the Lord? Do you confess your sins and repent sincerely once you are convicted by the Holy Spirit that your acts and thoughts displease God?

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 3:14–15***LESSON****The serpent's judgement****GENESIS 3:14**

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

Our Lord God is righteous and holy. He had to pass judgement and punish the serpent. The serpent was cursed to crawl on its belly and eat dust all the days of his life. Even if the judgement was directed at the serpent, its main thrust was unto the devil as in “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” [Revelation 12:9].

Under the cover of the serpent, the devil was condemned to be degraded, detested and ultimately destroyed and ruined by the Redeemer, signified by the bruising of the head of Satan by the seed of Eve. Romans 16:20a clearly referred to Genesis 3:15 with regards to the serpent's judgement: “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.”

There will be enmity between the seed of the devil (the ungodly people) and the seed of the woman (those who follow God). The wicked and the righteous can never reconcile, and there will always be a struggle between God's people and those who are corrupted, who follow after the way of self and the devil.

Satan constantly tries to attack God's people and he takes pride in hindering God's work. But he is limited by the power of God. Our gracious God promises salvation to mankind through our faith in Christ. Blessed are all they that put their trust in the Lord.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 29
MARK I

THOUGHT

Be self-controlled and alert. Keep your eyes focused on the Lord Jesus Christ and resist from falling into Satan's trap. Be strong and stay away from temptations.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 3:16

LESSON

Eve's judgement

GENESIS 3:16

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

The woman, who had disobeyed God's command, was punished with sorrow and pain, including but not limiting to pregnancy and labour pain. She was to have a yearning desire for her husband and she was to live in subjection to him.

As the woman chose to seek the pleasures of life, her physical condition would now change. As a result of her pride and decision to rebel against God, the woman was to feel and suffer greater sorrow. She would feel deeply for her own adversity and for others' troubles. She would now suffer greater distress and pain when her own children rebelled and fell into sin.

With the sorrow and grief, the woman would turn back to God to repent, trust and depend entirely on the Lord for help. This is the wisdom and mercy of God. With multiple sufferings, she is expected to cry out to God for comfort and peace. She is to ask for God's wisdom and guidance in handling the trials.

God is always fair and just. He judges according to a person's sin, and His judgement is always with purpose and mercy. God loves all His children. His divine judgement on Adam and Eve came with the purpose of arousing them to repent and turn to God for strength and hope. The special judgement on the woman (and her descendants) would be for the good of humanity. As a loving Father, God desires for His children to be purged, moulded and spiritually strengthened from sufferings and trials.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 30
MARK 2

THOUGHT

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. – Hebrews 12:11

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 3:17–19

LESSON
Adam’s judgement

GENESIS 3:19

*In the sweat of thy face
shalt thou eat bread,
till thou return unto the
ground; for out of it wast
thou taken: for dust thou
art, and unto dust shalt
thou return.*

The grounds for Adam’s judgement are: (a) he listened to Eve’s persuasive arguments instead of leading her back in repentance; and (b) he eventually chose to disobey God and wilfully ate the forbidden fruit. This is also a reminder to us that we should not be easily swayed when someone entices us to sin, as Peter reminds us, “We ought to obey God rather than men” [Acts 5:29a]

As a result of Adam’s sin, the ground became cursed. He would need to use all his physical and mental powers to subdue the earth. Man was condemned to struggle for survival and needed to sweat—to work hard—to get his food and living necessities. He was also condemned to die.

This is the beginning of the fallen world. As Adam was now imperfect, God could not let him continue in a perfect world. Therefore, God had to curse the earth, as part of the judgement upon Adam. But Christ, as the Son of Man, came and paid the price for our redemption with His precious blood. We may still be in sorrow but we should always rejoice [2 Corinthians 6:10], enduring the thorn in our flesh with His sufficient grace and perfecting strength.

God is merciful. For each curse there is grace. Even though the earth was cursed, it still yields food for man. God’s love for His children is the greatest in the universe. We are to remain faithful and hopeful until the day of eventual victory, the Second Coming of Christ.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 31
MARK 3

PRAYER

O God, we thank You that Your Son, Jesus, has triumphed over Satan. Help us to stay firm in our faith, and overcome the power of sin and temptation.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 3:20–21

LESSON

Coats of skin

GENESIS 3:21

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

Adam called his wife ‘woman’ [Genesis 2:23] because she was taken out of man. Now Adam named her Eve after hearing the judgement. The name ‘Eve’ means ‘to give life’, as she would be the mother of all human beings. It indicated that Adam had strong faith in God’s Word. God also promised that Eve would bring forth children and she was to bear the promised Seed (our Saviour), Who would crush the head of the serpent (Satan) [Genesis 3:15–16].

True faith in God always involves repentance. We ought to truly understand our sins, convict our hearts to repent and ask the Lord for forgiveness in order to surrender our own will to God. You need to confess that Jesus is your Lord and Master. Ask the Lord to transform your life, help you obey God’s Word and trust fully in Him.

God graciously provided clothing to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve. The Lord is gracious, full of compassion and of great mercy. God required the shedding of the animal blood to wash away the sins of Adam. He slew animals and made coats of their skins for Adam and Eve to wear. God eventually selected His own Son to shed His own blood to wash away our sins so that we may be reconciled to God.

Adam’s attempt to cover himself with fig leaves was never adequate. Similarly, men can never earn salvation through his own effort. We need to depend on God’s grace to receive eternal salvation.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 32
MARK 4

PRAYER

Thank You, Lord, for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us so that we may now be justified by His blood. Cleanse our hearts by the working of Your Holy Spirit.

BIBLE LESSON *Genesis 3:22–24*

LESSON **Kept out**

GENESIS 3:22

*And the LORD God said,
Behold, the man is become
as one of us, to know good
and evil: and now, lest he
put forth his hand, and
take also of the tree of life,
and eat, and live for ever.*

Verse 22 is not said in sarcasm or ridicule, but in sadness. Man had once known only the goodness of God but now he had come to experience the evil side of life when he rejected God's Word. Man has to bear the necessary spiritual and physical suffering resulting from his own action. He has plunged himself into evil and learnt the nature of evil by this experience.

God had to drive Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, though they were truly repentant and believing. They were reluctant to leave their home for the harsh and unknown world outside.

Yet this expulsion was necessary. Man had sinned and had become imperfect and corrupt. God created man to bless him beyond all imagination but man had turned against God and rejected Him. What was God to do? Was He to let His purpose for man be defeated? He could not and He would not, for He is God, and God's purposes can never be defeated.

Although a just punishment was involved, God's deeper reason was for the greater good of man. It would have been calamitous had they continued in a perfect environment as sinful people. Man must not be allowed to sin further and eat the fruit from the Tree of Life. He would forever experience a living death. Therefore, though God did judge man, He provided the way for his salvation and deliverance. The redemption story thus unfolds.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 33
MARK 5

THOUGHT

God is holy and at the same time forever merciful to provide salvation for those who repent. Let us come boldly to God to confess our sins and seek His forgiveness.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 4:1–5

LESSON

Acceptable and unacceptable worship

GENESIS 4:4

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering.

Cain and Abel are typical of the two kinds of people today. Like Abel, many hear the Word of God, accept it by faith and become reconciled to God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Others, like Cain, hear the Word of God but ignore it and establish their own way of worship.

In other words, there are those who hear the Word of God and walk in the way God has prescribed, acknowledging their spiritual debt to God, and there are others who hear but choose the way they see fit. They are convinced they need not follow God's way and choose to do whatever they want. In doing so, they put themselves above God by deciding for themselves how to worship God.

God appointed not only a day of worship but also a way of worship. We cannot worship God any way we want. Neither can we offer Him sacrifices of our convenience. In order for our worship to be acceptable, it must be pleasing to God. If not, our worship will be in vain and useless. The one thing that makes the difference between Cain and Abel is faith. Abel trusted not in himself but in God. His sacrifice was a better sacrifice because it is evidence of his faith and reflected the object of his faith: God.

How do you worship God? Is your motivation for doing 'spiritual things' right? We can faithfully serve God, sing His praises and give sacrificially to His work but God does not want any of these without our hearts.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 34
MARK 6

THOUGHT

Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain. – Jude 1:1a

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 4:6–7

LESSON

Sin at the door

GENESIS 4:7

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

The problem with Cain was his attitude. His improper attitude led him to offer something that was less excellent than it should have been. Had his heart been pure, he would have undoubtedly offered a sacrifice according to God's desires.

Seeing the destructiveness of Cain's attitude, God warned him. Cain has been called the wicked one [1 John 3:12]. God told Cain plainly: "Sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

This was a crucial moment in Cain's life. His soul hung on the balance. God warned Cain to root out the sin from his life. If he wanted, he could by God's grace overcome the sin that was controlling him. If he did not, sin would destroy him. God wanted him to stop making excuses and take responsibility for his behaviour. He wanted Cain to repent.

The larvae of fruit insects do not eat their way into a fruit from the outside. The insect lays its eggs in the blossom so that the fruit grows around it. The worm hatches inside the fruit and eats its way out. Sin is like that. It begins in the heart and, if unchecked, works its way out in thoughts, words and deeds. If you let those wrong thoughts go on, they will lead to wrong feelings and words, wrong habits and actions. If one does not resist sin, then greater ruin will occur in his life. How do we keep sin from consuming us? God must be our Master. Without God as our Master, we will be slaves to sin.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 35

MARK 7

THOUGHT

God is present every time men sin.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 4:8–9***LESSON****My brother's keeper****GENESIS 4:9**

And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

Cain's insolence is incorrigible. His arrogant response to God is a sign of his inward, unacknowledged guilt. This is always the way of the guilty: they attempt to disclaim responsibility. For sure, God knew where Abel was. He wanted to point out to Cain that he had to face his responsibility. Man by nature does not want to be held responsible. Most people do not see themselves as a brother-keeper. What is foremost in the hearts and minds of so many people is only 'I'.

Cain's response is the way of unbelief. It is one that is fuelled by jealousy and eventually led to murderous anger. Cain is an example of a person who disobeys God and, when confronted, still chooses to sin wilfully.

