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Commentary on Genesis 1 - 11

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INTRODUCTION

In this commentary, I'm not trying to duplicate what other commentaries on Genesis have said from a theological perspective. In fact, I generally make no claim to be a theologian, nor that my writings consist of *theology*. I am a lawyer, and I write as a lawyer. When I examine and interpret the scriptures, I use a legal analytical style and a legal method of interpretation. In other words, I use the same hermeneutic to interpret both legal documents and scripture. It is my hope that such an analytical style will lead to some insights about scripture that might not otherwise be apparent.

For that reason, this commentary is not an attempt to duplicate other commentaries on creation vs. evolution, or the evidence for creation or the science of creation. I will leave scientific matters generally to the scientists to discuss according to their areas of expertise. My concern is with the ***legal effects*** of creation, of which there are several, and to the extent I find them inadequately addressed by others, I will address them here. I will, however, touch on matters of cosmology, which is concerned with the origin, history, structure and purpose of the universe, as such considerations have numerous direct impacts on the relationship between God, man and creation, and therefore, the laws and government of the universe.

I will, however, make two disclosures concerning my starting assumptions which will guide everything I will say. First, I read Genesis as literally as possible, meaning that I understand the first eleven chapters to be historical, an accurate description of what happened, and at no point will I assume any of the narrative is merely or primarily mythological or allegorical. That there may be symbolic implications from some of the narrative, I do not deny, but these only flow from first reading the scriptures literally. It is my conviction that there are no factual or logical barriers to understanding Genesis literally, and any so-called obstacles to reading the text literally merely shows that some people didn't try hard enough.

Second, because of the first point, I am a six-day creationist, and a young earth proponent (less than 10,000 years old in total). And yes, there are legal consequences which flow from that, as we will see.

My intent is to explore Genesis in view of the laws of nature and of nature's God. The law of nature simply being the will of God impressed upon the creation when it was made, being eternally existent and an intrinsic part of the nature of the world (and universe) so long as it exists. This will of God is part of the so-called General Revelation of God, being non-verbal in nature, but particularly focusing on that aspect of the creation that reveals rules, or laws, of human behavior, the consequences of violating such laws, and the nature of God and His kingdom government. These laws of nature are fixed, uniform and universal. That is, such laws apply for all time, to all people, everywhere in the universe. The laws of nature are unchangeable and eternal.

Whereas the laws of nature's God are part of what some people call Special Revelation, that is, the verbal revelation of God as written in the scriptures of the Holy Bible. But again focusing on the verbal rules, or laws, of human behavior, the consequences of violating such laws, and the nature of God and His kingdom government. These laws were delivered by way of several divine covenants, three of which are revealed in Genesis - the Adamic, Noahic and Abrahamic covenants. However, it is my intention at this time to examine only the first eleven chapters of Genesis, which

excludes the Abrahamic covenant from present consideration.

The Adamic and Noahic covenants and laws, for example, are of tremendous importance. For they, like the laws of nature, apply for all time, to all people, everywhere in the universe, binding Jews and Gentiles to the same degree. This is because of the fact that everyone on earth today is a descendant of both Adam and Noah, and the covenants delivered to each of them was made binding on their descendants from the very beginning, as I will show. Together, the laws of nature and the laws of nature's God (not just the first two divine covenants, but the subsequent ones as well) comprise the entirety of God's laws - there are no laws of God apart from these. A consideration of these laws of God will entirely guide my examination of Genesis.

CHAPTER 1

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The Uncreated Creator

In the beginning, God. And because the purpose of this commentary is to explore the Genesis scriptures in light of the laws of nature and nature's God, not for the sake of theology, *per se*, I will not here devolve into a discussion of the Doctrine of God, the nature of the Trinity, or like things. Rather, my focus is on the fact that as the uncreated Creator, who exists apart from the creation and is the maker of all things, God is the universal, undeniable and absolute sovereign over all of creation - including people, the earth, and the universe in its entirety. Meaning, that all ultimate authority vests in Him, and He derives that authority from no other.

> The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein. Ps. 24:1.

This flows directly from the law of creation: whoever creates something owns it completely, and may exercise an unlimited discretionary authority over the thing created - to use it, to name it, or to destroy it. God's authority over people doesn't arise from His infinite righteousness, power or knowledge, but solely by virtue of His having created us. God created not only every individual person, but He has also created every nation from among the earth. The absolute authority this vests in Him over the affairs of men is often referred to as the authority the potter has over the clay.

> Who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay . . .?" Rom. 9:20-21.

> "Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?" declares the Lord. "Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel." Jer. 18:6.

God's ultimate authority over people translates into Him being the ultimate source of all laws, and His laws are of a superior obligation compared to any other laws. This was eloquently expressed by William Blackstone, Commentaries on the Laws of England, Vol. 1, Intro, §2 (1765):

> Man, considered as a creature, must necessarily be subject to the laws of his creator, for he is entirely a dependent being. A being, independent of any other, has no rule to pursue, but such as he prescribes to himself; but a state of dependence will inevitably oblige the inferior to take the will of him, on whom he depends, as the rule of his conduct. ... And consequently, as man depends absolutely upon his maker for every thing, it is necessary that he should in all points conform to his maker's will.
>
> This will of his maker is called the law of nature. ...
>
> Considering the creator only as a being of infinite power, he was able unquestionably to have prescribed whatever laws he pleased to his creature, man, however unjust or severe.

> But as be is also a being of infinite wisdom, he has laid down only such laws as were founded in those relations of justice, that existed in the nature of things antecedent to any positive precept. These are the eternal, immutable laws of good and evil, to which the creator himself in all his dispensations conforms; and which he has enabled human reason to discover, so far as they are necessary for the conduct of human actions. * * *
>
> This law of nature, being coeval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this: and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original.

Thus, God is the beginning of all laws, and also of all government. His laws are supreme in every conceivable sphere, whether laws of physics, chemistry, optics, biology, mathematics and all other physical laws, or the laws of behavior, whether of inanimate objects, plants, animals, human beings, nations, planets, stars or any other created thing, spiritual or physical. He is the supreme judge, lawgiver, and king of the universe. Isa. 33:22. Any accurate apprehension of the laws of the universe must begin here.

Gen. 1:2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

The Focus of the Universe

Verse 2 describes the earth in its very earliest phase of creation - that of a world completely covered in water, hanging in space in utter darkness. The phrase, *without form and void*, refers to the fact that the water on the earth had not yet been separated into the waters above and those below, and the land had not yet been separated from the seas, nor had any living thing yet been created on it. In other words, to use modern vernacular, the earth had not yet been *terraformed*, and was initially uninhabitable. And so we see here the analogy of the potter and the clay taken in its most comprehensive sense, that the earth itself is a lump of clay the Creator will mold as He sees fit.

As opposed to, and in direct contradiction of the speculation (and it is indeed nothing more than an extrapolated speculation), that the earth was formed by rocks and dust swirling around the sun which, via gravitational forces, amalgamated themselves into a rocky planet which was initially devoid of water and principally volcanic on its surface. Thus, water was upon the surface of the earth from the very first moment of its existence. We might say that since there were no witnesses to the earth's creation other than the account given to us by the Creator Himself, all contrary accounts of the world's creation lack any competent testimony to which any weight might be given.

What strikes me, however, is that when the earth was first formed, there was nothing else - at all. In the beginning God - then the earth - and literally everything else (sun, moon, stars, the rest of the universe) all came *after*. Not a Big Bang - then stars and galaxies - and then planets. Which makes the earth both the starting point and the focus of all creation, and necessarily of the entire universe. No place in the entire universe is more important than the earth. By definition, anything truly

important in the universe is happening *here*.

Historically, this led some people to assert the earth was the literal physical center of the universe, and the concept was introduced that all else in the universe revolves around the earth as the pivot point. Unfortunately, this was eventually made into a point of religious doctrine by the institutional church, so that anyone expressing a different opinion (for example, that the earth revolves around the sun) was branded a heretic and severely persecuted. Such a course of conduct is indefensible - not that the church formed its own opinion of the matter, but that church leaders assumed an authority God never gave them to force their opinions on others, and to persecute or punish those who disagreed with them.

Biblically, legally and scientifically, everyone is entitled to form their own opinion based on the evidence which convinces them. Something every lawyer knows (but apparently not many scientists do), is that documentary evidence and eyewitness testimonial evidence is every bit as competent as any physical or scientific evidence to establish a proof of facts. No one ever said (or at least, no one ever had the right to say) physical evidence is the only evidence allowed to prove an origins theory. The biblical rule is: "Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." Rom. 14:5. God is never threatened by people who have contrary opinions.

It matters not to me, nor to the law, whether the sun revolves around the earth, or vice versa. Because let us assume, *arguendo*, the earth revolves around the sun. Logically, it has no bearing on the *importance* of the earth in the solar system or the galaxy, or on the *importance* of humanity to the universe. Yes, having a central importance could conceivably indicate a central *position* in the universe, but not necessarily. The medieval mistake was linking the two together conceptually, so that if it could be proved the earth revolved around the sun, then it would be 'proved' the earth was not of central importance to creation. When of course, that doesn't logically follow at all.

The point being that modern cosmology has gone out of its way to deny, ridicule and yes, persecute anyone holding onto the antiquated notion of the central importance of the earth and humanity in the universe. People say things like the earth is an insignificant planet, orbiting a second-rate star, on the edge of a mediocre galaxy in a remote corner of the universe. That if there aren't millions of other intelligent beings in the universe, then it is a giant waste of space. That the more we learn about the universe, the more we validate our own insignificance as a species.

To 'prove' such assertions, cosmologists have devised a model of the universe which is not merely expanding in all directions from a central point, but rather is expanding in all directions from any and all possible points all at once, so that the universe is getting bigger but has no center. People often use the example of the surface of a balloon to explain this notion, which as it inflates expands in all directions all at the same time. Except, of course, *every balloon has a center*. A universe without a center cannot exist in three-dimensional space. But oh, they have mathematical equations showing how such a space would behave - if it did exist. But such a space does not actually exist, and mathematical equations do not prove they are describing anything real.

All in a spectacularly hubristic attempt to deny the universe has a center - that if it did, to deny the earth could be at that center - that if it did, mankind would still lack any significance in the 'big picture.' Using the guise of science to make a philosophical or theological point. Which ultimately

traces to a denial of the existence of any God who could have made any such universe. But at least modern cosmologists will all have the comfort of their math equations when they die and appear before God.

So let me now come out and say what every cosmologist dreads: the earth is neither merely ordinary, nor insignificant with respect to the universe as a whole. The earth is not only uniquely suited for human habitation, it is absolutely unique in all of existence - there is no other like it. Whether any other planet has breathable air or liquid water is irrelevant - in any case, life as we know it did not start 'out there' somewhere and then randomly find its way here to flourish. All life was created here on earth by the Almighty Creator. Consequently, regardless of our planetary position in the cosmos, the center of all life in the universe is right here on earth. Which means that all human efforts to find life elsewhere are wasted efforts of the blind leading the blind, trying to find what never was there - and a shameful squandering of resources on mere futility.

Plus, by definition, all those other galaxies and stars out there in the universe are not wasted space - they serve a very specific purpose, namely, to give light and to be for signs and seasons. Light, signs and seasons to us - people on the earth. Nothing else out in the universe has any importance except as it may be important here on earth. Just because people are *curious* about quasars, neutron stars and black holes does not make them *important*. And no matter what is learned about such phenomena, it will tell us nothing about where we came from, or why we are here.

Gen. 1:3-5 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

No Gaps In Time

Here I will briefly address the so-called Gap Theory, or ruin-restoration creationism theory, that postulates there was a long unstated period of time between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2. This theory is a misguided attempt to reconcile scripture with modern science, when of course it is modern science which must be reconciled with scripture. But in the minds of its advocates, this theory 'explains' how the present world could have been created in six literal days, yet accommodate an old age of the earth and allow for the age of dinosaurs before mankind was created.

According to proponents, when verse 2 describes the earth as formless and void, it supposedly indicates the earth was in a state of ruin and destruction, that is, an accursed state under God's judgment. Thus, verse 3 ("Let there be light") is supposed to show God initiating a new creation to replace the one that was judged and ruined.

There are severe problems with this theory. First, and foremost, it is nowhere indicated in the text. Scripture nowhere indicates a passage of time between verses 1 and 2, and the rest of the creation account is so compressed in time (lasting only six 24-hour days), that a gap of indeterminate, but extreme length (thousands or millions of years), is completely inconsistent with the rest of Genesis 1. Second, as I've already indicated, *formless and void* have no necessary implications of destruction or judgment, but merely indicate God had not yet terraformed the earth.