Since Cain, every generation has questioned how we ought to relate to our brothers. Have we loved them the way God has told us to love? What if they hate us or they are different from us? Can we just 'live and let live'?

We are to love our neighbour as ourselves [Leviticus 19:18] and this is reiterated in the New Testament. There is a mutual responsibility here to take care of one another. We should look after the interests of our fellow brethren and do good to them. When a person is unconcerned in the affairs of others and does not act when he has the opportunity to prevent hurt, that person in effect speaks Cain's language.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 36
MARK 8

THOUGHT

Sin distorts the clear vision and reasoning of the human mind, causing a lack of wisdom and spiritual discernment.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 4:10–12***LESSON****Fugitive and vagabond****GENESIS 4:11**

*And now art thou cursed
from the earth, which
hath opened her mouth to
receive thy brother's blood
from thy hand;*

We hear the forcefulness in God's voice. The curse was the withdrawal of the full strength or fruitfulness of the soil from Cain. He was banished to a less productive part of the earth, removed from the presence of God and the society of his father and mother, and abandoned to a life of wandering and uncertainty.

The sentence of death had been already pronounced upon man. Although the Scriptures teach that death is the just punishment for murder, God did not issue a death sentence. Instead, He decreed that Cain's days as a farmer would come to an end, and that he would be doomed to a wandering and restless life.

There is nothing covered up that will not be revealed. Sin cannot be hidden. Even when there is no witness, God sees all. Our sins will find us out. Sin will find you out in your conscience, your body or in judgement. It is a relentless stalker that tracks man down. Cain honestly believed that he could get away with murder but God was ready to uncover the evidence of the crime.

Confession and the renouncing of sin can be painful. It is not easy seeing the ugly truth about yourself, the truth you try to hide from everyone. However, God's desire for all of us is to enter a place of rest, joy and peace. It requires being clean and pure before Him and following Him with all our hearts and all our strength.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 37**MARK 9****THOUGHT**

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. – Proverbs 28:13

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 4:13–16

LESSON
The Land of Nod

GENESIS 4:14

Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
 IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 38
MARK 10

The curse that was laid upon Cain seemed excessive but what it showed was the fact that God knew Cain's unrepentant heart. In actual fact, this portrays the direction of fallen and unsaved humanity: into exile. There is no desire to stand before God, no wish for salvation and no desire to be personally drawn to Him. The self-delusion of Cain's own mind finally achieved what he thought he desired most: freedom from God. This is exactly the desire of many today.

But as Cain would soon realise, life without God is a life without hope. Cain thought that he could flee from the justice of God. However, the truth is, men cannot run from God. No matter where they go, He is there.

There is no recollection in any historical account of where this Land of Nod was. However, the Hebrew meaning of the word 'nod' is 'wanderings'. Cain went out into the land of wanderings. What Cain did physically, mankind has since done both physically and spiritually. When they leave the presence of the Lord, they do what seems right in their own eyes. They have chosen to ignore God and live in the Land of Nod.

We may not be like Cain, who was exiled by God almost abruptly. Our backsliding may be more gradual—less time with Him today and even less time tomorrow. Suddenly it seems we are so far away that it may not be worth the effort to even try returning.

THOUGHT

(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. – Romans 11:8.

BIBLE LESSON *Genesis 4:17–24*

LESSON **Lamech**

GENESIS 4:24

*If Cain shall be avenged
sevenfold, truly Lamech
seventy and sevenfold.*

When Lamech told his wives that he had killed a young man, it was as if he was singing a song about a heroic deed that he had performed. The song was not only a proof of the condoning of sin but it was also sung in defiance of God. We see that there was no fear of God or shame for sin.

Shame and guilt over sin comes only by the convicting power of God's Spirit. If not for Him, people would even rejoice in their wicked behaviour. Look around you today and see how many people are glorying in abominable sinfulness that they should be ashamed of.

Lamech illustrates the depths of mankind's depravity. He brings us to the point in the history of man where sin is not only committed boldly, but boastfully. Scripture teaches us that the Lord pours His kindness on sinners for the purpose of driving them to repentance. In his arrogance, Lamech presumed upon the mercy and kindness of God, viewing the absence of strict justice as liberation for him to do evil.

Man falsely assumes that the Lord will never repay him for his wickedness. While we may never murder a person, we regularly take the Lord's grace for granted. Even Christians who do not arrogantly flout God's law often transgress it while believing they will face no consequences. Ask the Lord to make you revere His law and endeavour never to presume upon His kindness. May we never so recklessly violate the law of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 39
MARK 11

THOUGHT

When the ungodly seem to rule the world, what can the righteous do?

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 4:25–26***LESSON****Seth****GENESIS 4:26**

*And to Seth, to him also
there was born a son; and
he called his name Enos:
then began men to call
upon the name of the LORD.*

God here introduces His chosen seed, Seth, which means ‘substituted’ or ‘appointed’ to show that he was given as a substitute for Abel. He separated himself from the corrupt descendants of Cain and laboured, as Abel would have done had he lived, to turn the minds of sinful men to revere and obey God. Men began to look to the Lord again. Men were entering again into a personal relationship with God.

Elsewhere, Cain and his descendants were setting up their cities. They thought they were making great progress in many areas but it was progress without God.

Compared with building cities, calling upon the name of the Lord does not sound much like progress. Christians ought to be leading the way in every aspect of human enterprise. But if God is not at the centre of such an enterprise, it will be spiritually deficient. Then what looks like progress is not progress at all. You cannot make progress with God until you learn how weak you really are. The problem with most Christians is not that they are weak but it is thinking that they are strong. Until you know your weakness, you will trust in yourself, which is a sure route to spiritual failure. But as you become aware of the awful depravity of your heart, it drives you to trust completely in the Lord.

Where are you putting your energy and time? The only progress that counts is progress with God at the centre of our lives.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 40
MARK 12

THOUGHT

I would rather fail in a cause that will someday triumph, than triumph in a cause that will someday fail.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 5:1

LESSON

And he died

GENESIS 5:1

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;

Man was originally created in God's image and after His likeness. God created both male and female, and blessed them. Seth was born in the hundred and thirtieth year of Adam's life. Through sin, Adam became corrupt in his nature, subject to ageing and decay. Seth, together with all of Adam's descendants, would be doomed to die, too.

Adam lived for 930 years and then he died. His death fulfilled the physical aspect of the death sentence pronounced on him [Genesis 2:17]. The wages of sin is death and "and he died" is repeated eight times in this chapter.

The recurring phrase "And he died" recording the death of each patriarch is by no means superfluous. It warns us that death was not pronounced in vain against man. We are now exposed to the curse of death unless we obtain deliverance through our faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

"And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" [1 John 2:2].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 41
MARK 13

THOUGHT

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. – Romans 6:23

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 5:24

LESSON

Walking with God

GENESIS 5:24

*And Enoch walked with
God: and he was not; for
God took him.*

Scripture declares twice that “Enoch walked with God” [v. 22, 24]. Enoch is forever remembered as the man who “walked with God”. Why did Enoch walk with God? Behind the walk was the will. There was an alignment of Enoch’s will with the will of God.

“And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah” [v. 22a]. He had a conversion experience. He repented and his lifestyle changed when he turned back to God. He was a redeemed sinner who began to live a life of self-denial and self-control. The secret of Enoch’s life was that by faith he had a good testimony. He pleased God [Hebrews 11:5–6]. He totally believed, had dedicated and committed his life to God. He preached a strong aggressive message and warned of the judgement of God upon all ungodliness [Jude 14–15].

The oft-repeated phrase “and he died” was broken abruptly by God. “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him” [Hebrews 11:5a]. He did not die. God took him away while he was still alive because of his obedience and faithfulness to God.

This is a clear demonstration of the promise of eternal life to every child of God. Enoch is only one of two men in history [the other being Elijah] who was taken into heaven without dying [2 Kings 2:11]. Enoch’s walk with God reminds us that it is possible for all of us to enjoy intimate communion with God. Let us commit ourselves to walking faithfully with Him every day.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 42
MARK 14

THOUGHT

To walk in His way is to walk through life in His Spirit, by His love and through His power.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 6:1–2*

LESSON

Sons of God and daughters of men**GENESIS 6:2**

That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

Adam and Eve were commanded by God to be fruitful and multiply to replenish the earth [Genesis 1:28]. Subsequently, men began to multiply on earth and daughters were born to them [Genesis 6:1]. But some beings called “the sons of God” came and “saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose” [Genesis 6:2]. Who are these “sons of God”?

There are two major interpretations. Some interpreters say that the sons of God are angels [Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7] who married human daughters and created “mighty men” strong in battle and “men of renown” [Genesis 6:4] who filled the earth with violence. This contradicts the teaching of Jesus that angels cannot marry [Matthew 22:30]. Moreover, angels are not mentioned in the five chapters of Genesis, nor do they appear clearly in this context, though technically angels may appear in bodily form to men, for example, when they appeared to Lot [Genesis 19:1–5].

The second interpretation is that these sons of God were the sons of Seth who inter-married the ungodly daughters of Cain. They took wives as they fancied without advice or consideration and without regard to their moral character. They chose only by the eye. They saw that they were fair.

As a result of these marriages, the sons of God became worldly and immoral, and rebelled against God. This resulted in a new generation of unbelievers and, if allowed to continue, will wipe out the promised Messianic line. The only remedy was judgement.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 43
MARK 15

THOUGHT

When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall. – Proverbs 29:16

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 6:3–5

LESSON

Only evil continually

GENESIS 6:5

And 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.

As fallen man multiplied and expanded, so did evil. Sin had been manifesting itself increasingly. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, was convicting men of sin and warning them of imminent judgement. Yet the people were resisting and quenching the conviction of the Spirit. As a result, God gave man 120 years to repent before His judgement. God was long-suffering towards this sinful generation.

The inter-marriages of the sons of Seth and the ungodly daughters of Cain produced a monstrous generation of intensely wicked humanity of considerable prowess and size. These powerful and mighty men ruled and dominated the earth. Man was told to “multiply and fill the earth” but now the earth was corrupt and filled with violence [v. 11]. This new generation of unbelievers threatened to wipe out the promised Messianic line.

In contrast to the Creation narrative where God proclaimed that all was “good”, man’s wickedness after the Fall was great. The heart and mind of the people were continually occupied with how to do more and more evil. “Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” [v. 5b]; man was totally depraved. The stream of sin was full, strong and constant and God saw it [Psalm 14:1–3].

“Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil” [Ephesians 5:14–16]. May we confess and repent from all our sins and thank God for His great love.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 44
MARK 16

PRAYER

Lord, please cleanse my evil thoughts and purify me by the power of Your Spirit.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 6:6–7

LESSON

Grieve not His heart

GENESIS 6:6

*And it repented the LORD
that he had made man on
the earth, and it grieved
him at his heart.*

Having completed the work of Creation and having created man perfect and upright, God rested and was refreshed [Exodus 31:17]. He was pleased with the work of His hands. Yet He was filled with sorrow to see man becoming wicked, committing sinful acts and being filled with vile thoughts. He was saddened by how man had degenerated. Man as a sinner did not embody the ideal of moral life that God had originally intended to manifest in him. He did not accomplish the purpose for which he was created.

Man's sin and wickedness has grieved God to the depth of His heart. What we read in verse 6 is not the ranting of an angry God but of a God Whose heart was filled with pain and hurt. Even in His wrath and disappointment, God was not moved towards utter destruction. His compassion is vividly displayed in the further narrative of the salvation of Noah's family. God's heart grieved that he had made man on the earth and He resolved to destroy man, even the beasts, creeping things and the fowls of the air, yet He had also chosen to save a remnant.

Man's sinful behaviour resulted in just punishment from God. Do not grieve God by your immoral conduct. Your Christian talk must match your Christian walk before others. If there is any cause for anyone to find fault in your behaviour, it is the time to seek God's forgiveness.

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" [Ephesians 4:30].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 45
LUKE 1:1–38

THOUGHT

Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known My ways. – Psalm 95:10

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 6:8

LESSON

Noah finding grace

GENESIS 6:8

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

In the midst of hopelessness and sin, God preserved His remnant. Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord. This is the first occasion the word ‘grace’ is mentioned in Scripture. Grace is free, undeserved goodness and favour, the essence of which the Apostle Paul defined as exceeding riches in God’s kindness towards us through Christ Jesus [Ephesians 2:7].

Though God was displeased with the world, He favoured Noah. He was no doubt a sinner. He stumbled in the later years of his life but there were certain qualities that distinguished Noah from other men: his faith by God’s grace.

In the days of Noah, the wickedness of the people was so great that both by his life and preaching, Noah condemned the world. They in turn hated and persecuted him. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah believed God’s promise of salvation through the promised Seed, the coming Saviour.

Peter reminds us that just as the world was once destroyed by water, it shall be destroyed by fire when Jesus returns [2 Peter 3:3–13]. In view of this promise, Peter urges us to be blameless [2 Peter 3:14]. When the end of the world comes, we had better be in a condition where we too can find grace in the eyes of the Lord. Otherwise, we will be like those left outside the Ark when the flood came. The Lord requires all to come to repentance [2 Peter 3:9].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 46
LUKE 1:39–80

THOUGHT

Every believer is saved just like Noah, by the grace of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 6:9

LESSON

Noah, a just man

GENESIS 6:9

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

Noah lived in dark times. Man had made the earth a cesspool of immorality and a society of lawlessness and violence. Man was living to fulfil the desires and lusts of his flesh, for sex, money, possessions, power, recognition and honour. Man was only living for himself and self-gratification. Man had forgotten God and was working against the very purpose that God had created him, which is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

However, Noah stood out in the darkness. Other than being a just man, Noah was righteous and honest towards others. He was perfect among the people of his times. He was sincere in his devotion to God and truly wanted to please his Maker whether anyone else did or not. Finally, Noah walked with God. He had a deep and abiding personal relationship with God that controlled the direction of his life. Noah obeyed God's commands without doubting. It was this kind of faith that saved Noah.

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” [Hebrews 11:7].

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. So can you. Noah lived in an ever-darkening world. So do you. Noah stood for God even when no one else did. So should you.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 47

LUKE 2

THOUGHT

Standing for God, even standing alone, can make all the difference in the world.

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 6:10–17

LESSON
Two by two

GENESIS 6:11

*The earth also was corrupt
 before God, and the earth
 was filled with violence.*

Here is a picture of the whole earth sitting before God. God looked upon the earth and saw a terrible place. The earth was corrupt and filled with violence. No one was living a holy and godly life.

Man had once received the earth as a gift from God, but soon after, man started to abuse and defile his heritage. Man's wickedness had swept over the whole earth. Every person was living an immoral and lawless life. Everyone had turned away from God and was seeking after his own pleasures. There was not a godly person left upon earth. Only Noah and his family still believed and followed God.

God revealed to Noah that He was going to destroy all mankind, both them and the earth, because they had filled the earth with violence. God commanded Noah to build an ark. These were God's instructions to Noah: he was to build a huge ark—a mammoth box-like structure—in the middle of nowhere, in a place where there was no seaport.

If Noah did what God said, the people would ridicule and mock him. Yet Noah had to believe God's words: that God was going to destroy both man and earth. Noah had to believe God's command to build an ark in the middle of nowhere. Noah had to believe that God was going to bring floodwaters upon the earth to destroy all flesh. By faith, Noah obeyed and did everything God had commanded.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
 IN 2 YEARS, READ
GENESIS 48
LUKE 3

THOUGHT

We must all face the judgement of God and give an account of how we have lived. Let us live to the glory of God.

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 6:18–22

LESSON
Covenant

GENESIS 6:18

*But with thee will I
 establish my covenant; and
 thou shalt come into the
 ark, thou, and thy sons, and
 thy wife, and thy sons' wives
 with thee.*

Noah must have been stricken with terror when God told him that all life would be destroyed. God knew Noah's thoughts and emotions. God knew that Noah needed to be comforted and assured. So He established His covenant with Noah and all who accompanied him into the Ark.

What covenant? It is the covenant of the promised Seed, the Saviour of the world, Whom God had promised to send to save the world. Adam was still alive when Noah's father, Lamech, was born. Lamech was 56 years old when Adam died. Adam was bound to have shared with Lamech his experience with God in the Garden of Eden. He would have shared with him God's great promise and covenant with his descendants. He had promised that evil would be completely destroyed and righteousness fully restored to earth. Noah, therefore, knew that God was choosing him to carry on the godly line through which the promised Seed and Saviour would come. But Noah had to first believe and trust God's promise.

God gave Noah the commission of saving two of every living animal upon the earth. He had to bring them all into the Ark and store enough food and water to feed them all. The task was a tedious one but see how God helped Noah—the animals would come to Noah to be saved [Genesis 6:20].

Noah believed God. He accepted everything that God said and did exactly what God had commanded. He trusted in God's covenant and God guided Him all the way.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
 IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 49
LUKE 4

THOUGHT

Noah's great commission is a picture of God's great commission given to every believer: to reach out and save mankind from the coming judgement.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 7:1–9

LESSON

Noah did according ...

GENESIS 7:5

*And Noah did according
unto all that the LORD
commanded him.*

There was a span of about 100 years between Chapter 6, where God commissioned Noah to build the ark, and Chapter 7, where the Ark was completed. Just think of the great faith and obedience of Noah. He built a monstrous box-like structure out in the middle of dry land, preaching the righteousness and coming judgement of God. Despite the ridicule, mockery and abuse of the people, Noah did all these based solely on the words and warnings of God.

After a century of silence, God spoke to Noah again. God told Noah to “come into the ark” because he had been righteous before God. It was also significant that God said “Come into the ark” and not “Go”. God was assuring Noah that He would be in the Ark with them and that they would all be safe with Him.

These words must have been both comforting and terrifying to Noah. Comforting because Noah knew that he was then to be vindicated and delivered from the trials of this evil world, and terrified because he knew the earth and every living thing upon it was going to be destroyed.

Noah went into the Ark and took only those whom God had said were to enter—Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives, eight people altogether [Genesis 6:18]. Noah followed God’s instructions to save the animals. He took two, a male and a female, of all animals [Genesis 6:19–20]. Noah did exactly as God had commanded. He obeyed God completely.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

GENESIS 50
LUKE 5

THOUGHT

Noah found safety and security from judgement by entering the Ark. We too can find safety and security from the coming judgement by receiving the saving grace of Christ.

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 7:10–22

LESSON
The Flood

GENESIS 7:19

And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.

This is a record of the flood that God set upon the earth as His judgement of man's immorality, lawlessness and violence. This passage not only records the great flood and judgement of the past but it also leads us to ponder the final judgement to come.

This judgement day was fixed in the 600th year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month, when devastating floodwaters began to pour forth for 40 days and 40 nights [v. 11–12], just as God had warned [v. 4]. The day of our judgement, the day when we are to stand before God in judgement is also fixed, though we do not know when that is [Mark 13:32–33].

Even in the midst of judgement, there was great salvation inside the ark of safety. God saved those who went into the Ark. God was merciful in saving some. Noah believed and followed God and taught his family to seek after God. God saved them and two of every kind of animal from His terrifying judgement. The Ark is Noah's vessel of refuge. Jesus Christ is the believer's refuge from the terrifying judgement of hell and eternal separation from God.

God flooded the earth for 40 days and 40 nights with raging, surging water from underneath the crust of the earth and torrential rains from the sky, just as He had warned [Genesis 7:4, 17–23]. God means exactly what He says and He will do exactly what He says.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
 IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 1
LUKE 6

THOUGHT

God warns us against sin and judgement. He will judge us if we reject, curse and deny Him.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 7:23–24***LESSON****Only Noah remained
alive****GENESIS 7:23**

*And every living substance
was destroyed which
was upon the face of the
ground, both man, and
cattle, and the creeping
things, and the fowl of the
heaven; and they were
destroyed from the earth:
and Noah only remained
alive, and they that were
with him in the ark.*

God destroyed all life. This is a righteous and just act of God, as He had warned man time and again but man refused to heed God's warning. They rejected God even up till the very last day before the Flood. God had warned the people and He had fulfilled His word of judging the earth.