Third, the theory postulates God had a reason to judge the earth during the gap period, which could only have been for moral reasons. Whose morality? The dinosaurs? Pre-human humans? Moral, but fallen and sinful creatures in addition to, and separate from, the present humanity? Why on earth would God want to do that twice? It makes no sense. Fourth, the theory postulates, in effect, that God made a mistake with the first creation, and had to resort to Plan B. Allow me to gently suggest: 1) God never makes mistakes; and 2) God never needs, and never has, a Plan B.

Sure this present creation that we live in now will be replaced by a new heavens and a new earth, when sin and death are abolished and the curse and the Fall are completely removed. But the Gap Theory suggests that God replaced the first sinful and fallen creation with a second sinful and fallen creation, both of which still ultimately need to be replaced by a perfect and sinless creation. Why go through the present mess at all, if that is the case - why not just skip from the first sinful creation to the perfect creation? God wanted to go through a fallen and sinful creation twice? I don't get it. Plus, if you say the first creation (before the gap) wasn't sinful and fallen, then why was it judged and destroyed? Again, it doesn't make sense.

And if the first creation before the gap failed, why didn't God plan for that in advance? Or didn't He see it coming? Which brings up a fifth problem - the Gap Theory postulates an ineffective or an unprepared God who didn't see where things would eventually lead, or in other words, a puny god. Ah, but the God of scripture declares, "for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.'" Isa. 46:9-10.

A sixth problem with the Gap Theory is that it is nothing more than raw *eisegesis* - reading into the text something that isn't there. It's just like the popular gap theory often applied to Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks in Dan. 9:24-27, where supposedly the first 69 weeks all happened in the past, and the future 70th week is separated by an indeterminate period of 2,000 years, at least. Not to mention the popular misinterpretation of the 70 weeks (490 literal days) as 490 years being the core assumption underlying the existence of a gap. Eisegesis, all of it. Unfounded assumptions, leading to gross misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Don't get swept up in such nonsense.

God knows how to tell time, and He knows how to convey a proper sense of time to us. If God had actually intended for any of these alleged gaps to be understood as such, He has the language skills to be able to express those thoughts directly, instead of leaving people to have their imaginations run rampant.

Gen. 1:6-19 [Summary] Second day - separated the waters above from the waters below with an expanse called Heaven. Third day - separated the dry land from the seas, and created all land-based vegetation. Fourth day - created the sun, moon and stars to give light on the earth, rule over the day and night, and for signs and seasons, days and years.

The Divine Calendar

The creation account here in Genesis 1 gives us not only a sequence of events, but also a precise measurement of time intervals between events. In other words, Genesis gives us the foundations of

the calendar which, being rooted in the creation account itself, is a part of the law of nature. A day is a day, a week is a week, and a month is a month, etc., precisely because God made them a certain way, conformed all of nature to that way (including people), and then told us what those measurements are so as to eliminate any doubt or ambiguity. And mankind, being who we are (self-willed, stubborn, wanting to be like God) still screwed it up.

Let's consider the textual evidence. God defined a *day* as one complete cycle of evening and morning, *i.e.*, from sunset to sunset. Thus, the phrase, "and there was evening and there was morning, the [blank] day," is used six times in Genesis 1, one for each day of creation. So it would seem self-evident that when Genesis 2 moves to a description of the seventh day, the measurement remains the same (from evening to morning) even though unstated. And the Jews have always observed the Sabbath (*i.e.*, the seventh day) as beginning on Friday at sunset, with the first day of the week beginning on Saturday at sunset.

Next, God defined a *week* as seven days - six days of work followed by one day of rest. Gen. 1:31 - 2:3. Or, as later described, from Sabbath to Sabbath (Isa. 66:23), that is, from the completion of one Sabbath, to the completion of the next Sabbath. God defined a *month* as one complete lunar cycle, that is, from one new moon to the next - always 29 or 30 days. See again, Isa. 66:23. Although Genesis uses the term *years* quite frequently beginning in chapter 5, no year-end definitions are provided until Exodus.

In Exodus 12, when the Jews were still captive in Egypt and they were about to observe the first Passover, God told Moses that "this month [Nisan] shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you." Exo. 12:2. *See also*, Est. 3:7. Historically, the Jews have recognized two annual calendars. There is a religious year which begins on Nisan 1 (in the Spring), and there is a civil year beginning on Tishrei 1, which comes in the Fall. I, not being a Jew, regard the yearly definition which came first, and from the mouth of God, as being more likely to be aligned with the law of nature. Thus, a year beginning in Spring.

I also note that ancient Gentile nations tended to observe an annual calendar which began on or about March 1. You can still see the remnants of this today. Thus, September, October, November and December are *named* as the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th months (*check your Latin - sept = seven, oct = eight, etc.*), but that only makes sense if New Year's Day is/was March 1. However, those months are the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th months in the current western calendar. The Gregorian calendar that we now use, which incorporates all of these changes, was first introduced in Europe in 1582 and only became effective in Britain and America in 1752.

Which leads me to believe that the calendar year, as defined by God and nature, likely begins in the Spring, around March 1. Of course, as per the aforementioned willful stubbornness of people, over time, people have gradually changed all of these basic definitions to suit our purposes. Instead of starting each day at sunset, we define it as beginning at midnight. God defined a week as having seven days with one day of rest (the Sabbath), with Friday sunset to Saturday sunset counting as the last day of the week. We define a week with two days of rest (a weekend), and what most Christians call the Sabbath is actually the first day of the week (Sunday), not the last.

Western civilization has completely divorced the concept of a month from the lunar cycle of new

moons by introducing 28 day and 31 day months. And we base the year not on lunar cycles, but on solar cycles, having completely disposed of the concept of an intercalary month for an intercalary day (*i.e.*, leap year, February 29). Additionally, New Year's day was changed to January 1 from dates roughly correlating with March 1 as used by ancient calendars.

Since God implanted the nature of the calendar in the laws of creation, people have redefined the calendar in almost every imaginable way. But just because people have done this, *does not mean it is binding on God*, or that the actions of mere men have changed the way God keeps time. It kind of gives a new meaning to Job 10:5, does it not? ("Are your days as the days of man, or your years as a man's years?") In other words, does God measure time the way men measure time?

And, since the legal implications of creation are of primary concern here, at what point, exactly, did God authorize people to redefine the calendar He gave us? God said the sun, moon and stars were given to us for signs and seasons (verse 14) before he gave us dominion over the earth in verse 28. Frankly, I don't see how earthly dominion fairly implies an authority to redefine the signs and seasons of the heavens. I look forward to seeing if, in the Millennium when Jesus returns to rule over the earth, the worldwide calendar gets readjusted to conform to the laws of nature.

Gen. 1:20-25 And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens." So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

And God Said

In the Introduction to this Commentary, I said that the law of nature is the will of God impressed upon the creation when it was made, being an intrinsic part of the nature of the universe so long as it exists. The question naturally arises as to how this was accomplished. And the answer, clearly provided in Genesis 1, is that the entire creation was spoken into existence by the Word of God. It is fairly to be implied, therefore, that this is how the law of nature also came into being.

For we see repeatedly in the account of creation, on each of the creation days, the statement "and God said," which is the exclusive mechanism provided for the manner in which the creation took place. Thus, the creation was not only spoken into existence, *piece by piece*, but in so doing, God implanted His will, that is His laws, into the creation *piece by piece* as it was being made.

Thus we have the "and God said" statement in verse 26, specifically relating to the creation of mankind, separate and distinct from the "and God said" statements in verse 20 (birds and sea creatures) and verse 24 (all land animals). So it may reasonably be inferred that God's will for birds

and sea creatures might be (and probably is) different from His will for land animals, and both of those are different from God's will for humans. Such that God's will for how people are to behave is different than His will for how other animals are to behave - regardless of whether the underlying physical laws would be the same, similar, or different. Although these various aspects of the law of nature - physical vs. behavioral laws, and human vs. animal laws - would all exist harmoniously in an integrated system compatible with each other consistent with God's nature.

This is consistent with a variety of scriptures linking Jesus as the Word of God with the creation of the world. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." Jn. 1:1-3. "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him." Col. 1:16.

Many people take this phrase in Colossians - *thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities* - to mean heavenly forces, *i.e.*, angels and demons. For my part, I can allow that as a possible meaning of the phrase, but one which is not necessarily intended, nor is it required, so I leave it to others to consider in that light. Rather, I see the words as clearly indicating *laws and governments*, for that is quite clearly the ordinary meaning of the words, that is, thrones, dominions, rulers and authorities. And since God has given us very little information in the scriptures about heavenly laws and governments, I must conclude the phrase primarily refers to earthly laws and governments, about which the scriptures give us much more information.

The clear meaning of Col. 1:16 is that when the universe was created, laws and governments were expressly made a part of that creation. For both law and government are very clearly a part of the nature of God - as God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33), neither is He the Creator of randomness, chaos or disorder. And the creation as a whole, just as the law of nature does specifically, reflects the nature of its Creator.

Thus, the law of nature did not in any part evolve over time, as the defining factor in evolution is randomness, as opposed to being created with a fixed beginning. "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, . . . 'Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth! . . . Do you know the ordinances of the heavens, or fix their rule over the earth?'" Job 38:1,4,33. Plus, the law of nature did not gradually develop from the operation of impersonal forces, but was imposed by the Creator from the necessity that the entire creation should be subjected to His will, giving Him the right to judge the entire world.

Hence, we should be mindful that the creation account in Genesis 1 is as much about human behavior, laws and governments, as it is about the physical universe, the environment, and mankind's relationship to them.

Gen. 1:26 Then 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 birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

The Pinnacle of Creation

I'll talk about what it means to be created in God's image shortly, but first I want to simply recognize that being made in God's image is as high as any creature can get. First, it means that of all the creatures God made on the earth, mankind is the pinnacle of creation. Of no creatures besides mankind does God say they bear His image. God does command that the animals of the earth should be fruitful and multiple several times (Gen. 1:22; 8:17; Eze. 36:11), but never does He say they have been made in His image. Instead, the scripture says this:

> When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings [or angels] and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. Ps. 8:3-8.

Now, this Psalm does have some specific Messianic references in it. Nevertheless, the dominion spoken of here, over sheep and oxen, beasts of the field, birds and fish - all these are specifically covered in the granting of dominion to mankind in general (not merely the Messiah) in verses 26 and 28. Therefore it is humanity in general, not only the Messiah, who is crowned with glory and honor, and is made a little lower than the angels. And the dominion spoken of here is a very large part of that glory and honor.

Second, it means that there cannot be any alien species or life forms, extra-terrestrials, nor any 'Ancients' pre-dating humanity who are superior, more powerful, more intelligent, or more advanced, than earthly human beings. I suppose I can see why some people might find it a disappointment, that we are the most intelligent creatures in the universe. Nonetheless, that is a fact we have to work with.

For indeed the search for extra-terrestrial intelligence is very much an enterprise engaged in for the purpose of avoiding the obvious - namely, God the Creator. This idea floating around, that once we find other intelligent beings in the universe we will finally know that we are not alone - what a bunch of utter nonsense. We have *never* been alone - God is with us, *Immanuel*. To say that we are now alone, and we will only ever not be alone when we finally encounter beings not created by the God of this earth, is to spit in God's face and deny that He exists, and is who He says He is.

Deeply ironic, isn't it, that we as the pinnacle of creation don't even recognize who we are, and what our proper place in the universe is? And to think, this is the opinion of some of our brightest minds. Man, are we (as a species) dumb!

All Men Are Created Equal

The key legal effect of mankind being the pinnacle of creation, is that every human being equally shares in this high position. It was not merely Adam and Eve who were made in God's image, but all who are descended from them. For the dominion granted to them here in v. 26 and v. 28 did not terminate with the death of Adam and Eve, but continues to this present day. Or else, I suppose, the

animal kingdom would have risen up and deposed its human masters, and human beings might long ago have stopped having children - but no, these never happened, and never will. Meaning, that every descendant of Adam and Eve today (which includes literally everyone) is made in the image of God to the same degree and extent as everyone else. Thus, all men are created equal.

However, I use this concept of equality strictly in its legal sense. Obviously people are made with different appearances, different personalities, different gifts, talents and abilities, and may be born into very different circumstances or environments. But I am not addressing any of those things. Rather, I see the legal equality of people as including these attributes:

1. All people equally bear God's image. Thus, among humans, there are no lesser creatures, nor any people with any more or less individual dignity compared to anyone else. No race or nation of people - nor even any individuals - are more cursed than any others, more inclined to sin than any others, more the spawn of the devil or any unholy offspring compared to others, or are inherently more wicked than any others. No people are to be treated as mere animals, or mere property.