After the rain had stopped, the water stayed on for 150 days. All the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The Flood was universal and only God could do such a thing.

Only the Ark floated upon the water. It was not destroyed. God saved Noah and all those in the Ark with him. This was the fulfilment of God's promise to Noah. Noah is the living example of God's mercy. He and he alone had believed and followed God. He and he alone had obeyed and based his life upon the warnings of God. Therefore, God saved Noah and his family from His terrible judgement.

God will save anyone who believes in Him and follows Him. He will save anyone who fully obeys and bases his life upon His Word and His warnings: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" [Titus 2:11–13].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 2
LUKE 7

THOUGHT

**And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call
on the name of the Lord shall be saved. – Acts 2:21**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 8:1

LESSON

God remembering Noah

GENESIS 8:1

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged;

For 150 days, God poured out His wrath upon the earth and its inhabitants. All creatures that have breath in them died, a sad but fitting end to a wicked generation. God condemned this generation, which was corrupt and filled with violence. And God acted by destroying the world with a great flood that covered the whole earth.

Yet God remembered Noah. One writer describes it as God acting on behalf of Noah and the Ark's inhabitants to bring about a restoration from the Flood by bringing into existence a new world from the ruins. God is almighty and omniscient, and is not bound by time. He does not forget in the human sense because forgetfulness is a frailty of creatures that are bound by time. He had Noah in mind all along.

Why did God remember Noah? Noah found grace in His eyes [Genesis 6:8]. In the midst of a perverse generation, Noah was found to be incorrupt. Neither was he filled with violence nor evil. Noah is an example of how we should also be separated from the present age, in which evil, corruption and violence abound.

But the greatest example that God had set for us is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who showed us not just how to be separated but also how to overcome evil, corruption and violence by the Gospel, so that men can escape the greater wrath of God, which He will pour out on all creation, not by water but by fire, at His second coming.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 3
LUKE 8

MEDITATION

Be ye therefore followers of God ... walk as children of light ... have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. – Ephesians 5:1–21

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 8:2–12***LESSON****Noah remembering God****GENESIS 8:8**

*Also he sent forth a dove
from him, to see if the
waters were abated from off
the face of the ground;*

Noah had obeyed God's commandment to build the Ark, which God had promised would save him and all its inhabitants from His wrath [Genesis 6:18–19]. However, the Bible did not say that God told Noah all the details of His plan to save him and his charges. What would happen after the Flood? How long would Noah need to stay in the Ark? How much food should he prepare? There certainly were many questions that might have come to his mind.

Nevertheless, Noah obeyed God, made his preparations and built the Ark. God sent the animals and closed the door of the Ark. After 40 days of tossing about in the great flood, Noah continued to trust God because he remembered that God had made a covenant with him.

Notice also that Noah's trust was not a passive one. At the end of 40 days, he sent out first a raven and then a dove. When the raven did not return, he did not falter but went on to send out the dove, not once but three times until he obtained good news. Noah was patient while actively seeking for answers.

Let us also remember that we are God's redeemed people and He has promised that He will never forsake us. Let us send out our prayers, believing that God will answer and His answer is always the best for us. Let us be patient like Noah in waiting for answers and not falter after just one prayer.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 4
LUKE 9

MEDITATION

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. – Matthew 7:7–8

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 8:13–19

LESSON
Going and bringing forth

GENESIS 8:17

Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

After the earth was completely dry, God commanded Noah, his wife, his sons and his sons' wives to go forth from the Ark. Clearly, God did not intend for them to continue to stay in the Ark because it had served its purpose and was no longer of any use to them. God did not want Noah and his descendants to turn the Ark into a shrine, nor keep it as a memorial of how it had served to save them.

In addition, God also wanted Noah to bring forth all the creatures that were with him in the Ark. Again, God did not intend for the Ark to be made into a zoo where all the animals could be kept inside. Instead, the animals had to go forth from the Ark, breed abundantly, be fruitful and multiply to fill the whole earth again. Noah and his family obeyed God, as did all the animals.

We, as the people of God, have been redeemed by the precious blood of our Lord Jesus and have likewise been commanded to go forth after we have been saved. We are not to continue looking back at our past or be stagnant in our Christian growth. Rather, we are to bring forth the Gospel to those who are still unsaved.

In addition, we are also commanded to bring forth our God-given talents to be used for the furtherance of God's work wherever He has called us and be fruitful in our service to Him. Let us strive to obey these commandments as good Christians.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 5
LUKE 10

MEDITATION

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. – John 15:5

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 8:20–22

LESSON

**Not cursing the ground
again**

GENESIS 8:21

And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

Noah and his family had personally witnessed the terrible wrath of God, and were spared from the destruction. The Bible says that we are all born with a sinful nature and in us dwells no good thing. Noah was well aware that his own sinful nature could have caused him to suffer God's wrath as well.

However, God was merciful and gracious towards Noah, and spared him and his family from the Flood. In humility and gratefulness, Noah built an altar unto God, and sacrificed and offered burnt offerings upon the altar.

God was pleased with Noah's sacrifice and said in His heart that He would not curse the ground again for man's sake nor smite every living thing like He had done during the flood. God will not bring such destruction again. He knows that man's heart is sinful from birth. Instead, God has a plan to bring sinful man back to His fold again through the redeeming work of our Lord Jesus on the Cross. Instead of waters of destruction, He will one day offer living water so that whosoever drinks of it will never thirst again.

Just as our Lord has redeemed us, let us show our humility and gratefulness, as Noah had done. We no longer need to fear the wrath of God on the day of judgement because we have trusted in Jesus and our sins are washed clean by His precious blood. Let us offer up ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 6
LUKE 11

MEDITATION

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. – 1 Thessalonians 5:18

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 9:1, 7

LESSON

Multiply and replenish

GENESIS 9:1

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

God commanded Noah and his sons to be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth. Noah and his sons were commanded to be fruitful and multiply, to bring forth abundantly in the earth [Genesis 9:7]. Noah and his sons understood that they and the inhabitants of the Ark were the only survivors of the great flood, and now the time had come for them to replenish the earth with their offspring.

In all these, God was ultimately in control. He is the Creator of the whole world, and He determines when it is time to plant and when it is time to harvest. God had “planted” the first world with the creation of Adam and Eve. He gave them the original commandment to be fruitful and to multiply. God had also determined the ‘harvest’ and Noah and his family were the fruits of the harvest. After the harvest, it was now time for a new planting season, and Noah and his sons were to become God’s means for replenishing the earth.

God’s command to Noah is still applicable today. With the first advent of Christ, God has determined that a new season of spiritual planting will begin. The apostles were commanded by Jesus to go forth and preach the Gospel, to bear much fruit in the salvation of souls, and to fill every corner of the earth with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We, as the fruits of the apostles’ labour, should continue their work until our Lord returns for the final harvest.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 7
LUKE 12

MEDITATION

Read Matthew 28:19–20.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 9:2–3***LESSON****Fear of man****GENESIS 9:2**

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

Before the flood, God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth [Genesis 6:5] and the earth was corrupt and filled with violence [Genesis 6:11]. It must have grieved God that His creation, which was originally good, had been corrupt and abused by the wickedness of man. The beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea were probably not spared from the corruption and violence of these wicked men.

After the Flood, God established a new relationship between fallen man and the animals of the earth. Instead of perfect obedience to the rule of man, as in Adam's days, animals now fear and dread the presence of man. All animals, regardless of whether they are wild or domesticated, have an in-built fear of man and this has remained true even today. Matthew Henry says in his commentary: "The horse and ox patiently submit to the bridle and yoke, and the sheep is dumb both before the shearer and before the butcher; for the fear and dread of man are upon them."

Our gracious Lord, however, already has a plan to restore man's relationship with animals. The Bible tells us that one day the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them [Isaiah 11:6].

What a glorious day it shall be when our Lord Jesus returns a final time to rule over us as our Sovereign King and our God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 8
LUKE 13

MEDITATION

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. – Isaiah 65:25

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 9:4–6

LESSON

Blood for blood

GENESIS 9:6

*Whoso sheddeth man's
blood, by man shall his blood
be shed: for in the image of
God made he man.*

Even after the Fall, man remains a creature dear to God. He who unjustly kills his fellow human being defaces the image of God. Genesis 9:6 sets out a fundamental principle about the sanctity of life. God orders the death penalty for those who murder other human beings. So whoever kills a man, unless unwittingly, shall forfeit his own life.

Why do people murder? This is because man's heart is filled with anger, frustration, hatred, greed and selfishness. Man is prone to violence and has a tendency to murder because his heart is not right with God.

What should Christians do? We must recognise our heart's thought of murder and put a stop to it with God's help. We are to let God make things right. We are to learn how to forgive and forget. We are to keep our hearts true to God. It is human to feel hurt and have negative feelings at times, but violence and murder should not be natural outcomes of our feelings. Let us look at others as God sees us: precious, sacred and created in His image.

Our Lord Jesus has set an even higher standard for us to follow. He says evil thoughts of murder come from the heart [Matthew 15:19]. To wish one dead is already murder. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" [1 John 3:15]. Our Lord says believers are to love, forgive and do good. We are to leave vengeance and payback to God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 9
LUKE 14

THOUGHT

God created men in His image. Let us thus not put contempt upon them.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 9:8–17

LESSON

God remembering His covenant

GENESIS 9:15

And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

God told Noah that He would remember His covenant [v. 15]. He said again [v. 16] that He would remember “the everlasting covenant”. Why the repetition? God is not forgetful; it is for man’s assurance that He has to repeat His promise. He knows it is difficult for a man to let comfort come into his heart easily, especially when he has just experienced the terrors of death.

Noah and his family had witnessed the wrath of God first-hand. Standing on the deck of the Ark and watching the divine judgement on life was indeed terrifying. The experiences must have been so firmly entrenched in their hearts and minds that they remained fearful and terrified even when God spoke words of comfort to them. Noah and his family needed repetition of words to drive back their terrors and lighten their fears. Even though they were believers, they were still human.

We too need this comfort today. We too need constant reassurances and reminders of God’s love and care. We need to know God still remembers His promise. In our distress, suffering and fear, we cry out to God and call upon Him to keep His promise. The Psalms contain many passages about God “remembering”: Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love; Remember thy congregation, Lord; Remember David.

The good news is God knows our infirmities. In times of weakness, ask God to remember you and He will assure you through His Word.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 10

LUKE 15

PRAYER

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord. – Psalm 25:7

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 9:18–25

LESSON

Cursed be Canaan

GENESIS 9:25

*And he said, Cursed be
Canaan; a servant of
servants shall he be unto
his brethren.*

Genesis 9 records an incident in Noah's life that triggered a major family crisis. The Flood had not in any way removed the original sin from Noah and his family. His youngest son, Ham, happened to be in his tent when Noah was drunk, asleep and naked. Ham's sin was that he boasted to his brothers about seeing their father naked, thus dishonouring the family patriarch.

Shocked and alarmed, Japheth and Shem took a robe and walked backwards into the tent, covering their father. Upon waking, Noah learnt of Ham's behaviour. He then made prophetic remarks about his sons. Strangely, Noah did not curse Ham but singled out another of his sons, Canaan. And Canaan was cursed.

History has, of course, confirmed for us that Canaan's descendants were indeed a grossly immoral lot. We read in the Bible that God ordered the Israelites to destroy them when they returned from Egypt to the Promised Land.

What can we learn from the sins of Noah and Ham? We learn that a single act of perversion can create years of misery and affect many people. It also shows that our response to the sins of others becomes a test of our Christian character. Ham was seemingly amused by Noah's sin, rather than appalled by it. However, we should not be discouraged by the indiscretion of the duo. God chose to record this event so that we can learn the destructive power of sin and the predictive power of Scripture.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 11

LUKE 16

THOUGHT

The judgement of God in the Flood did not drown sin. The heart of man is still deceitful and desperately wicked.

3 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 9:26–29

LESSON

**Blessed be the Lord God
of Shem**

GENESIS 9:26

*And he said, Blessed be
the Lord God of Shem;
and Canaan shall be his
servant.*

The story of Noah's drunkenness, together with the conduct of his sons in relation to it, leads to a very significant prophetic statement concerning sons and their descendants. After pronouncing "cursed be Canaan", Noah turned to Shem and said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem" [Genesis 9:26a]. The wording of this blessing was unexpected. In contrast with what was said about Canaan we would expect Noah to say, "Blessed be Shem". But the blessing of Shem was tied in a peculiar way to a covenant relationship with God.

Both Shem and Japheth acted honourably. So why was Shem favoured over Japheth in receiving the blessing? Nothing had distinguished Shem from Japheth, so this must be pure grace and God's sovereign choice. Shem's great distinction was to be chosen by God. We know Noah did not pronounce the blessing on his own initiative; the destinies were God-ordained. The line of Shem went right through Abraham to Christ.

The blessing of Shem is the blessing of God's sovereign election. God chose to identify Himself with the descendants of Shem. The rest of Genesis shows how God continued to narrow His selection: from Shem to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. With Jacob, the selection process was completed as God identified Himself with all of Jacob's sons, from whom came the 12 tribes of Israel.

The Lord has blessed Israel in many ways but His greatest blessing is the fact that He is their God. The Lord wants to be our God, too. We must believe in Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 12
LUKE 17

THOUGHT

When we bless the Lord or pronounce Him blessed, we acknowledge that He is the source of blessing. It is an expression of thanksgiving and praise.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 10*

LESSON

**Generations of the sons
of Noah**

GENESIS 10:32

*These are the families of
the sons of Noah, after
their generations, in their
nations: and by these were
the nations divided in the
earth after the flood.*

What is recorded for us in this chapter of Genesis is also known as the 'Table of Nations'. Noah and his family were the only people left alive after the Flood, and it is from his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth that all the inhabitants of the earth were descended.

The table begins with an account of the descendants of Japheth, followed by those of Ham and Shem. It is not intended to be a complete historical record but one that leads us to the line of Abraham, David and Jesus. God used these genealogies to prove that Jesus was, as promised, the son of Abraham and of David.

Even though there may be full of unelaborated names of people and places, it has in it the thread that is drawn from the beginning of mankind to the end of all things. The Holy Scripture reveals this knowledge to us so that we know where we come from and where we are going.

The chapter also contains a thrust in the area of missions. God is not simply concerned with the Israelites and their predecessors. His desire is to see the nations brought to Him. Though God left the other nations and focused on Abraham and his line later, it does not mean He does not care about these nations. Similarly, we believers should not just look after 'our own people'. It is our calling as the spiritual children of Shem to be a blessing to all nations.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 13**LUKE 18**

THOUGHT

Unless the Word of God reveals it to us, we are so marred by sin that we have no knowledge of our origin, not even of our Creator God Himself.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 11:1

LESSON

One language, one speech

GENESIS 11:1

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

These are the families of the sons of Noah ... and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood" [Genesis 10:32]. However, the descendants of Noah, united by the strong bond of a common language, had not separated, despite the divine command to replenish the earth.

Sharing one common language was not the critical issue. The reason why God dispersed Noah's descendants was that they wanted to build a name for themselves. They wanted their own glory. Their desires were akin to those of Adam and Eve—to be lords of their own lives. So God dispersed them by making them speak different languages.

With that, over time, nations developed different cultures, lifestyles, beliefs as well as, sadly, discord, strife and war. Today, even if many of us speak a common language, it does not unite us in any way. The only thing that can unite us is the love of God through His Son Christ Jesus. We don't need a common language today; instead we need a common faith.

The Apostle Paul called Titus "mine own son after the common faith" [Titus 1:4]. They shared the same faith in Christ. This common faith is able to unite believers of every age, culture and race. We need a common faith because of the common problem of sinfulness. More importantly, we can have that common faith because of the uncommon grace of God shown to us. God enables believers to share a common faith regardless of the languages they speak.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 14

LUKE 19

THOUGHT

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. – Psalm 19:1–3

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 11:2–4***LESSON****Building a city and a tower****GENESIS 11:4**

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

Man’s sin of pride and rebelliousness is seen here in the building of the Tower of Babel. Believing that unity is strength, these sons of Noah encouraged one another to erect a great monument, with the sole purpose of striving to reach upward to heaven.

Building this great tower only revealed man’s sinful rebellion in defiance against God. Such an attitude was recorded even before the creation of man. In Isaiah 14:13–14, notice the five I’s when Lucifer, son of the morning, aspired to be like God. Just as Lucifer was cast out of heaven with his followers, Nimrod and his men were scattered far and wide.

We read of Nimrod the mighty hunter in Genesis 10:8–10. He was the one responsible for the kingdom of Babel in the land of Shinar. Likewise, Cain also built the city of Enoch in the land of Nod [Genesis 4:17]. The condition of men’s hearts is still the same. In the old world before the Flood as well as in the new world after the Flood, there are men who still defy God by their acts of accomplishment. They erect monuments to honour themselves and for others to honour them.

Instead of preparing themselves for the Promised Land, the sons of Noah stirred up one another to stay put in that same city. Let us instead heed the exhortation “to provoke unto love and to good works” [Hebrews 10:24] through mutual encouragement. The saying that there is safety in numbers is true only if God is included in that number.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 15
LUKE 20

WARNING

**Woe unto him that thus strives with his Maker. –
Matthew Henry**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 11:5–6***LESSON****The Lord coming down
to see****GENESIS 11:5***And the Lord came down
to see the city and the
tower, which the children
of men builded.*

God has always been fair and just with His creatures. He does not just write anyone off without being heard. Despite His omniscience, God “came down to see the city and the tower” [v. 5]. Of course, since God is Spirit, He does not have physical eyes. Here is the use of anthropomorphic language where human attributes and appearances are ascribed to God for our finite minds to understand. This is language that ascribes uniquely human characteristics to God. Some other examples are “smelled a sweet savour” [Genesis 8:21], “everlasting arms” [Deuteronomy 33:27] and “the finger of God” [Luke 11:20].

God condescended to take notice of the building before judging the people. The fact that the tower was still in the process of being built shows the patience and long-suffering of God. These sons of Adam had the opportunity to repent but had chosen to disobey. How would you react if the Lord comes down to see you?

Throughout Scripture, there are many instances of God’s fair dealings with His creatures. In this instance, He extended His mercy to Nimrod and his followers by just dispersing the group. Without God’s intervention, there was no telling what that rebellious group would do next.

The best example of God visiting mankind is His first coming when He left heaven’s glory to come down to earth. This is the illustration of love at its greatest, shown on the cross of Calvary. If you are still unsaved, do not delay. Come to Jesus even now.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 16**LUKE 21****QUESTION****Are you ready for Christ’s second coming?**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 11:7–9***LESSON****Scattering them abroad****GENESIS 11:7**

*Go to, let us go down,
and there confound their
language, that they may
not understand one
another's speech.*

Imagine the scene of chaos, noise and confusion at that time. Unable to understand one another, there was panic everywhere. This diversity of languages resulted in disunity and disruption in communication. The consequence was that the building project was stopped and the builders were scattered abroad.

Compare the scattering of the Babel-builders with the diaspora of the church at Jerusalem. The motive of the former was due to pride and disobedience against God. However, the dispersion of God's children in Jerusalem was for the sake of the Gospel. They were persecuted for preaching the Word of God. Thus, not all scattering is bad. The dispersion of the Jerusalem saints far and wide opened opportunities for the spread of the Gospel.

Observe the different consequences then. The Gospel reached out to everyone far and wide [Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19; James 1:1]. On the other hand, there was no more unity, oneness and openness in Babel. It is no surprise then that the word 'babble' sounds like 'Babel'. The people's motive to outrival God in their building of the tower came to nought. Yet, though the people deserved death, God dealt with them mercifully [Psalm 103:10].