2. All people are equally fitted by God for self-government. Which means every person: a) has a conscience; b) is capable of making right and wrong moral choices; c) is accountable for their own actions or choices only and not the actions or choices of others; d) is subject to the laws of God and man for the proper regulation of their behavior; e) will give an account before God on the Day of Judgment; f) is capable of making right moral choices during their lifetime.

3. All people have the same authority to subdue the earth, exercise dominion over the animal kingdom, and to be fruitful and multiply (see v. 28). In other words, legally people have the same rights and authority to choose an occupation and engage in honest work, to own, possess and use property, to marry, to have children and to raise them, to keep and tame animals for their use or profit, to derive food from the natural resources God has provided, and to engage in commerce, industry (*i.e.*, to make things), and form voluntary associations, etc.

4. All people are endowed with inalienable rights in the same number, to the same degree, and to the same extent as any others. All inalienable rights are God-given, so they cannot be taken away from, or deprived of, any person except by voluntary waiver by a person for themselves only, or by forfeiture for a crime committed. No one can forfeit or deprive the inalienable rights of others, including their descendants. Children cannot be punished for the sins of their parents, or vice versa. The inalienable rights of every person include life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, of course, but also many others - religious liberty, freedom of speech and assembly, the right to bear arms and others too numerous to list here.

5. All people are born free. Under the laws of God, no one can rightfully be born into slavery, nor be made a slave or sold as a slave. But the reverse is also true - no one is born with an inherent right to rule others. All human beings are created equally free before God, and any right to rule can only be conferred by the consent of the governed in keeping with the limitations and restraints of God's laws. No one, by reason of their birth, is vested with any authority to rule others for any reason whatsoever.

6. All people are equally born with a fallen state, or sin nature, under a universal condemnation and judgment of sin, and are equally capable of partaking of the redemption in Christ. However, as those do not actually arise in the Genesis narrative until chapter 3, and are more of a religious nature than a legal nature, I will defer discussion of them until later.

Gen. 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Made In God's Image

Now there are several attributes of humanity which irrevocably separate people from animals, by which we may say that all people bear the image of God, but animals and all other aspects of the creation do not. Foremost among these is the eternal spirit given to each person, sometimes called the *soul*, which survives the death of the body and lives forever in the 'hereafter.' Several consequences flow from this, such as personal moral responsibility, the ability to make right and wrong choices, and individual accountability before God, etc.

Other unique attributes of bearing God's image, or 'personhood,' are the ability to exercise reason and understanding, to speak and write complex languages, to tap into the conscience - an *a priori* knowledge of right and wrong based on God's laws partially written on our hearts - and the ability to invent, to produce and create, for as God was able to create us, so we are also able to create things lesser than us. All these, and some others, distinguish people from animals and mark us as the pinnacle of creation, made in God's image.

However, for legal purposes, that is, under the laws of nature and nature's God, what most distinguishes people from the rest of creation is that we are vested with *authority*. Think back to the Ps. 8 quotation a couple pages back - what was it that made man crowned with glory and honor, the pinnacle of creation? It is that God granted mankind dominion over the works of His hands, and put all things under our feet. In other words, God put humanity in the position of being Second-In-Command over the whole world. That's what makes us most reflective of God's nature (made in His image) compared to all other creatures.

But note, this authority doesn't vest in humans simply because we are 'higher life forms,' have sentience or self-awareness, or by reason of evolutionary processes allowing us to claw our way to the top of the heap of creatures on the earth. Rather, we are crowned with this authority by the express verbal declaration of God, by which He has given, or delegated, this authority to us. Which, to be perfectly blunt, would not belong to us ***but for*** the verbal declaration of God. That is, if God had not expressly said so, in so many words, we would have no claim to that authority.

Thus in v. 26, we have a discussion among the Godhead, as it were, expressing a divine intention to *let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion*. Again directly linking God's image to dominion authority. Then in v. 28, we have God speaking an express blessing and command to the man and woman, to *be fruitful and multiply, subdue the earth, and have dominion*. And since this all occurs in the same act of creation, everything authorized in v. 28 is to be understood as being a part of the image of God in man, as well.

Earlier I commented that God implanted His will, that is the laws of nature, into the creation piece by piece as it was spoken into existence. Thus, we can infer from v. 26 that the phrase *then God said* is the means by which the laws of human behavior were impressed upon the creation, not only in the physical world, *per se*, but in the very makeup of human nature. Further, the phrase *and God said to them* in v. 28 is the means by which mankind's dominion authority was bestowed upon Adam and Eve and their descendants until the end of time.

In a technical sense, since the law of nature is non-verbal, the delegation of dominion authority (being expressly verbal) in v. 28 is part of the laws of nature's God, which are verbal. But I take this to mainly mean, with respect to dominion authority, that we would not have known about it, except that God has given us the scriptures telling of it. For all practical purposes though, since the grant of dominion was declared during the six days of creation, and not merely some time afterward, it signifies that our dominion is built into the fabric of the universe, for there was never a time in the history of creation when mankind did not have this dominion.

This leads me to conclude that our dominion is a law of the creation. I mean this in at least two senses.

First, the physical creation itself must respect this authority - that is, the earth knows who its master is. This unfettered dominion was of course altered in the Fall - the earth no longer yields its produce freely and abundantly, but must be coerced by the sweat of the brow. Nonetheless, the original grant of authority remains unaltered. Humans are still the masters of the earth, and we have no equal. We do not need to ask the ground, the birds, fish or animals for permission to dominate them - and they have no claim to dominion superior to ours - we are their unquestioned masters and we need not apologize for it.

Second, because this dominion authority is the law of our nature, built into the world by the very God who made it, it is an inalienable right which can never rightfully be taken away or deprived by any human government. For when this authority was delegated, there were in fact no human governments in existence, nor would there be any for a few thousand years. Which means that accountability for the manner of taking dominion is personal and private, between each person and God alone. Think of it as an aspect of religious freedom, where no one else is authorized to step in between us and God and direct the manner of how we discharge our duty to Him.

Male and Female He Created Them

Lord knows there are all kinds of things which could be said about sex and gender, gender fluidity, transgenderism, gender reassignment surgeries (a/k/a sex change operations) that just a few decades ago, no one would ever have thought necessary to talk about. However, my comments will be brief.

When v. 27 says that God created mankind as male and female, it means that every person ever born in the history of the world was born either male or female - not both, not neither, but one or the other in a binary system. This determination was and is made by God alone, assigned at birth, fixed for life (not subject to change), and is biologically based. There are no 'inner boys' lurking within a girl's body, nor any 'inner girls' waiting to burst forth from a boy. People do not get to select their own genders, nor indeed even what genders they want to have sex with, and multiple options are

never an option. Neither parents nor children have the right to change anyone's gender, nor schools, governments or society.

When God gave mankind dominion authority, it only included authority over the earth and the animal kingdom. Dominion authority does not include what today is euphemistically called 'reproductive freedom,' or the right to terminate a pregnancy other than by giving birth. Similarly, dominion authority does not include the right to select, ignore or change gender; the right ro redefine gender; the right to give birth to, or adopt, a child by an unmarried person; the right to marry a person of the same gender; or the right to cross-dress, etc. All actions taken in disregard of these limitations are unlawful and forbidden.

According to Rom. 1:18-32, the fact that these things are wrong, they will eventually be judged by God, and all who do such things deserve only death, is plainly revealed to all people in the creation itself, so that no one can claim to be excused by reason of ignorance. And far from being actually ignorant, people deny and suppress this truth in active rebellion against their Creator. We can only hope that in the larger flow of history, the current prevalence of these practices will be short lived.

Gen. 1:28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

The Dominion Mandate

Although the creation account is full of instances where God spoke things into existence, for the most part no one (humanly speaking) was there to hear those words. The writer of Genesis wasn't so much an eyewitness of the creation, as a recorder of the words God told him to write down at a later point. Here in v. 28 for the first time, God spoke words out loud in the hearing and presence of the man and woman, telling them exactly why they were here on the earth and what God wanted them to do. Which in the scheme of the laws of nature and nature's God, is the first instance of the law of nature's God, that is, the first *verbal* revelation of God's will.

Now, whatever God has to say at this point - it being the beginning point - is likely to be the most important thing possible for people to know, in order to survive, thrive, and carry out God's intentions on the earth. So what is the very first thing God says to man? Bow down and worship Me? Love and serve Me? Preach the gospel to all creation? ***No***. Have sex and make babies; conquer and control the world; and dominate all animal life. That's it, right there - the reason why God made mankind and put us on the earth.

These things all need to be done lawfully, as further revealed (primarily in the context of a lawful family), but a person does not have to be a Christian to do them. This is not a command for the Church to fulfill, nor is it a call for Christian families to take Christian dominion. This is God's will for *all people* - Jew and Gentile, saint and sinner alike.

Verse 28 is commonly referred to as the Dominion Mandate, and we need to say some generalized things about it. First and foremost, when God granted dominion authority to mankind, it was given to us in our private capacities (*i.e.*, as individuals and members of families). No civil government

then existed at the time of God's grant, nor did God thereafter transfer this private dominion to the jurisdiction of civil rulers. Civil government has no original, inherent or superior right to supervise, superintend, regulate, license, tax or otherwise police the private dominion of individuals and families. Thus, the Dominion Mandate was from its inception, and still is, one hundred percent private, not public or communal, and not subject to any human institution, whether church, state or corporation.

The practical consequences of earthly dominion being vested in the private sector are far-reaching. Thus, the right to conceive and bear children, as well as the care, discipline and education of them, is the exclusive province of families.

This is amply demonstrated by the fact that the first civil government did not arise until almost 2,000 years later (after the dispersion from Babel), during which period families were the primary governing unit of society. When nations and governments eventually arose, God at that time made no pronouncements concerning the nature and extent of national or civil powers that might have operated to insert those institutions into the parent-child or marital relationships, leaving them firmly in the hands of private families. Even when the nature of national and civil power is summarized in Rom. 13:1-7 and 1 Pet. 2:13-14, more than 4,000 years after the Garden of Eden, no mention is made of familial purposes resting in the hands of public officials or the public sector.

Similarly, when Jesus laid out the authority of the Church in Mat. 28:18-20, it included only the authority to make disciples via the second or spiritual birth, and made no mention of children or physical birth. Following the *Law of Enumerated Powers*, no authority is given unless it is expressly granted, and the only express grant of familial authority by God is right here in the Dominion Mandate.

The same principles hold true for the authority to subdue the earth (including, without limitation, private property) and the authority to exercise dominion over the animal kingdom. At no time subsequent to the initial creation did God grant any similar authority to nations, civil governments or the Church. It never has been, and never will be, the lawful authority of governments to conquer or control the world, nor to treat natural resources (including all animals) as inherently under the control of government institutions. That this has ever been the presupposition of all governments in history only shows the extent to which God's commands have been ignored, violated and perverted.

I only need to briefly mention that to the extent the institutional church has exercised control over nations and kingdoms, waged war with armies, and subjugated lands and people by coercion, it too has ignored, violated and perverted the laws of God. But in the case of churches, they should have known better, and also claimed to be the people of God, so their transgressions are the worst.

Secondly, the Dominion Mandate has never expired, nor has it been superseded. The authority granted to be fruitful and multiply has never expired, as people have continued to reproduce throughout history, and the authority to reproduce did not expire when Adam and Eve died. Further, the dominion authority granted was and is a *package deal*. By that I mean all of the various authorities granted - to subdue the earth, dominate all animals, to bear and raise children - are all bundled together. They were spoken to the same people at the same time and in the same

circumstance, literally in the same sentence, and applied to the same beneficiaries. They cannot be separated from each other, but must all rise and fall together.

Which means that as long as God allows families to bear children, then dominion over the earth and the animals continues to reside in the hands of the private sector - families and individuals.

Neither was the Dominion Mandate terminated at the Fall, nor was mankind's dominion *lost* at that point. The curses pronounced on the man and the woman in Gen. 3 made taking dominion more *difficult* from that point onward, but the commands of the mandate itself remain unchanged. In spite of the fact that childbirth would become painful, women were still commanded to be fruitful and multiply. In spite of the fact that man would need to work for his food, he was still commanded to subdue the earth. The *conditions* of keeping the covenant had changed, but not its *terms*.

When you want to modify an agreement, how is that done? The parties get together and either make an all new agreement, or they make an amendment. *It takes new words between the parties to change old words between the same parties*. Just because you lost your job (a change in conditions) does not mean the terms of your mortgage have changed. Just because you move to another state does not change your credit card terms or the amount you owe. Circumstances and conditions do not create changes to the terms of a man-made agreement - *much less could they ever change a divine covenant*.

The inevitable result of which is this: the Dominion Mandate is as much the law of human nature today as it was when first spoken. Insofar as the authority which was granted, *nothing has changed*. Nor was it ever optional, and is not optional now. Nor has the Dominion Mandate been made less important over time, nor is it less important than, say, the Great Commission. It is still the Prime Directive, if you will, of humanity. The family is still the primary governing unit of society, over both church and state. This is the reason people were put on the earth.

Gen. 1:29-30 And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.

Unfettered Private Dominion Over Plants

Some aspects of dominion, particularly child-bearing, by subsequent revelation of God's laws, are restricted to being carried out lawfully only by a man and woman united in marriage. That is, no man has the right to father children by any woman not his wife, and no woman without a husband has the right to conceive a child either naturally or artificially. But not all aspects of dominion are like this. Thus, single men and single women are authorized by God's laws to own and hold property, to choose and exercise a lawful occupation, and to exercise dominion over animals.

Here in verses 29-30, God expresses another aspect of dominion capable of being exercised by any individual as well as a family unit, namely dominion over plants. Specifically, people are given plants yielding seed and trees having fruit bearing seed for food. Animals are given a larger diet - every green plant, not just those yielding seeds or fruit trees. But by fair implication, since people

have dominion over the animals, whatever it is that the animals are authorized to eat, people must be authorized to procure, grow, harvest, and use for related purposes, such as animal bedding, etc. Further, it would seem these verses grant an unfettered private dominion over plants, as food for people, food for animals, and for related dominion purposes (to make dwellings, tools, etc.).

Which, for our purposes here, means that this dominion over plants is the law of human nature, in effect now as much as it was at the beginning, and it continues to reside exclusively in private hands (individuals and families) without any part of that dominion having been transferred over to nations, governments, or any other human institution. Thus, when nations and governments tell people what plants they can and cannot grow, sell, or use, it is a fundamental violation of the laws of nature and nature's God, a usurpation of private dominion, and an unjustifiable injustice. And this leads to some *inconvenient truths*.

Many plants can be used for multiple purposes, some of which can be potentially harmful, or at least risky. Thus, hemp is a plant product that can be used to make rope, cordage and fabric. But the hemp plant is otherwise known as marijuana, or *cannabis* - a flowering plant yielding seed - that can be ingested or smoked to produce pain relief, yes, but also a drug induced high which can impair one's brain functions and judgment. And cannabis is hardly unique in this respect.

Tobacco is a seed-bearing plant, which in colonial times was often used as a monetary currency, even in the payment of church tithes. Yet, the primary use for tobacco is in making products for smoking, which is addictive and causes lung cancer. Wine is made from grapes, beer is made from barley, and whiskey is made from various grains - all of which are seed bearing plants having legitimate uses as food quite separate from any considerations of producing alcohol for consumption. The opium poppy, the source of various narcotics including morphine, heroin, codeine, oxycodone and many other derivatives, is a seed-bearing plant. These powerful drugs all have legitimate medical uses, but at the same time are easily abused recreationally.

Nonetheless, whether used for food, beverages, medicines, or ten thousand other possible uses, people have an unrestricted private dominion to use plants any way they wish, for plants are a natural part of the earth that people have the right to subdue and control. So it frankly doesn't matter whether tobacco or poppies or marijuana are food or not. *We have dominion over them*. And this dominion, being given to us by God, is *an inalienable right and authority* - no civil government that ever has existed or ever will can lawfully deprive anyone of God's delegation of this authority. I go so far as to say civil government (according to the laws of nature and nature's God) has *no legitimate jurisdiction* over the private dominion of people with respect to plants.

Doesn't civil government have the right to punish wrongdoers (it does not "bear the sword in vain" - Rom. 13:4)? Yes - but that power is limited to matters which God has declared to be wrong. If your argument to me is that civil government is a *servant of God* to punish people for exercising a God-given authority, then my answer to you is that *a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand*. (Mat. 12:25-26). God never gave authority over the same things to separate segments of society, so they could fight each other for control. Plus, God is not the author of confusion. (1 Cor. 14:33). What God gave the private sector He did not "re-give" to civil government to superintend, regulate or control. Nor did the good Lord position civil government *between* God and individuals.

This is not merely God's *permissive will*. This is God's law - a divine commandment which, when violated by any person or government, is a sin.

Of course, substance abuse can cause real harm to people, and the scriptures indicate inebriation, drunkenness, and getting high are morally wrong. However, we are not here discussing the *wisdom* of substance abuse. We are here considering who has *authority before God* to do what. And just because people do harmful, foolish and stupid stuff of their own volition does not thereby deprive them of the authority to do so, nor does it operate to vest governments with authority not expressly granted to step in. God lets people fail, and fail miserably. God even lets people (gasp!) *go to Hell*. God never stops people from being foolish or self-destructive. Who are we, as a society, to think we can do what even God does not? Who is the real law-breaker in this situation?

Gen. 1:31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

The Adamic Covenant

Although there are no express words of covenant used in the text (such as, "this shall be a covenant between Me and you for all generations"), verses 28-30 are typically regarded as constituting a divine covenant between God and all of mankind through Adam, as progenitor of the entire human race. And as v. 31 informs us, everything God made - necessarily including not only the physical world and all creatures, but as Col. 1:16 states, all *dominions* and *authorities* - was very good. Thus, v. 31 must be taken as a statement that the Adamic covenant, which is an authorization to take dominion, is itself *very good* - meaning that it lacked nothing, and was and is perfect.

It also means that we need to look no further than the words of the authorization expressed here in chapter 1, to fully understand its terms. We do not need to look at the circumstances and conditions of the Fall in chapter 3 to understand what dominion means. In particular, I reject the tendency of some to superimpose a spiritual gloss on the Adamic covenant, such as: 1) the covenant contains a promise by God that Adam would have eternal life if only he would obey God's command; or 2) the covenant contains a promise of redemption (foreshadowing Christ) in that God clothed the man and woman after the Fall.

None of these things were included in the express terms of the covenant (*i.e.*, the grant of authority) that was completed and approved by God on the sixth day of creation. From a covenantal perspective, verse 31 is essentially a statement that, "and this is all there was to it." People have often wondered why the Genesis narrative seems to wrap up the six days of creation in chapter 1, then backtracks in chapter 2 to describe additional events which, logically, had to also have happened on the sixth day. Such as, the naming of the animals, the creation of Eve, and man being placed in the Garden to work it. And, of course, God's institution of marriage and the family.

For chapter 1 is, above all else, a description of the creation of the world and the imposition of the laws of nature upon it, and the creation of mankind and the delegation of authority to them so they could survive and thrive upon the earth. Chapter 2, in essence, gives us further guidance as to how reproduction and dominion are to be carried out lawfully in fulfillment of the Dominion Mandate.

Which, because marriage and the family were instituted on the sixth day, means that they are foundationally part of human nature, and there has never been a time in the history of the world when they did not exist. But that merely helps to *explain* the Dominion Mandate, it does not *expand* its terms.

Neither does anything in chapter 2 operate to make any part of the Adamic covenant "spiritual." Neither eternal life nor redemption are mention in chapters 1 or 2, and there is no reason to suppose that the events of chapter 3 relating to the Fall happened on the sixth day of creation. And the absolute last thing anyone should ever suppose about the Adamic covenant is that it applies primarily or exclusively to the spiritual descendants of Adam. *Nothing about the Adamic covenant depends on, or is related to,* ***faith or belief***.

The Adamic covenant, same as all the other divine covenants in the Old Testament, applies to people solely on the basis of physical or biological ancestry. Which means that in order for you to know how the Adamic covenant applies to you (if at all), you must know whose descendant you are. Thus, it is absolutely crucial to believe in a literal Adam and Eve - two literal, physical people who were the first people to ever exist, and who were the biological parents of us all. For if those things are not true, then the Adamic covenant is nothing more than an idealized moral principle, and perhaps only a mere myth. But if these things are true, then the Adamic covenant is binding law on every person alive today - absolutely mandatory, not merely optional or a rule of thumb.

If Adam and Eve were not literal and historical people, then the covenantal aspects of the Dominion Mandate fall apart. If Adam and Eve were not the literal parents of us all, since the Dominion Mandate was expressly given to them, then that means there are some people to whom the Mandate and the Adamic covenant do not apply. If the inalienable right of married couples to have children might or might not apply to any specific couple, then it opens the door for governments to regulate and even limit or stop babies from being born. The command of God is no longer an inalienable legal right at all, but only has the power of a rule of thumb.

Similarly, if earthly dominion itself might or might not apply to specific people (because we really can't tell whose descendants they are), then private property, occupational choice, the dominion over animals and the private right over plants all disappear into the vastness of state power to control.

Looking ahead a bit, if Adam and Eve were not the real biological parents of us all, then it opens the door to the possibility that some people - perhaps a majority of people - have never fallen spiritually. Which leaves society (via government) to decide who the cursed people are and aren't - and that always works out so well. Without a literal Adam and Eve, not only do all of our fundamental inalienable rights of dominion vanish, but so does the fundamental legal equality of all people vanish into thin air.

Since all of the Old Testament divine covenants apply to the biological descendants of the original parties, if we can't determine who those people are with great certainty, it destroys the efficacy of all of the divine covenants. That is a primary reason why I reject altogether an allegorical reading of the scriptures, especially Genesis 1-11.

CHAPTER 2

Gen. 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

The Seventh Day

Here we have the account of God resting on the seventh day of the creation week, and then consecrating (or blessing) it as a holy day of rest. The implication, because this is included in the first week of world history, is that God is here establishing a pattern for people to follow. And this pattern has two parts: 1) for timekeeping purposes, days will be counted and time measured by heptads of days, that is, a series of seven consecutive days to be called a *week*; and 2) the seventh day of each week is designated by the Creator as a day of rest, typically referred to as a Sabbath. There is no indication here, or elsewhere in scripture, that the seventh day was intended by God to be a day of worship.

Of course, following the divine calendar, this means each day begins at sunset, the first day of each week begins at sunset on Saturday, and the seventh day begins at sunset on Friday. And thus weeks have been observed since the beginning of time, and Sabbaths observed on the seventh day. This is the law of nature and nature's God, and since it is rooted in the creation of the world, like all laws of nature, it is eternal and unchanging, and nothing that has happened since has altered this pattern. This is true notwithstanding the deviation from this pattern introduced by the Roman Catholic Church of observing the Sabbath on the first day of each week. This principle is reiterated in the original statement of the Ten Commandments.

> "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." Exo. 20:8-11.

This Fourth Commandment, like all of the Ten Commandments, did not impose a new rule beginning at Mt. Sinai, but merely stated verbally for the first time principles derived from the laws of nature which had been in place since the creation. For all of the prohibitions in the Ten Commandments - adultery, stealing, murder, the Sabbath, etc. can be traced to the foundation of the world, and cannot be said to arise only with Moses. Thus, it is commonly acknowledged that the Ten Commandments are a statement of universal moral principles, not limited to the Jews.

Later in Exo. 31:12-17, the Lord told Moses that observance of the Sabbath was not merely optional or a matter of conscience with the Jews, but that it was an integral part of their national covenant with God, and a violation of the Sabbath was a criminal offense punishable by death. However, these provisions are *Israel specific* - that is, applicable to the Jews only, not to all people. This is because: 1) the covenant between God and Israel *by its terms* only ever applied to the Jews and not

to any other people; and 2) all criminal punishments in the Mosaic laws are Israel specific only. The law of nature, *per se*, only says what is right and wrong, but includes no punishments, no enforcement mechanisms, and authorizes no one to enforce the law.

Thus, no punishments, no enforcement authority, and no criminal aspects peculiar to the way Israel observed the Sabbath, are to be imported into Gen. 2:1-3. To the extent this text imposes a universal obligation on humanity to observe a Sabbath rest, it is moral only (not legally enforceable) and is to be determined by each person according to their conscience before God, just like any other merely moral rule.

This is confirmed in the New Testament. "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath." Col. 2:16. In other words, Sabbath observance is a matter of individual conscience only. Sunday Blue Laws (legally prohibiting certain business or consumer transactions on Sundays) are a misguided attempt to exercise civil jurisdiction over a merely moral matter.

Consequently, all people are under a universal moral obligation to observe a Sabbath rest, but neither Gentiles nor Christians are under the covenant sign or the legal requirements of the Jewish Sabbath. Sabbath-keeping is a matter of individual conscience only.

None of which alters or affects the fact that as descendants of Adam, the general principle of the Sabbath (one day of rest per week) still applies per the law of nature. And, the one day of rest is on the last day of the week starting at sunset on Friday, not Sunday (Jesus never changed the Sabbath). But in observing this, we have liberty and are free from the judgment of others as well as any penalties for "violations." So if the good Lord gives you a job where you are required to work on a day other people observe as the Sabbath, whatever it may be, that is a matter between you and God that no one else can judge.