Be warned against flouting God's authority. His sure word and counsel stands forever. When God judges, it is just, swift and final. Let us not forget that God Who is our Creator reigns over all the affairs of men. As His creatures, we must not resist His sovereignty. The Babel-builders stubbornly went against God's will. Indeed, what man proposes, God disposes.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 17
LUKE 22

PRAYER

Lord, help me to be in tune with Your will.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 11:10–32***LESSON****Knowing our roots****GENESIS 11:27**

Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

This whole passage records the genealogy from Shem to Abram. Many of us tend to skim through such a long list of names in the Bible. Though we may find the reading tedious, it is of great importance. Notice that their ages gradually decreased from the time of Adam's descendants. By divine providence, men's lives were shortened even as the earth began to be populated, to the point where the average lifespan was between 70 to 80 years [Psalm 90:10].

How important is this ancestral lineage to us? The focus in this section is the lineage of Abram. Christ, the promised Seed, would come through him.

Abram was mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. We learnt that he came from Ur of the Chaldees, an idolatrous country. Together with his relatives, Abram left his homeland for Canaan. Today's passage ends with the death of Terah in Haran. This is in accordance with God's grand plan of redemption.

It is good to take stock of our family tree. Even more important is the knowledge of our spiritual heritage. By God's grace, all believers are heirs of the land of promise. Through Christ's redemption, believers have been saved from their original, sinful and corrupt nature. Thank God if you come from a generation of believing ancestors. If not, as a believer, be faithful in passing on your faith to your posterity. If you are an unbeliever, pray for the Holy Spirit to convict you of your sin.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 18
LUKE 23

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for preserving the lineage of Abram.

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 12:1–3

LESSON

Abram’s call

GENESIS 12:1

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee.

In the preceding chapter, we read of Abram’s obedience to leave Ur with his family for Canaan. From here onward, several chapters are devoted to Abram and his seed. God’s call of Abram in this chapter was to set him apart for a special service.

Observe Abram’s immediate response to God’s call. He did not know the exact location of his destination but he ventured forth obediently [Hebrews 11:8–10]. Not only was Abram called to leave his country, kindred and father’s house, he was going into unknown territory. This shows Abram’s unquestioning faith in God.

Venturing into a new, foreign land can be fearful—apprehension of the unknown, possibility of culture shock and the difficulty in making new friends, among other things. Going out of one’s comfort zone is challenging. Yet all these fears are incomparable to those of Abram. Today, we plan our travel itinerary because we know where we are headed. However, Abram did not know his destination; he was entering “unto a land that I will shew thee”.

We try to do our best at different jobs. The best attitude is to take it as a vocation. Whether you are a teacher, doctor or salesman, work at it as unto the Lord Jesus. Whatever your occupation is, fulfil it to the best of your ability. The highest calling of all is fulltime service for God. Do not hesitate when you hear God’s calling. Obey His call without delay.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 19
LUKE 24

THANKS

All God’s precepts are attended with promises to the obedient. – Matthew Henry

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 12:4–9***LESSON****Entering Canaan****GENESIS 12:7**

*And the Lord appeared
unto Abram, and said,
Unto thy seed will I give
this land: and there builded
he an altar unto the Lord,
who appeared unto him.*

Abram's obedience to God's will was complete, so he "departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him". Following God's call is usually not easy. In Abram's case, God had to renew His call and promise to him [v. 7]. Abram then built an altar immediately in praise and thanksgiving to God. Before Abram left Haran, even his father Terah was influenced by the practice of idolatrous worship [Joshua 24:2]. The Canaanites were still occupying the land when Abram and his family arrived there. Though surrounded by heathen worship, Abram kept his faith in obedience to his Lord.

This new and strange land was occupied by the descendants of Canaan, the cursed son of Ham. Unlike his nephew Lot, Abram stayed faithful to God. He kept up the worship of God in his family. Wherever Abram went and whenever he pitched his tent, he would build an altar to worship God.

Abram's faithfulness is testimony to Paul's exhortation: "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" [Ephesians 3:20]. Abram left his country but was promised a nation through his posterity. Furthermore, his regular family worship provides a good witness to the other unbelieving nations.

How is your family worship lately? Have you been putting it off due to time constraint? Fathers should not neglect their duty to maintain family worship. Let us emulate Abram's example to be a good testimony before the unsaved.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 20
JOHN 1

PRAYER**Lord, help me to be faithful to Your cause.**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 12:8

LESSON

Pledging your allegiance

GENESIS 12:8

And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

Abram had made the decision to follow God and committed his whole life in that direction. He boldly pledged his allegiance to Yahweh, the God of Israel Who provided all his needs each step of the way. Building an altar symbolised the act of worship and outward declaration of his faith, and calling on the name of the Lord shows acknowledgement of his total commitment to God. He knew Jehovah's grace towards him and he worshipped Him and called upon His name. Abram boldly identified himself with the Lord as a testimony to the idolatrous Canaanites. Wherever he went, it was his constant practice to build an altar to establish a place of worship and to testify of the goodness of God.

Our gracious God appeared to Abram [v. 7] to confirm the promised Seed and the Promised Land. These are comforting words of encouragement indeed. In gratitude, Abram built an altar to acknowledge God's gracious visit and to testify his confidence in and dependence upon His spoken words.

As followers of Christ, we must pledge our allegiance to our Master and confess our faith even if we may lose a few friends and experience ridicule and rejection. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" [Matthew 10:32-33].

Believers are thus encouraged to confess their faith publicly before men in baptism.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 21
JOHN 2

CONSECRATION

I have decided to follow Jesus; no turning back!

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 12:10–16***LESSON****Abram's foolish
deception****GENESIS 12:13**

*Say, I pray thee, thou art
my sister: that it may be
well with me for thy sake;
and my soul shall live
because of thee*

Abram had just begun his great pilgrimage of faith. Now his faith weakened and he slipped away from God. When famine struck, he did not turn to God for help but took matters into his own hands. He made the decision to move his family to Egypt. This hero of the faith faced a severe crisis of starvation and he succumbed to the world (in this instance, Egypt) for a solution to his needs. Not a single word was mentioned about Abram seeking God about his problem.

A lie is indeed an abomination to the Lord though it may seem like a 'very present help' in time of trouble. Abram apparently agreed when he persuaded Sarai, his beautiful wife, to lie about her identity, claiming to be his unmarried sister. As a brother, he would be honoured by Pharaoh, but as a husband, his life would be in danger. He was more concerned about his life and spared no thought for his beloved wife.

Abram lost faith in God's protection and provision. His foolish deception backfired and would have disastrous consequences but for our gracious God, Who kept His covenant promise intact. The Lord inflicted disease on Pharaoh and his family, revealing to him that Sarai must be returned to Abram untouched. Abram, however, was rebuked and forced to leave the land. In the end, his lie earned him nothing but contempt and disgrace.

Are you tempted to lie your way out of a tight spot? Remember, a lie appears to offer help but in reality it only delivers harm.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 22
JOHN 3

WARNING

... be sure your sin will find you out. – Numbers 32:23.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 12:17–20***LESSON****Plagues from God****GENESIS 12:17**

*And the Lord plagued
Pharaoh and his house with
great plagues because of
Sarai Abram's wife.*

What a fall for Abram: from a mountaintop experience of meeting God face to face to the dark valley of despair! It takes divine intervention to deliver Abram from his present dilemma. Our gracious God did not forget His covenant promise. He meant every word of it. He protected Sarai from Pharaoh to preserve the seed of Abram. The plagues were sent as judgement on Pharaoh and his entire household. God loves His children and protects His own from harm and danger.

Abram fell out of God's will when he moved to Egypt, which symbolised the world. Take note that he did not build an altar to worship God. Neither did he call upon God's Name. He relied on his own worldly wisdom to solve his problem of starvation. He resorted to the sin of lying. It is sad and humiliating to see a heathen rebuking a believer for his misconduct [v. 18]. Abram did not say anything to vindicate himself but silently acknowledged his guilt in concealing the truth of his relationship with Sarai.

Abimelech, the Philistine king of Gerar, faced a similar situation because of Abram's lie [Genesis 20]. God again protected Sarai's honour to preserve the mother of the promised Seed. "He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes; Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm" [Psalm 105:14–15].

God sends plagues as a form of punishment on believers as well as unbelievers.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 23
JOHN 4

MEDITATION

**For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways, and my
thoughts than your thoughts. – Isaiah 55:9**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:1–4***LESSON****Abram's return to Bethel****GENESIS 13:3**

And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai;

In spite of Abram's deception, God blessed him abundantly. Pharaoh even ensured Abram's safety out of Egypt [Genesis 12:20]. Note that he was very rich in livestock, silver and gold [v. 2]. He left Egypt and returned to Bethel where he first built an altar for worship. Abram renewed his fellowship and communion with God.

The victorious Christian life is a series of new beginnings. Abram repented of his sins and returned to God, Who graciously forgave him and restored the broken relationship. "He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake" [Psalm 23:3].

Note that Abram separated from Egypt—from the world of ungodliness and worldly lusts—and made the right decision to return to God and the Promised Land, to Bethel. He could have gone back to Ur of the Chaldees, Haran or another country, but he did not. It was this same place that God had instructed Jacob to go and build an altar in thanksgiving for His protection and guidance [Genesis 35:1]. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way" [Psalm 37:23].

Abram went to the place where he first built the altar and called on the name of the Lord with grateful prayers for preserving him and Sarai in Egypt, for increasing his worldly substance, for provision during famine and all instances of grace. He acknowledged that the source of all this goodness is from God Almighty.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 24
JOHN 5

PRAYER**Thank you, Lord, for every grace and mercy.**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:3–4***LESSON****At the beginning, at the first****GENESIS 13:4**

Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.

The grace of God led Abram back to Bethel, “the house of God” where he had raised an altar when he first came into the land of promise. This was the spot where he had been in touch with God and where he should have stayed instead of going to Egypt. The phrases “at the beginning” [v. 3] and “at the first” [v. 4] indicate that Abram made a fresh start to renew his allegiance to God. He revived his former worship and called on the name of the Lord once again. The lost communion with God was restored since Abram returned to his first love in humility and repentance.