Gen. 2:4-7 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

A Living Being

With verse 3, the first seven days of the world have now been concluded. But before moving the narrative to subsequent events, verse 4 takes us back to *the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens*, or in other words, we're going to reexamine the creation week - particularly the sixth day - in more detail. Thus making the events of chapter 2 part of the creation account as much as chapter 1. I'll defer comments on the mist and lack of rain until chapter 7, some 1,650 years later, when God eventually sends rain upon the earth. For the present, I want to focus on verse 7 and the creation of Man.

The creation of Man is expressed in a single verse, which can be reduced even further to a very

simple equation, as it were: Dust + Breath = Living Being. The two elements of man's being were recognized by the Preacher (king Solomon) when talking about death: "and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it." Ecc. 12:7. Or, as philosophers would say, the dust and breath merely symbolize the body and spirit of mankind. Let's take a look at each of these things in turn.

Dust (of the earth). God could have created Man from nothing - so-call *ex nihilo* - like the earth itself was created from nothing. Or, God could have created Man from space dust, swirling in the heavens or in outer space, and then *sent* man down to the earth once formed. But no, God did neither of these. Strongly indicating that Man was made *on the earth, from the earth, for the earth*. It is not our destiny, calling, or really even an opportunity, for people to scatter among the stars, inhabit other worlds, or conquer the galaxy. God put us *here*, to live and work *here*, and to fulfill our callings *here*. Everything we need to be fully satisfied in life can be found *here*.

Even when time ends, we enter into an eternal state, and we "go to heaven," what that means is that God will remake the world - the earth - and put us on it to live for eternity. Rev. 21:1. No space hopping from star to star, no interplanetary travel, no scattering of the human seed to other worlds. Man is an earthbound creature, and tough if you don't like it. All these people who want to colonize other worlds, travel to the stars and such - there is an age-old expression that directly applies to them: *they are so heavenly minded as to be of no earthly good*.

Breath (of God). There is a strong correlation in scripture, here in Gen. 2:7 and elsewhere, between breath, life and the spirit of mankind.

> Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ... And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live. (Eze. 37:9, 14).

Also, a universal sign of when a person died in scripture is when *he breathed his last*. So scripture everywhere affirms, from Genesis to Revelation, that life is in the breath, and both life and breath come from God. Everywhere breath is lacking (such as with idols), it means there is no life. Every time breath is found, it means there is life. However, the presence of the breath of God in man does not merely signify life, it also signifies the presence of an eternal spirit, which is a direct connection to the image of God in man.

There is also a correlation in scripture between the words *breath, spirit*, and *wind*. The Greek word in the New Testament primarily translated as spirit can also be translated as breath or wind, and sometimes is. The Greek word primarily translated as breath can also be translated as spirit, and sometimes is. The same exact situation occurs with respect to the Hebrew words for *breath* and *spirit* used in the Old Testament.

The clear implication, when the same word is used for both breath and spirit in the scriptures, is that a person's eternal spirit is linked to having the breath of life. Now it is true that there is a sense in which both mankind and animals have a spirit or breath of life from God.

> For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as

> one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth?" Ecc. 3:19-21.

But notice the clear difference: the *bodies* of both men and animals returns to the dust of the ground, but not so their spirits. Man's spirit goes *up* at death (*i.e.*, to God, or to heaven), whereas the animal's spirit goes *down* (to the grave) - a strong indication that the spirit of animals is not eternal. However, for the spirit of man, there is an expectation of something more after physical death.

Now it is also true that life is connected to the blood. "For the life of every creature is its blood: its blood is its life." (Lev. 17:14). And three verses earlier, "the life of the flesh is in the blood." (Lev. 17:11). Once again, we come to the distinction between science and law, or the physical and the spiritual. The point is quite simple. The *physical* life of every creature - human or non-human - is in its blood. That's science. But the *spirit* of every creature - human or non-human - is in its breath from God. That's God's law.

And God's breath in people means that the spirit of mankind is eternal.

A Living Being. Thus, the phrase rendered in the ESV as *living creature*, is translated as a *living being* (NKJV and NASB), or a *living soul* in the KJV. I stress the fact God made mankind a living *being* because this expression is contrasted with the way God referred to the animal kingdom just a few verses earlier (Gen. 1:28), that is, animals are living *things*.

Thus, the term human being reflects the difference in legal status between people and animals. People are beings, not things. Animals, as things, do not have the image of God, and they may be property that people can own, use and dispose of as they see fit. People, as beings, are made in God's image, and cannot lawfully be made the property of another person. And the chief difference between people and animals is this: people have an eternal spirit, and animals do not. From which difference a number of legal consequences flow.

Animals have no legal rights - they have no right to life, to liberty, or to the pursuit of happiness. Animals are not capable of sin, and have no moral accountability. They are not governed by rules of right and wrong behavior, will not stand for judgment before God, and will neither be rewarded or punished for eternity. Animals have no earthly dominion, which means they cannot own anything, and have no authority to dominate anything. It most certainly means that animals have no rights to the earth, to possess it as a habitat, and no dominion which is superior to the rights of people. Animals were not "here first," since all land creatures and people were created on the same day.

If there is one single idea that is most clearly expressed in Gen. 2:7, it is that people and animals are not the same.

Gen. 2:8-15 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree

of the knowledge of good and evil. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

The Prime Directive

After making Man a living being, God gave him both a purpose and a home. This home was the Garden of Eden, a place of beauty and many good things to eat. We have some geographical descriptors here which indicate that Eden was a real place, not merely allegorical, that very much physically existed in the world. The extent to which these geographical markers still exist or can be traced, I leave to others to determine. One thing we can say is that a key results of Noah's flood would have been to scramble or obscure all the original markers, making it difficult or impossible to determine at present. Many people have spent their lives trying to locate Eden. Eden's location may have archeological significance, and I admit to being a little curious about it, but it matters not with regard to the laws of nature or nature's God, for it has no behavioral or moral significance.

But we see that even in this idyllic state - for there was at this time no sin yet in the world - God put the Man to work right away, which is to say, He gave the Man a job. The job, consistent with the Dominion Mandate to subdue the earth and rule over the animals, was initially to work the garden and keep it, that is, to tend the plants. Which job also apparently included naming the animals as the first step in dominating them, which we will see in a few verses. Now, I won't be so crass as to say that it was Adam's *job*, either as an occupation or as a service for hire, but it was certainly his pleasurable *duty* to also begin the procreation process with his wife in order to fulfill the command to be fruitful and multiply.

In other words, everything the Man did, both before and after the Fall, was done in order to satisfy and fulfill the Dominion Mandate - what we might call his prime directive. This is the reason God made mankind and put him - and us - on the earth. Take charge of a patch of earth, find an honest and productive job or occupation worthy of pursuit, dominate some wildlife, get a wife and start a family, and build something worthwhile. Call it *cliche* if you want, mock it as a white picket fence, a wife, two kids and a dog, if you must. But this is the real deal.

I note with a little irony, that there are no religious duties, practices, or rituals that Adam and Eve were commanded to observe. There are no verbal commands to glorify God, enjoy God, praise God, love God, or to worship God. Now, we can fairly infer that Adam and Eve were in daily fellowship with God - conversationally - since the Lord was apparently in the habit of walking in the garden in the cool of the day. Gen. 3:8. We can also infer, since the Ten Commandments are part of the eternal moral law built into the world at the creation, that God expected Adam and Eve to acknowledge Him as the sole and exclusive God, not to make any idols, and to observe the Sabbath.

But beyond these things, there is little direct evidence of any religious observances that God required of the people He had made. I am making a couple of assumptions here. First, that God made no

secret commands or requirements that are not expressed in the scriptures. He never whispered rules in Adam and Eve's ears, and then said, "but don't write this down. Keep it just between us." Yes, God told John the Revelator not to write some things down (Rev. 10:4), but then John wrote down that God had told him that. So, as part of my assumption, I assume that since the Genesis account lacks a disclosure regarding things not supposed to be written, there were no such things.

Second, that whatever additional requirements there may have been, could only have come from the law of nature (like the Ten Commandments). Which, at the time, would not have ever been verbally expressed, and at the same time, would have been known to everyone as a self-evident truth. Things like, don't steal, don't murder, etc. Not stated, but understood by everyone.

With the end result being that beyond the express statements of the Dominion Mandate, there was nothing else God expected people to do. This is why we are all here in the world, people. Fulfill the Dominion Mandate, acknowledge God for who He truly is, and establish fellowship with Him. That's it. That is humanity's prime directive - our main purpose. It's not that complicated.

Gen. 2:16-17 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

One Little Prohibition

God could very easily have omitted making this little prohibition of eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but what would that have proved? That people would gladly acknowledge and serve God so long as that was their only option? No, clearly God wanted to put a test before man, to see if he would choose God or not, and thereby divide all of humanity forever into two groups - those who choose to serve God, and those who do not.

Theoretically, I suppose, since the law of nature fully existed when Adam and Eve were still innocent, they could have violated one of the Ten Commandments and sinned. But who would Adam be able to steal from? Who could he commit adultery with? Yes, he could have committed murder, or broken the Sabbath. But the law of nature, as such, contains no punishments for offenses, so just because it was possible for Adam and Eve to sin against nature, the punishment would not necessarily be death. Plus, until they had first eaten the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would not necessarily have known that stealing, murder, adultery and breaking the Sabbath were even wrong to begin with. How can a person who has no knowledge of good and evil, know that something is either good or evil? They cannot.

Thus, merely leaving Adam and Eve to their own devices with respect to the law of nature would be an inadequate test of their obedience. Plus, it would not have put death at stake. God had to devise a test of obedience that was more overt - verbally expressed, not merely inferred from creation, with death at stake instead of an uncertain consequence. Plus, a test that was more likely to be put into play immediately, instead of perhaps much later. And one that was more likely to attract the attention of the devil. Can you imagine the serpent trying to explain the laws of nature to Eve before being able to tempt her? No, God's test was designed to be quick and decisive.

So there they are, Adam and Eve, living in the garden before the Fall. God told them there were all these things they could do, and that God wanted them to do, except this one, teeny, tiny little prohibition. What were they supposed to do? They were supposed to **obey God** - to conform their lives to God's laws and commandments - to do His will. For God's laws are nothing more, really, than an expression of God's will for all people. God's laws and God's general will are one and the same.

And even though Adam and Eve failed their test - they failed to obey God - we know that God made them *capable of obedience*. And we further know that each and every one of their descendants is also capable of obedience. Not capable of perfection, or perfect obedience. Not capable of innocence or a sinless state. Not incapable of discerning good and evil, for every person is born with a pre-loaded (*a priori*) partial knowledge of good and evil we call a conscience. But nonetheless capable of choosing between right and wrong, which necessitates that everyone is capable of choosing to do good, and act lawfully. Not that this capability justifies or redeems anyone, for we are all born condemned, but not doomed to only ever choosing wrong for the rest of our lives.

Doing God's will, or obeying His laws, is something everyone can do - not merely redeemed people. Being fruitful and multiplying is something all people can do, not just Christians, and even unsaved people can do so lawfully, in conformity with God's will. When God gave mankind the Dominion Mandate in Genesis 1, there was no part of it whatsoever dedicated to "Christian families." Christ had not yet come - there were no Christians for another 4,000 years. There were just families, and people everywhere were capable of carrying that out lawfully.

At present, and presumably ever since Noah's flood, the Garden of Eden and its special trees, including the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, no longer exists. As far as we know, ever since mankind was driven out of the garden, what with an angel with a flaming sword guarding its entrance (Gen. 3:24), no one other than Adam and Eve were ever given the opportunity to eat the fruit of that tree. Nevertheless, God still gives every person today ample opportunities to choose to obey Him, or to choose to rebel. And so the choice remains ever the same - obey and live, or disobey and die.

[Gen. 2:18 is discussed along with Gen. 2:21-23.]

Gen. 2:19-20 Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.

Dominion Over Animals

In v. 19, we see right off the bat that the animals, like man, had been formed from the dust of the ground, consistent with Ecc. 3:19-20, as I mentioned before. Next we see that God brings all the birds and beasts of the field to Adam - what I call the parade of the animals - to see what he will call them. Why does God do this? Two reasons: first, for man to begin to put into practice the dominion

over animals that God had given him. For naming the animals signifies who has authority over the other - the one who does the naming is the one who has the authority. Second, God wants the man to clearly understand his situation - that none of the animals present a suitable companion for him.

No dumb ape man is Adam, communicating only with grunts and pointing, or dragging a large club around with him. Nor is he the product of a fish-lizard dragging himself out of the primordial ooze. Rather he is alert, perceptive, and articulate, with a firm grasp of language. He easily converses with God, he has a mind facile enough to give names to all the animals God brings before him - no small task, he understands what it is he must do, and he accomplishes it efficiently.

We should remember that this is taking place in a time of innocence, when sin had not yet entered the world. But it is also happening before Noah's flood, when God had not yet put the fear and dread of men within the animals. Gen. 9:2. Thus, all the animals are perfectly tame and harmless - there is no fear of the man, and there is no hostility between them. At this time, neither man nor animal has ever taken the life of another, nor has there been any need to, so far. Which I'm sure made the task at hand much easier than it would be today.

Now, while man is exercising dominion via the parade of the animals, God has already said that He has another purpose being worked out at the same time, which from the perspective of history we can say was actually the primary purpose for the parade of animals. Namely, the purpose of making a helper fit for man. Verse 18 doesn't say who God said these words to - was it Adam, or merely another discussion among the Godhead? In any event, the parade of animals is a very striking demonstration, or object lesson, that would have been impossible for Adam to miss.

For Adam could plainly see that all the animals had partners fit for them, whereas he had none. And any man with Adam's mental acuity would realize this was not a desirable situation. Which would then put Adam and God on the same page, as it were, seeing the desirability - and the necessity - of fixing this problem. But God already had a plan, and in order to ensure that all mankind would stand on an equal footing with respect to the creation, it was implemented the very same day that Adam himself was created. So that when the day was done, God could rightly say that everything He had made was "very good."

Gen. 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Gen. 2:21-23a So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh ..."

And God Created Woman

Whenever I read that *it is not good that the man should be alone*, I can't help but think that never a truer statement was ever made. For all of the events in chapter 2 from verse 4 to the end, ostensibly occur on day 6 of the creation week. Thus, sin had not yet entered into the world, and man was in his most perfect state - ever. And yet, even in his state of sinless perfection, something was amiss - there was something he lacked that he needed. Not the perfect woman, *per se*, but a

woman who would be the perfect fit for him as a companion and helper.

Thus it has ever been for men and women. Nothing about the nature of men and women has changed since creation. I think it a fair reading to understand the scripture to mean that it is not good for *a man*, or *any man*, to be alone. A man needs a woman. The Fall into sin changed nothing about this, except to make it more difficult for any man to find the woman who is a perfect fit for him. What a joy it would have been for Adam to instantly recognize the woman who was his perfect fit, never to have to embark on a lengthy search, to take an extensive time to see if she was the right one, and never to wonder if he made the right choice, or whether there was someone else for him. For these things have all been adversely affected by the Fall.

Adam, of course, recognized Eve for who she was immediately. The text doesn't say it, but I have to believe Adam, upon seeing the woman, saw that she was "very good." And Eve, for her part, was fully on board with this. Love at first sight, one might say. If only it were that easy for everyone.

The details provided in verses 21-22 give us essential information missing from the earlier statement that "in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." For it is now evident that man and woman, though both created on day 6, were made in separate ways and at separate times on that day. For instance, Eve apparently was not present for the whole parade of animals thing. Plus, more importantly, the woman was not made from the dust of the ground, like Adam was. Rather, she was made from Adam himself, making Adam her parent, as it were, instead of God. This will become extremely significant later on.

But there is more significance to the order of creation still. Namely, that there is a direct relationship between the order of creation and the relative authority between a husband and wife.

> For a man should not have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. Therefore the woman should have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 1 Cor. 11:7-10.

I am not at this point going to try to fully unpack all of the nuances of the relative authority between a husband and wife. I merely note that Paul is here making an argument from the law of nature. This has absolutely nothing to do with Jewish, Greek or Roman culture, or any other human culture. He goes straight to the creation account as recorded in Gen. 2, which makes this a part of human nature, and a part of the law of nature. This is not a new rule originating with Paul, the Church, or the New Testament. It is Paul saying to each one of us, "you should already have figured this out, if you had been paying attention to the true origin story of the human race, and not succumbed to heathen or merely naturalistic explanations."

And the bottom line is, there is a difference between the authority of a husband and the authority of a wife, which is built into the world and us. We can perhaps discuss what those precise differences are in another place. Let us, for now, just acknowledge that there is a difference. This is confirmed in another place, as well. "But I do not allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve." 1 Tim. 2:12-13. Again,

to the same effect, the order of creation *way back when*, makes a difference in the relative authority between a husband and wife *in the here and now*.

This is not a popular teaching today, but it doesn't matter. We're still talking about events occurring on day 6 of the creation week, which things are embedded into the nature of human beings, the nature of the world, and are part of the immutable and eternal law of nature. Consequently, this is part of God's will which does not change. So, everyone might as well get used to it.

[Gen. 2:23b is discussed together with Gen. 3:20.]

Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Marriage and Family

Here we have the very brief account of the institution of marriage and the family. The institution of marriage essentially deriving from God making a woman for the man, then presenting her to him, and his response of recognizing and accepting her (all of this in verse 22). And the institution of the family consisting of man's response, which is to leave his parents (even though Adam had no parents himself, but is a model for the rest of us), to join with and cling to his wife, and to become one flesh. Indeed, by the old common law in England and America, no marriage was deemed completed for legal purposes until it had been consummated by sexual union.

In doing this, each married couple separates from the families of their parents, gets prepared to bring new descendants into the world, and becomes a new self-governing unit, which history teaches is the foundational social unit of every human society. As a new self-governing unit, each family is co-equal with all other families. There never was in ancient times, nor is there now, any God-ordained or divinely established hierarchy among the families of the world.

Once a couple is married, they step out of the authority and jurisdiction of their parents. Older generations of families have no intrinsic right to rule over younger generations of families. No family group, tribe or clan has any intrinsic right to rule families from other groups, tribes or clans. Each family is accountable solely to God for the manner and extent to which they take dominion, that is, how many children they have, how they raise their children, the extent of property owned or cared for by them, etc. The unfortunate extent to which families throughout history have dominated other families is a testament to the sinfulness of mankind.

In establishing marriage and the family, God set out the basic parameters for the lawful exercise of dominion. Marriage is exclusively between one man and one woman, devoted to and set apart for each other for the rest of their joint lives. For as confirmed by Rom. 7:1-2, upon the death of either spouse the marriage immediately ends. Same-sex unions and homosexual behavior in general is contrary to nature and unlawful. God did not fashion another man for Adam to be his companion, two men do not "fit" together as a man and woman, and it is impossible for two men or two women to become "one flesh," just as it is impossible for two men or two women to procreate, to be fruitful and multiply. Which is why in Western Civilization, homosexuality was always historically regarded as "the crime against nature."

Other false relationships, such as sexual cohabitation without benefit of marriage, do not a family make. By the law of nature, such a relationship is merely serial fornication. There is no suggestion either textually or by example that polygamy (multiple wives) or polyandry (multiple husbands) are anticipated or allowed in God's institution of marriage. Certainly polyandry is the worse aberration, since man was not made for a woman, but woman was made for a man (1 Cor. 11:9), and the husband is the head of a wife, not vice versa (Eph. 5:23).

I note with some wistfulness that marriage will not exist in the afterlife, as Jesus clearly told us. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven." Mat. 22:30. Obviously, when the present earth is destroyed and time is no more, there can be no opportunity for either the righteous or the unrighteous to procreate any further, and bring new lives into existence, for the time of sin and free will are past. But more than that, if you believe in an earthly Millennial kingdom of Christ as I do, then there will at that time be both ordinary mortal human beings and resurrected saints inhabiting the earth together. The mortals will marry and procreate as per usual, but all saints entering the kingdom post-resurrection will have received new bodies, and during the entire Millennium will not marry or procreate.

Which creates a strong link between marriage and procreation - to the point that whenever there is no longer any need for procreation, there is no longer any need for marriage. Sorry to say there will not be endless sex with 70 virgins in eternity for us guys. I don't want to read too much into it, but from a law of nature standpoint it seems that marriage merely for companionship (*i.e.*, without propagation) is not really a thing with God. So it would seem that not merely marriage as an institution, but sexual relations in general, won't exist for anyone post-resurrection.

[Gen. 2:25 is discussed along with Gen. 3:7-11.]

CHAPTER 3

Gen. 3:1-6 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

The Fruit of Disobedience

Here we have the account of the Fall of mankind into sin, which was absolutely necessary to have happened for God to work out His plan of sin and redemption, etc. As already mentioned, God undoubtedly conceived this little test of obedience for the very purpose of prompting man's disobedience, knowing full well in advance what would transpire. And in spite of the fact that only Adam's sin would end up bringing death and condemnation to the entire human race that was to come, it was absolutely necessary that the woman should be there and participate in the sin.

For it showed that the moral nature and character of the woman and the man were the same. Women are not any less evil, more perfect, more moral, or less inclined to make errors in judgment, than men. Sex or gender is not an indication of moral strength or inclination. Before the Fall, the man and the woman were equally innocent, and afterward equally fallen. It is fitting, since they were made for each other, and made for this earth, that they should enter a state of sinfulness together.

Nevertheless, regardless of who sinned in what order, and who tempted who, the man bears the primary responsibility for the decision to disobey God. For as the apostle Paul tells us,

> Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. Rom. 5:12-14.

In other words, the sin nature that is passed to each person when they are born comes solely from Adam - not Eve, and not Adam and Eve together. It is Adam's descendants who are fallen by nature, not Eve's. It is Adam who is the model for Christ - the second Adam - not Eve, both of whom came into the world without sin as the direct creation of God. Many people attribute Adam's sole responsibility for our sin natures to him being the federal head of the human race, the one who represents us all. I don't disagree with this conclusion, but I find the idea of *representation* insufficient as a legal principle found in the law of nature. I prefer to rest my case on the biblical law of inheritance, which states a legal rule. I will discuss this law at length later on.

Admittedly, the scriptures do not give us any indication of the amount of elapsed time between Gen. 2 and Gen. 3, if indeed there was any elapsed time. It is certainly possible that Adam and Eve

remained in a state of innocense for some time (years, maybe?), enjoying each other's company and walking with God in the cool of the day. But three things mitigate against that in my mind. First, I cannot imagine the devil would have delayed in working his deception. He would have played the part of the spoiler as soon as possible. Second, Adam and Eve had not yet had occasion to eat of the tree of life. Realistically, how long would they have gone without trying it while they still could?

Thirdly, not by any means least, Adam and Eve did not have sex and conceive a child until chapter 4, after the Fall and pronouncement of the curses. There they are in the garden in chapter 2, having been told to be fruitful and multiply, naked and not ashamed. Again, realistically, Adam's looking at Eve and she's looking really good, and he's going to wait how long before getting intimate? Years - really? Months, weeks, days? How about maybe a couple of hours? Although, that does not mean Eve became pregnant right away. The Lord could very well have blessed them with years of sweet marital bliss before any children came along.

Plus, in order for God's whole plan to work out correctly (where all mankind is under the curse of sin), Adam and Eve could not have conceived a child *before* the Fall, or else that child might not be under sin. So I'm thinking that the events of chapter 3 all happened pretty quickly, compared to the creation itself, maybe even occurring on day 6 of creation. I don't know for sure, obviously - no one does. But more likely than not, to my mind, the Fall is part of the creation account, and is built into the fabric of the creation as much as any other aspect of nature.

Which is why, to the extent the order of the Fall into sin by the man and woman have consequences relating to authority and inheritance, those consequences are eternal and immutable, meaning that they are still in full effect today for all of us.

Gen. 2:25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Gen. 3:7-11 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

Of Nakedness and Shame

I suspect a key reason why the scriptures tells us the man and woman were initially naked and not ashamed, is because it is diametrically opposed to the current universal human condition. There is a strong link in scripture between nakedness and shame. And thus the other principal reason for Gen. 2:25 is that it gives us a before and after snapshot of the instinctive human response to nakedness. Ever since the Fall, nakedness is something that actually causes shame.

The reason for this is that the flesh is the embodiment of sin, as indicated in Rom. 7:17-25, where Paul complains about the "sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh." And again, "with my flesh I serve the law of sin." In other words, as a result

of the Fall, it is not merely our spirits which have been deadened to God, but also the flesh itself which has been corrupted. Thus, to be naked is to expose one's sin to the eyes of the world, which is not something to boast about, but rather to be ashamed of. God desires that our nakedness, that is our sinful bodies, be hidden, or in other words, covered.

When we cover our own nakedness, we admit that our natures are sinful, and we humble ourselves before God. When we expose our own nakedness, we deny our sinful natures and/or take pleasure in our sinfulness, in defiance of the God who made us. Unfortunately, there are a lot of people in the world who think that exposing their own nakedness is a good thing.