The place of the altar is the place of decision where Abram leaves behind his former life in favour of the interests of God. It is where he gives God the positive honour that belongs to Him alone. If we are to be properly restored after failure, we must likewise return to the place from which we have departed from God.

Remembrance is the hallmark of gratitude. Abram returned to the sweet memorial place where he first met God. Bethel is a place endeared to Abram by association with his Lord. Memory became a means of grace to encourage hope. “Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice” [Psalm 63:7].

Can you remember the day when you first felt love towards God? Reflect on it and thank Him for His grace in bringing you out of darkness into His marvellous light.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 25
JOHN 6

THOUGHT**Count your blessings, name them one by one.**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:5–7***LESSON****Strife between the
herdsmen****GENESIS 13:7**

*And there was a strife
between the herdmen of
Abram's cattle and the
herdmen of Lot's cattle:
and the Canaanite and the
Perizzite dwelled then in
the land.*

What was the bone of contention in this instance of strife? Material wealth! Abram and his nephew, Lot, were very rich in livestock, so there were not enough watering holes and pasture land to feed their large herds and flocks.

The severe conflict started with their workers and this posed a real problem for their masters. There was a strong bond between uncle and nephew but Abram had to do something, as in-fighting would be a bad testimony to the heathens who dwelt in the land. Abram was chosen by God to bear witness to the other nations that there is only one true and living God. It is critical that he handled the situation to the glory of God.

Riches are often the cause of strife and contention among relations and neighbours. “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition” [1 Timothy 6:9]. Note that poverty and travail could not separate Abram and Lot but riches did. Wealth is the most common reason for strife, as it stirs a spirit of contention by making people proud and covetous. “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” [1 Timothy 6:10].

But some strife could have positive consequences, as in the one between Paul and Barnabas, which resulted in the furtherance of the Gospel.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 26
JOHN 7

MEDITATION

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. – Hebrews 10:24

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:8***LESSON****For we be brethren****GENESIS 13:8**

*And Abram said unto Lot,
Let there be no strife, I pray
thee, between me and thee,
and between my herdmen
and thy herdmen; for we be
brethren.*

Abram's main concern was the relationship between him and Lot. He was willing to go to any length to settle the strife, applying the wisdom of Solomon: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" [Proverbs 15:1]. He opted for peace between himself and Lot and their herdsmen for the simple reason that they belong to the same family and worship the same God.

The people of God must show themselves a peaceable people to reflect the image of God. The situation between the herdsmen must be improved so that peace can be restored. Contention is indecent and scandalous between brothers in the household of faith. Abram, the man of faith, is also a man of peace.

To be a peacemaker is to possess the likeness of God. Abram nips the problem in the bud before the strife extended to other family members. God Himself is the author of reconciliation [2 Corinthians 5:18–19]. The Apostle Paul exhorts the Roman Christians: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" [Romans 12:18]. Our Lord Jesus pronounced a blessing on peacemakers in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" [Matthew 5:9].

Are you at variance with someone today? May the example of Abram encourage you to settle for peace and reconciliation, "for to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" [Romans 8:6].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 27**JOHN 8****REMINDER**

**Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory;
but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other
better than themselves. – Philippians 2:3**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:9***LESSON****Allowing Lot to choose first****GENESIS 13:9**

Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

We have read of how the material possessions of both Abram and Lot grew to such an extent that they could not dwell together anymore [Genesis 13:6]. This must have been in their mind for a while before strife finally caused them to separate [Genesis 13:7]. Abram, in an effort to maintain peace between brethren, asked for the eventual separation [Genesis 13:9].

We can see in this conflict some virtues of Abram. He was wise in seeing that a separation was necessary to prevent future strife. He was peace-loving when he placed the relationship between Lot and himself, as well as his herdsmen with Lot's herdsmen, above the differences they might have of each other. More importantly, he was gracious enough to let Lot choose the land that he wanted and leave the remaining portion to himself.

In dealing with a conflict, Abram was not blinded by the dispute at hand. Neither did he allow himself to dwell too much on it. As a child of God, he had placed others before himself.

What would you do if you were Abram? James 3:14–17 says, “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 28
JOHN 9

CONSIDERATION

When offended, try turning the other cheek. It is not easy, but it sets you free.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:10–13***LESSON****Lot lifting up his eyes****GENESIS 13:10**

*And Lot lifted up his eyes,
and beheld all the plain
of Jordan, that it was well
watered every where, before
the LORD destroyed Sodom
and Gomorrah, even as
the garden of the Lord, like
the land of Egypt, as thou
comest unto Zoar.*

Lot was given a choice but he chose wrongly. We read that he lifted up his eyes and saw the plain of Jordan that was well watered everywhere. He chose the cities of the plain [v. 12]. He pitched his tent towards Sodom [v. 12], not considering the fact that the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly [v. 13].

Job was misled by his eyes. Placed in front of him were two choices. Canaan must have paled in comparison to the prosperous cities of the plain. We can almost imagine their lively din in the day and glamorous lights at night. Most people would have chosen this land.

Yet “for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” [1 John 2:16]. Lot’s choice would prove disastrous. From then on, he would be “vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)” [2 Peter 2:8–9].

What do you see when you lift up your eyes? Do you stop on the horizon and simply linger on the things of this world?

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 29
JOHN 10

CONSIDERATION**Read Isaiah 51:6.**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:14–18***LESSON****Renewing God's covenant****GENESIS 13:15**

*For all the land which thou
seest, to thee will I give it,
and to thy seed for ever.*

We have read of how Lot lifted up his eyes and was mesmerised by the cities of the plain. Abram lifted up his eyes upon the command of God [v. 14]. God told him to look across the vast lands and when he did so, God renewed the covenant that he had earlier promised to Abram [Genesis 12:2]. He would give Abram and his seed all the land that he had seen.

We see God's mysterious providence at work here. In His omniscience, God foresees everything. He had promised to make of Abram a great nation in Canaan. He had allowed strife to happen between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. He also knew that the gracious Abram would let Lot choose first. And yet all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose [Romans 8:28].

Abram loved God. He was elected according to His will. Eventually all things worked together, be they seemingly bad ones (the strife) or good ones (Abram's graciousness), for good. God is in sovereign control of everything and would certainly be faithful to His own covenant.

Let us thus take comfort in the promises of God and press on in our walk with Him despite all difficulties in life, "being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" [Philippians 1:6].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 30
JOHN 11

REMINDER

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. – Romans 8:37

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 13:16***LESSON****In God's grace****GENESIS 13:16**

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

God's reassurance to Abram [Genesis 13:16] of His promise [Genesis 12:2]—the Abrahamic covenant—is the lesson for today. Later, God declared this covenant two more times [Genesis 15:18; 17:2].

One may also draw a parallel between this verse and Genesis 1:28, where God told Adam and Eve to multiply and replenish the earth. However, a distinction needs to be made here. In Genesis 1:28, man had not fallen yet, whereas in Genesis 13:16, God was speaking to the fallen human race.

Man was never created in shortness of God's glory. God created everything and said that it was very good. Yet because of the fall of Adam, man inherited a sinful human nature and thus had fallen way below God's standard. Before the Fall, man was under the covenant of works. He would live as long as he abided by God's instructions. But after the Fall, man became doomed for sure death and he is only sustained by the covenant of grace. He is not destroyed yet able to prosper, all because of God's grace.

The Abrahamic covenant is a gracious one. God in His grace and sovereignty has chosen the line of Abram to become a great nation. And it is from this line that God will send our Lord Jesus, Who would reconcile His chosen people back to Him. Believe and trust in Christ, and be joint-heirs with Him of the inheritance of restored perfection and everlasting life.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 31
JOHN 12

REMINDER

Read Romans 5:14–15.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 14:1–11***LESSON****The battle of the kings****GENESIS 14:11**

*And they took all the goods
of Sodom and Gomorrah,
and all their victuals, and
went their way.*

In the opening verses of Genesis 14, we have an account of the first war in the Bible. This is often called the war between the four kings and the five, simply because there were four kings in one camp [v. 1] and five in the other [v. 2].

Like the strife between Abram's herdsmen and those of Lot [Genesis 13:7], the details of the cause of this conflict were not made known to us. We were only told that it was a rebellion against Chedorlaomer, a king that the camp of five had served for 12 years.

Causes of rebellion are often self-centred. It often involves pride and—especially—the thinking that one can be better than the other against whom the one is rebelling. It might also involve sins of covetousness and envy, likely so in this case, since we read later [v. 11] that the victors took away the goods of those who were defeated. Whatever the cause, we read from this chapter that man had learnt how to gather themselves together to do evil deeds and to destroy one another on a massive scale.

It must have grieved the heart of God to see creatures who were created in His own image killing one another, adding sins to the sins that were already in them. Yet if we are to read Genesis 14:1–2 again, which of these king's names are familiar to us? No one remembers even their names, save the victories they won or the goods they took.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 32
JOHN 13

CONSIDERATION

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?
– Psalm 8:3–4

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 14:12–13

LESSON

Lot's capture

GENESIS 14:12

And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

The sins of man had caused them to fight and destroy one another. Each in his own conceit had probably thought he was the best among the many. He might have thought his name would be remembered for generations. He might have gloated at the plight of the defeated and swelled in pride thinking of his increased possessions. He might even think God was with him.

But the truth is far from what any of these pathetic kings could imagine. The only details of the war recorded was how the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell into slime pits, and how their enemies took by force their people and goods. In fact, it seems the case that God only had the names of these nine kings recorded in the Bible for a sole purpose: Lot was taken captive as a result of this war.

The account of this war was just the continuation of the story of Abram and Lot, which we read in the previous chapter. Among those captured, one escaped to Abram for help [v. 13]. This would cause Abram to go after the captives.

Man often wants to be the captain of his own life. He has his mind set on worldly conquests and successes. But if he is not a child of God, then all his achievements in life will eventually come to nought. Just like Babylon in the history of Israel, he will at most be God's tool in bringing to pass what God wants to happen in the life of a chosen one.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 33
JOHN 14

CONSIDERATION

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.
– Galatians 6:14

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 14:14–17***LESSON****A time of war and a time
of peace****GENESIS 14:14**

*And when Abram heard
that his brother was taken
captive, he armed his
trained servants, born in his
own house, three hundred
and eighteen, and pursued
them unto Dan.*

We have read of how Lot fell captive when Sodom was conquered. Someone with him had escaped to tell Abram of this bad news. Abram immediately armed more than 300 of his trained servants and gave chase [v. 14].

To pursue an enemy, one has to act fast. And this was what Abram did. He did not spend too much time on planning. Neither did he hesitate when faced with a battle. He did not even think about the strife he had with Lot that first caused them to be separated. He acted fast and he acted right.

What we see here is a different Abram compared to the one we saw in Genesis 13. Earlier, when faced with a possible conflict with his brother, Abram stepped back graciously and let his brother have the first prerogative. Here, when faced with a possible showdown with an enemy who had captured his brother, he courageously gave chase.

In all things, there is “a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace” [Ecclesiastes 3:8]. Similarly, in our walk with God, there are different things we should do when faced with different challenges. When faced with difficult brothers, it is a time to love. When faced with wilful sinning, it is a time to hate. When dealing with our own sins, it is a time of war. When forgiving others who have sinned against us, it is a time of peace.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 34
JOHN 15**

REMINDER**Those who love God must hate sin.**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 14:18–24

LESSON

**Abram blessed by
Melchizedek**

GENESIS 14:19

*And he blessed him, and
said, Blessed be Abram
of the most high God,
possessor of heaven and
earth.*

Many will be surprised to hear that Abram was indeed an accomplished warrior. He is often viewed to be a gentle and peaceable man. But when duty calls, he was capable of rising up to be a fighter. In fact, he was so successful in one of his military campaigns that he was congratulated upon his victory. His expedition had captured the attention of the Canaanites in the region. He even won the praise of some wicked kings [v. 17].

However, Abram did not fall for the flatteries of men. He feared the Lord deeply. As such, he gave more reverence to king-priest Melchizedek than all the kings of the Canaanites [v. 18]. He had the highest regards for the most-high God, Who alone was the true and living God [v. 22]. It was this God who had given him and his men the victory over these fearsome kings.

Melchizedek was immediately recognised as one chosen and appointed by God [v. 20]. Therefore, Abram was grateful to receive the blessings that had come from God through the good hand of Melchizedek. He not only offered physical sustenance of ‘bread and wine’ but also authoritatively declared what God could offer and bestow spiritually on those who loved and feared Him. The priest was acting as an ambassador on behalf of the sovereign God [v. 19].

What blessings are in store for those who wait and hope in God through our Lord Jesus Christ? Christ is the Mediator of the New Testament. He is capable to offer forgiveness and salvation to any who will repent and believe in Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 35
JOHN 16

THOUGHT

**For there is one God, and one mediator between
God and men, the man Christ Jesus – 1 Timothy
2:5.**

BIBLE LESSON

Genesis 15:1–3

LESSON

**Jehovah’s promise to
Abram**

GENESIS 15:1

*After these things the word
of the LORD came unto
Abram in a vision, saying,
Fear not, Abram: I am thy
shield, and thy exceeding
great reward.*

Now that the excitement was over, Abram seemed to be overwhelmed with a sense of despondency and terror. Probably his enemies could be plotting revenge to recover their losses. To dispel his fear, God made this announcement to him regarding “after these things”. Having such a promise from God Himself, Abram could now dismiss his fears and cast all his burdens on the Lord.

This revelation of God to Abram contained a prophetic message. He was visited by “the word of the Lord”. God spoke to Abram regarding His special relationship to him. Because of this relationship, God’s power and blessings were made available to Abram. God revealed His true characters and nature in order to win the confidence of Abram’s heart and to excite his strongest faith in Him.

Like Abram, we are constantly exposed to many dangers in this wicked world. These threaten our peace and comfort. Fear can paralyse us to the point where we cannot render to God what is due to Him. But when we learn that God is our Protector and that He is able to shield us from fiery attacks, we can serve Him more courageously. We can remain calm in the face of conflicts.

Let nothing trouble you today as you launch into the world because you are assured of the divine promises to you. You can surely smile at the storms of life, for the Lord is ever near even “in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow” [Mark 4:38a].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 36
JOHN 17

PRAYER

**O Lord, let Thy Word be my strength and my
shield now and forevermore. Amen!**

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 15:4–6***LESSON****Believing the promises of
God****GENESIS 15:6***And he believed in the
Lord; and he counted it to
him for righteousness.*

Very often, a believer's faith takes a long while before he could respond positively to the gracious promise of God. Such was the case with Abram, when he immediately reacted unbelievably: "Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" He seemed to be saying to God, "You may promise me one thing, yet You are doing another." God promised him power but he felt helpless: Where is my reward? I am still childless [Genesis 15:2].

Abram had sincerely expressed his frustration and hopelessness to God as far as having an heir was concerned. He was then old and it would be impossible for him to have any descendant. He might as well give all his inheritance and honour to his faithful servant who was born into his household. Eliezer could be adopted into his family and be heir to his possessions.

Just as when Abram's faith was beginning to waver, "the word of the Lord came unto him" [v. 4]. God did not blame or chide him for his faithlessness. Instead, God once again spoke patiently to him, confirming in his heart the reality of the promise that He made earlier [Genesis 13:16]. He would have an heir who would come forth out of his own bowels. Furthermore, Abram would have a multitude of descendants, just like stars covering the night sky [v. 5].

Can you feel the power of God in the life of an obedient and submissive believer? We will not fail on what God has promised. Instead, God will most certainly bring them to pass. The only thing needed for us is to have true faith in Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 37
JOHN 18

PRAYER

**Gracious Father, help me cast my doubts away
and begin to believe in Thy faithfulness.**

BIBLE LESSON
Genesis 15:7–11

LESSON
The name of Jehovah

GENESIS 15:7

And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

The basis for all the fulfilment of the promises of God must undoubtedly be on the Person of God Himself. Jehovah is the ever-present God. He never changes. Past, present or future, He is the same. The faith of Abram might be wavering but the One who made the promise was ever faithful.

Here God graciously confronted the faltering faith of His servant so that instead of doubting, he could hold fast to the eternal promises of Jehovah. Abram was reminded of God's past dealings with him. The Lord had allowed him to see and experience His gracious provision and divine protection. The name of Jehovah, Who is all-sufficient, should be enough to excite him to look forward to the land of his inheritance, which he will surely possess. Abram was then standing on that land, and there was nothing that could stop him.

Yet, the old patriarch needed signs for encouragement [v. 8]. To fully satisfy the queries of His servant, God entered into a covenant made by a sacrifice with him [v. 9]. This sacrifice consisted of animals that are three years old, which was "the year of full vigour". Through the covenant, God tied Himself down to some conditions. It was a pledge on the part of Jehovah to fulfil His promise to Abram.

Let God speak words of peace and comfort to your faithless heart now, so that you will no more be cast down but rather be assured of Who God is.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 38
JOHN 19

PRAYER

O Lord, thank You for Thine sympathetic heart that reaches to me in the moment of my weakness. Drive my doubts away.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 15:12–21***LESSON****Abram's dreadful vision****GENESIS 15:17**

And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

After Abram had brought the animals for the sacrifice, there was nothing more that he had to do but await God's instruction. God Himself had done everything else. God gave Abram a clear message in a dreadful vision. Abram would not live to see this posterity but would die in peace.

This covenant is distinctively the initiative of God alone. In ancient times, participants of a covenant would walk through the blood and pieces of the animals in order to enact a treaty and curse anyone who broke the promises. No wonder, Abram found himself in the middle of a blood-bath ceremony with the Almighty God. And as the sun set, Abram was looking at all this blood, possibly still unsure as to what his terms were going to be in the covenant. He was terrified [v. 12].

But here, we only see God manifesting Himself in the appearance of "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp" [v. 17], passing between the divided carcasses of the animals. "This was done to signify that the covenant was unilateral and unconditional. No conditions were placed upon Abram for its fulfilment." It was a covenant between a greater party and a lesser party, between a sovereign and a subject.

Our faithful God binds Himself to this covenant with His people. We know that He will never fail but it is up to us whether we will enjoy His blessings by our obedience and submission to Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EXODUS 39
JOHN 20

PRAYER

Almighty God, let me fear Thee and ask that Thou would enable me to keep to the words of my promise for Thy Name's sake.

BIBLE LESSON*Genesis 16:1–6***LESSON****Waiting on the Lord****GENESIS 16:2**

And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

Both Abram and Sarai had been waiting for the fulfilment of God's promise. They had dwelt in the land of Canaan for 10 years now [v. 3]. Hitherto, they had clung to the promise of God and Sarai was expecting to be the mother of the promised son. But hope deferred made her heart sick. Every delay to their earnest expectation tried their hearts sorely.

In their impatience, they resorted to worldly means. Such was the case with Abram's wife, Sarai. To her own understanding, God could never give her a child in her old age. Sarai failed to see the good promise of God and thus limited His power. It was not that they did not know the expressed words of God. They simply could not wait on God's perfect timing. They grew tired of waiting and decided to seek out more expedient ways to resolve the issue themselves.

In the East, to perpetuate the household when all other hope was gone, this was one method that was well accepted. Thus this act seemed justifiable. However, when they acted in their impulse, it was a beginning of troubles for the family. Now, there would be jealousy and unhappiness in the home. Obviously, it was not their duty to aid God in the accomplishment of His promise.

How often have you acted in your own understanding and wisdom in matters that you think you are in control? Sometimes, waiting on the Lord is as much needed as believing His Word. Ask Him for more patience in your daily life.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

EXODUS 40
JOHN 21

PRAYER

Gracious Father, grant me Thy grace to cast my doubts and fears away and begin to trust in Thee completely and unreservedly.