Of course, our sin and shame cannot be hidden from God, who sees all. "And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account." Heb. 4:13. The one principal exception to this rule is between a husband and wife, whose exposure to each other is not shameful, since they have become one flesh by God's design, and to see each other in that context is counted the same as a person who sees himself. Since God sees us as we are and nothing can be hidden from Him, to see ourselves naked - in privacy - is strictly speaking just between us and God, and there is no shame in it. The concept of nakedness in scripture is not merely a lack of clothing, but it also implies an exposure to those who have no right to see it.

This is why the sexual offenses listed in Lev. 18 and 20 are not framed in terms of, "you shall not have sex with so-and-so." Instead, the offenses are framed as, "you shall not uncover the nakedness of so-and-so." Lev. 18:7 is a good example: "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness." In other words, because mother and father are one flesh, for a son to have sex with his mother uncovers the nakedness of ***both*** father and mother, which is immoral and unlawful. Similarly, "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness." Lev. 18:16. Many of the sexual offenses are explained in this way.

I know the discussion about head coverings in 1 Cor. 11 is sometimes difficult to understand. But think about 1 Cor. 11:6 (for example) in the context of nakedness. "For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head." Consider the possibility that for a woman to shave her head is a form of nakedness, and in order to hide her shame her head should be covered. Which, in the larger context of that chapter, is not merely ***her*** nakedness, but also her ***husband's*** nakedness, for they are one flesh. Thus, for a woman to shave her head, is for her to expose her husband's sinful nature which ought to be covered. Thus, it is a form of rebellion against her husband.

Nakedness seems to be a big thing to God. Flaunting one's nakedness is usually associated with adultery and whoring in scripture. God was even concerned that the priests of Israel not go up to the altar with steps lest their backsides be exposed (Exo. 20:26), and prescribed that they should wear undergarments to prevent that possibility (Exo. 28:42). Conversely, it is always seen as a virtue and an indication of uprightness that one would clothe or cover the nakedness of a stranger. The extent to which modern societies flaunt, laugh at, and revel in nakedness is a good indication of people being proud of their sins and sinful natures, and the extent to which they despise God and His laws.

Gen 3:12-15 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

The Curse of the Serpent

In these verses Adam and Eve play the blame game, indicating an equal tendency by nature of all people to try to shift the blame for what they have done. God hears their arguments and does not contradict them in so many words, but by the judgment and curses which follow, He makes it clear He is not buying any of their excuses. For the fact of the matter is the man and woman were both under an equal duty of obedience not to eat the forbidden fruit - a duty which they both violated in equal measure. There is no joint or attributed guilt here - each of them was individually responsible for their own compliance, and each received an individual judgment.

The serpent was not, by the express terms of God's command, in violation of that command because the serpent did not (as far as we know) eat of the forbidden fruit. Rather, the serpent's offense was tempting and deceiving those who were under a duty to obey, to disobey. For this, the serpent (representing the devil), received a two-part curse. The present part apparently consisted of condemning the serpent to a life of crawling on its belly and eating dust. The extent to which this involved any physiological or anatomical changes to serpents, I cannot say, and leave to others to speculate. But apart from that, there would also be an ongoing hatred or hostility between the woman, and perhaps all women, and snakes.

But the future part is interesting. "He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." This, of course, is understood by most as referring to Christ and His defeat of the Devil. But it is the phrase, "your offspring and her offspring" that interests me. For I have already mentioned that the effects of the Fall pertain to the descendants of Adam, not Eve, and not Adam and Eve. Just Adam alone. The point being that, legally speaking - by which I mean to specifically *exclude* any considerations of DNA or biology - all people living today are Adam's descendants, and we have inherited ***nothing*** of a legal or spiritual nature from Eve. In other words, the sin nature is not governed by the rules of biology or genetics (that is, *science*), but by the nature of inheritance (that is, *law*). The transmission of the sin nature from one generation to the next is a legal question.

Which makes it odd, once you are aware of this biblical principle, to consider anyone at all in the human race to be Eve's offspring. There is only one way this could possibly happen, and that is for someone to be born of a woman who is *not* a descendant of Adam. In other words, Gen. 3:15 is a prophecy concerning a virgin birth. A baby born of a woman, but not with a human father - for indeed any human father would be a descendant of Adam. And so we have here a prophecy of the virgin birth of Jesus, who was Eve's offspring. The chief significance of which is that since mankind's fallenness and sin nature flow through to all descendants of Adam, a baby born of a virgin woman would not have a sin nature, and not be fallen. In other words, born sinless. Someone uniquely qualified to be the Savior. 2 Cor. 5:21.

It is also to be fairly implied from this text that there will be ongoing hostility not only between the serpent as representative of the devil and women, but also hostility between the serpent and God, for Christ is God's anointed (the word "Messiah" or "Christ" literally means "Anointed One"). Thus, since the dawn of time, serpents have ever been associated with pagan, devilish, and false religions all over the globe. This is no coincidence, but flows directly from the events described here in Gen. 3.

Gen. 3:16 To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."

The Curse of the Woman

God's curse of the woman, as with His curse of the serpent, has two parts, only in this case they are both an ongoing present reality. The first part has to do with pain in childbirth. Some people argue that child raising in general is painful, but that is not what is meant here. Scripture is clear that God regards children as a blessing (*see*, Ps. 127), although it is true that child raising takes much effort. But the curse here is specifically directed towards women, not parents as such, so it must be taken as referring to the pains of pregnancy, labor and delivery - things not applicable to men.

Numerous times the scripture uses the word picture of a woman in childbirth as a metaphor for debilitating pain. Ps. 48:6; Jer. 6:24, etc. Especially noteworthy is the reference in Rom. 8:22 that "the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." This is a reference to the inauguration of the earthly kingdom of Christ being born, as it were, upon Jesus' return. Similarly, the metaphor of a woman giving birth is used in Isa. 66:7-9 to refer to the rebirth and restoration of Israel. The point in each case being the same: that the pain is necessary in order to produce the good result of a birth - that the pain is ultimately worth it.

The second part of the curse of the woman relates to the marital relationship. We have already mentioned that the order and manner of creation (how that woman was made for man and fashioned from him) points to a difference of authority between them. Namely, that a husband is the head of (in a position of authority over) his wife. And, without getting into too many specifics, at a minimum it means that the husband is the head of any family. In God's curse of the woman, we see this natural and divinely intended order reshaped in the form of a struggle between husbands and wives as to who is really in charge. Not that God is changing the natural order of authority in any way - He is merely making it more difficult to keep the marital relationship in a proper balance and providing an endless source of conflict.

Thus, wives will be inclined to balk at their husband's authority, and attempt to usurp it by asserting their own will. However, and this is where the curse for women really hits home, they will be frustrated in their attempts (generally speaking), and husbands will respond by being excessively domineering. The result of which, as the scripture says, "he shall rule over you." Not tenderly, as it were, but harshly, to the vexation of all parties - women won't submit, husbands overreact, and everyone ends up unhappy. The result of which, if I may be so bold to suggest (this particular curse being directed to women), is that women will come out on the losing end. Those couples who are able, by the grace of God, to minimize their internal marital conflict, are truly blessed.

Gen. 3:17-19 And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

The Curse of the Man

Consistent with God's pattern so far, the curse of the man also has two parts. The first part is the curse of the ground, by which the earth will no longer be man's friend, as it were. Instead of yielding its produce abundantly and easily, the earth will now only yield its produce begrudgingly, with much effort and pain on the man's part. The second part of the man's curse is the sentence of death imposed on men and women alike, and indeed, all flesh (*i.e.*, the entire animal kingdom).

I think it interesting that both the woman's and the man's curses included an element of pain. Adam and Eve probably knew no pain up to this point, although that time of sinless and painless existence was probably quite brief. But to quote the wise philosopher, "Life *is* pain. Anyone who says differently is selling something." This is the inevitable state of things until God creates the new heavens and new earth. For salvation in Christ my soothe the soul and heal the mind, and even our bodies can be healed from time to time, but no one will ever be free from pain in this life. It seems that God wants us to believe in Him and love Him in spite of the pain, for this is our lot.

Both the curses of the woman and man additionally involve an impediment to the exercise of the Dominion Mandate. The woman's curse impedes her ability to be fruitful and multiply, as indeed many women in history have died in childbirth, or otherwise become gravely ill. Sometimes childbirth will render a woman incapable of having any more children. None of which alters the command of God, or the duty of people, to be fruitful and multiply. Bearing children has been made more difficult, but that does not modify the Dominion Mandate in any way.

Similarly, with respect to the man's curse, subduing the earth has been impeded. But this only makes fulfilling the Dominion Mandate more difficult - it has no effect on the command or the duty whatsoever. The Dominion Mandate is still in full force and effect, and no matter how difficult it may have become to achieve it, it still stands as our Prime Directive in life.

Tell me if you've heard this bedtime story: In the beginning God gave mankind dominion over the earth, but in the Fall that dominion was lost. Since the Fall, the earth has been under the dominion of Satan, but when Jesus returns man's rightful dominion over the earth will be restored (as Satan will be locked and chained in the Abyss). Leave this fable in the fairy-tale book, because it simply isn't true. God never gave Satan man's prior dominion (much less could Satan forcibly wrench from people what God had given them). "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." Rom. 11:29.

For one thing, the Dominion Mandate was repeated almost verbatim in Gen. 9:1-3. If anything, this second giving of the Dominion Mandate was more expansive than the first, not less (which we will see when we get there). If the first giving of the Dominion Mandate had expired or been terminated

because of the Fall, then the second giving of it undid whatever damage the Fall had done. But in truth, the second giving of the command was not really necessary as the first command had never lapsed. The second merely affirmed and confirmed for Noah and his family that in spite of all that had happened as a result of the flood (*i.e.*, the death of 99.99% of the world's population), God's intention, plan and command had not changed.

Although it is true that mankind's dominion and the Devil's dominion are both worldwide, the *nature* of their dominions is completely different. Being fruitful and multiplying - having human babies - has never been part of the Devil's authority. And no, I don't believe it has ever been possible for humans and angels or demons to generate offspring. The fact that people have continued to bear children all throughout history demonstrates whose authority it is to do so. Similarly, do you see the demonic host exercising dominion over the animal kingdom for food, clothing, etc., or is this something that only people are doing?

So, when it comes to subduing the earth - buying and selling, owning and using property, reshaping the earth via construction and building projects - who is doing it, people or demons? People, of course. Thus, the Dominion Mandate hasn't gone anywhere, it is still very much in human hands. Plus, the Dominion Mandate is a package deal - all the parts (children, family, property, animals, occupations, etc.) all rise or fall together as a bundle. No part of the Dominion Mandate can be stripped out and separated from the other parts. Meaning, that if the Devil doesn't have *all* aspects of dominion, then he has none of them.

What the Devil's dominion does include, apparently, are the rulers and governments of the world. "And the devil took [Jesus] up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, 'To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.'" Lk. 4:5-6. It is clear to me that if the Devil was here claiming an authority which he did not actually have, then Jesus would have seen through it immediately and it would not have been a temptation to Him. But the fact Jesus did not rebuff the Devil for telling a lie, means he could have delivered the kingdoms of the world if he wanted to.

Similarly, Eph. 6:12 links the power of evil with rulers, powers, principalities and authorities, which I take to primarily signify the rulers and governments of the world. This is the dominion of Satan, and it covers the whole earth.

Mankind, on the other hand, has no authority via the Dominion Mandate to rule over other men (apart from the parent-child relationship). Thus, mankind has no inherent right to rule over neighbors, governments, nations or kingdoms. This is the basis for the rule that governments are instituted among men by the consent of the governed, and not by any inherent or inherited right on the part of the rulers.

What we have here are two dominions operating concurrently. Each dominion is for a separate *purpose*, and operates under a separate *authority*. Between the dominions of mankind and Devil there is no overlap. Neither one interferes with, or supersedes the other. They both run in parallel at the same time. They are separate and distinct. Yet both dominions cover the entire globe at the same time. And whatever dominion the Devil has was not acquired from humanity or at our expense, nor does it truly affect the Dominion Mandate in any way.

The Curse of the Ground

Apart from the sentence of death, the brunt of man's curse fell only indirectly on the man, but fell very directly on the earth. For when God cursed the ground, the ground did nothing wrong. But because man sinned, the ground would produce thorns and thistles, and only reluctantly give up its produce. Or, *because of human sinfulness, the earth's physical environment changed.* Ever since the Fall, ***the earth reflects the sin condition of its inhabitants***. God has established this as the mechanism by which the physical environment is linked to the sinfulness of the inhabitants of the land.

This relationship between the earth and human sinfulness is not merely just "once and done" in the past, but occurs on an ongoing basis. In other words, this is not a fixed or static condition - it is dynamic and constantly changing. Yes, the sentence of death and the basic nature of the curse of the ground will remain constant for all time. Yet, *at the same time*, as any society becomes more wicked, the land will become even more hostile, as it were, and less fruitful for its inhabitants.

Thus, whenever you see something in the scripture indicating the land has been *defiled* or *polluted* by certain sinful acts, it leads to the imposition of additional consequences in the form of natural disasters - plagues, floods, droughts, crop loss, disease, etc. These things, in God's economy, need to be periodically atoned for, or else the earth will react violently against its human inhabitants. This is the *Law of the Land*, and we will discuss it in more detail later.

This curse of the ground and the law of the land will remain in effect unabated throughout all of human history, even including the Millennial period. Neither Isa. 11:6 ("The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them"), nor any other scripture indicates that the curse of the ground will be partially or fully repealed in history. How could it be otherwise? The Fall changed the nature of creation and the nature of mankind right at the beginning of history. Nature, as the law of nature tells us, is immutable. It will not change until the creation itself is changed.

In other words, the curse of the ground will not be lifted until God destroys the present creation and makes a new heaven and a new earth. Indeed, this is the clear indication of Rev. 22:3 when describing the New Jerusalem: "No longer will there be anything accursed," which the KJV translates as *there shall be no more curse*, referring to the curse of the ground.

Further, since death is an integral part of the curse, the curse cannot be repealed until death itself is abolished. As long as death exists, the curse of the ground exists. And we know death will not be abolished until death and the grave are thrown into the lake of fire at the Great White Throne Judgment at the very end of history, immediately preceding the new heavens and new earth. Rev. 20:14. Also see Rev. 21:4, describing eternity (not the Millennium) as when "death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

This helps to put into perspective how vain are all the attempts of mankind to achieve immortality through various mystical or scientific means, including downloading our intelligence and personality

into an artificial intelligence device. All people must die, and God will not be mocked. The only path to true immortality is through Jesus Christ.

Gen. 2:23b She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.
Gen. 3:20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

Of Naming and Authority

We have already seen God exercise the right of naming things He has made, by calling his creation Day, Night, Heavens, Earth and Seas, etc. Gen. 1:5,8,10. Similarly, God has on occasion renamed individuals, such as Abram-Abraham, Sarai-Sarah, Saul-Paul, Simon-Peter, Jacob-Israel, etc. Now certainly, the parents of all those people had the authority to name them as children, indicative of the authority parents have over children - being an inherent authority, not derived from government or any other person. But God, who had already made these individuals as Creator, was asserting a new authority over each of them by renaming them, such as setting them apart for a special task.

Even when we reach eternity, God will rename all those who will dwell with Him. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it." Rev. 2:17.

The point is that the authority to name someone or something indicates an authority over the thing itself. God has authority over His creation, and over us - especially those whom He has called for a special purpose. Parents have authority over their children. Adam, by naming the animals, demonstrated mankind's dominion over the animal kingdom. In the case of animals, this authority includes the right to own them, use them, and sell them. And, ever since Gen. 9, to kill animals for food, survival and necessities. Likewise with the present verses, we see the authority of a husband to name his wife.

We see this most clearly demonstrated in Genesis by the fact Adam named his wife not once, but twice, as we see from these texts. Which things Adam did consistent with the naming authority already discussed. When I note this, I'm not saying that man has the same authority over woman as he does over animals - he does not. A man does not have dominion authority over a woman, to dominate her. Yet, there most clearly is a difference in the relative authority between a husband and wife as demonstrated by Adam in naming his wife. For never in scripture does a woman name her husband.

I presume the tradition of a woman taking the name of her husband was derived from this example in Genesis. And the fact this practice was begun, or instituted, from the very beginning of history, is a strong indication it is the pattern God wishes all people to follow. Therefore, logically, any woman who refuses to take the name of her husband upon marriage to him, dishonors her husband, defies his rightful authority over her, and is in open rebellion against the law of God. And no, I don't mean that she should add her husband's name to her father's surname as a hyphenated name. I mean that she should gladly take the name her husband gives her, and leave the name of her father and mother as suggested by Gen. 2:24.

Gen. 3:21-24 And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Man Has Become Like One of Us

Verse 21 tells us that after the Fall, God clothed Adam and Eve with animal skins. Some people take this as an indication that God redeemed them from their sin, pointing to the animal skins and quoting Heb. 9:22, "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." But see, there is no language in the text saying this - no mention of faith or belief, and while they acknowledged their sin (each of them blaming others in the process), there is no indication of individual repentance.

In a certain sense it is probable, given that Adam and Eve walked with God in the cool of the day, they believed in God and acknowledged Him for who He was as their Maker, etc. It is possible they each had a faith equivalent to Abraham - for that is the rule of faith they would have been under at the time. But the scriptures never say this, and the mere fact God clothed them is an insufficient indication of redemption. In the hall of fame of faith in Heb. 11, the first examples are Abel, Enoch and Noah - no mention of Adam. In the New Testament, the most significant mentions of Adam connect him with sin and death, not as an example of redemption.

Of course, it's quite possible Adam and Eve are with the Lord right now - it's impossible to say for certain. I will say, however, that there is one very obvious purpose in God clothing the man and woman *other than* redemption. Namely, to hide their nakedness, of which they were now ashamed. And merely hiding nakedness does not a redemption make. It is a type of covering for sin, yes - but not one that provides entry into heaven as a redeemed one. For without faith it is impossible to please God, isn't that what the scriptures say?

Verse 22 gets into some interesting territory, as God once again refers to Himself in the plural form. What does it mean, that *man has become like one of us*, that is, like God? Has man acquired divine powers? No. He has gained a knowledge of good and evil, that by his now corrupted nature, he will undoubtedly use primarily for evil and not good. And God forbid, if man were to become immortal in this fleshly body of sin and death (Rom. 7:18), he would have a virtually unlimited capacity to produce evil and wickedness in the world, becoming as it were, another Satan in human form, living forever.

Thus, I draw a parallel between verse 22 and Gen. 11:6, speaking of the Tower of Babel incident: "And the LORD said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.'" Imagine what the potential for evil would be if, in addition to speaking one language and being of one accord, humans were also able to live forever? Yikes!

And so cutting off the man and woman from the tree of life, just like separating humanity into

separate languages and nations after Babel, was primarily calculated to restrain the potential for evil that people would have. I mean, it's bad enough as it is - why would anyone (other than the Devil) want it to be even worse? And so, you might say, by cutting humanity off from Eden and the tree of life, God was protecting us from ourselves.

Is the tree of life still out there, hidden like Shangri-La from the prying eyes of the world, cherubim and flaming sword at the ready? Highly doubtful. I suspect the tree was destroyed or removed during Noah's flood, and any trace of Eden washed away. The tree of life is used as a metaphor several times in Proverbs, but shows up again as a literal tree in Rev. 2:7 and three times in Rev. 22 (talking about the New Jerusalem). So all the saints dwelling with God in eternity will have access to the tree of life - only after every last trace of sin and death are removed and forever destroyed. At which time the Lord will bring His saints back to a perfect state of innocence, and we will all experience a Garden of Eden-like experience forever.

CHAPTER 4

Gen. 4:1-7 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."

Cain and Abel

The scriptures don't give us much information on the passage of time with respect to Cain and Abel. Presumably, Cain was Adam and Eve's firstborn child, and Abel was second. Seth didn't come along until Adam was 130 years old (Gen. 5:3), and before the first mention of Seth (Gen. 4:25) we are told of six generations of descendants of Cain. However, these events are not necessarily recorded chronologically, so it is anyone's guess as to when Cain and Abel were born. The one thing we can presume is that no child of Adam and Eve was conceived or born before the Fall, for then it would call into question whether that child had been born with a sin nature. However, if Cain was indeed firstborn, there can be no doubt he was born with a sin nature.

Some commentators take Eve's proclamation that "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD" to be an expression of hope that Cain would fulfill the prophecy of Gen. 3:15. But remember, this is the first birth of a human being in the entire history of the world - an event which was undoubtedly perceived as wondrous. Not fashioned from the dust of the earth, or taken from a rib, but born from the womb of a woman. I think it much more likely that Eve was just making an exclamation of joy and appreciation for God's marvelous gift.

My assumption is that when we get to verse 3, Cain and Abel have both reached adulthood, being neither children nor teenagers. Plus, lifespans were so much longer back then for a variety of reasons, it seems likely that at least some decades have passed since they were born. Thus, when verse 3 says Cain and Abel brought sacrifices to God *in the course of time*, this was probably not a regularly occurring event, not even annually. There is no reason not to suppose that as adults, this is the first time Cain and Abel have ever done this. Otherwise, they might have had a better handle on what they were doing, if they had done it before.

So what went wrong? Scripture gives no indication that God had prescribed any rules as to where, when, or how to make an offering to Him. Nor are we ever told that Adam and Eve made offerings to God as an example to follow. It seems logical that Cain and Abel were operating under the laws of nature (no verbal laws for sacrifices and offerings being spoken yet). For me, this is a clear indication of the operation of Rom. 1:19-21:

> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they

> are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

We can say with confidence that both Cain and Abel *knew God*. They both must have been aware of many of God's invisible attributes, having heard about them from their parents, and having little in the way of distractions to keep them from noticing them. The question is, did they honor him as God or give thanks to him?

Abel, it would seem, clearly did, because he gave to God the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. In other words, the very best of what he had. Cain, on the other hand, gave merely an offering of the fruit of the ground - no firstfruits, and no choice portions. Or, simply not his best. This was the difference between them, and this is all derived from the laws of nature.

The results of which we know well. Abel's offering was accepted, Cain's was not. Cain then became very angry, or in the words of Romans, he became futile in his thinking, and his heart was darkened. The Lord's response to Cain was to assure him that both repentance and acceptance were still possible, if he would only discipline himself and master the sinful desires within him. Nothing, at this point, was irreversible. Cain could still do the right thing. But that's not the way it worked out.

Gen. 4:8-12 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" And the LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."

The First Bench Trial In History

The Crime. Here we have the account of the murder of Abel by Cain his brother - the killing of the second man born in the world by the first. And yes, it was murder in the legal sense, notwithstanding that God had never told the first family what murder was. We have already noted that the Ten Commandments are part of the eternal moral law built into the world at the creation, meaning that each commandment - such as "do not murder" - was fully disclosed to the first family through the things that have been made, as stated in Rom. 1:19-21. And that everyone, including Cain, was without excuse.

Therefore, Cain had all the knowledge he needed to have, to know the wrongfulness of his actions. The law of murder had been sufficiently published and promulgated by God, the Supreme Lawgiver, to give Cain all the advance notice he needed. And I suppose by the severity of his crime, and how remarkably little time it took for the first murder to be unleashed in the world, it shows that the corruption of human nature needed very little time to progress to committing one of the greatest offenses in human society. In other words, even the very first generation of people were all the way

corrupt from the very start, requiring no time at all to mature to full-on evil behavior.

The Evidence. God, now acting in the capacity of the Supreme Judge of the World, comes to Cain and makes inquiry. Presumably, though not necessarily, Cain has either hidden Abel's body or buried it. He assumes God only knows what Cain chooses to disclose, and feigns ignorance. But nothing is hidden from God's sight, and Cain's deceit is of no avail. God knows where the body is, where the murder happened, and He knows exactly how and by whose hand Abel died. So God has no need to show the body or disclose its location to Cain, nor to do an autopsy, because God is not a man, that he should be limited to this kind of evidence.

Rather, as God says, the voice of Abel's blood cries to the Lord from the ground - wherever it was. It is the blood itself which speaks, and it is God alone who hears it. Which statement is no more or less true if we read it literally, symbolically or allegorically. For God is omniscient, even to the point of intimately knowing Cain's evil thoughts and the guilt hiding in his heart. But there is another principle operating here, which is that all sinful activities of men leave traces, which is to say, the earth is not neutral towards sin, but is negatively affected by it. This is the operation of the law of the land. And regardless of whether people can track, sense or measure these traces, God most certainly can. Nothing escapes His notice.

The Verdict. God's response to the testimony produced is to declare Cain guilty, and pronounce upon him a verdict. Now he will be cursed from the ground, and made a fugitive and wanderer (in other translations, a vagrant, vagabond, or a drifter) on the earth. That is, Cain's curse is separate from, and in addition to, the curse of the ground pronounced against Adam. For Cain's ability to take dominion will not merely be made more difficult, it will in some ways be fully denied to him, preventing him from settling down in one place. Plus, he will be in constant fear for his safety, if he does not receive some special protection from God.

Cain's curse, unlike Adam's, is personal to him as a murderer - no one else is directly affected by it, though his immediate family will of course be impacted by it. But we see here the formation of a pattern, that when people sin, the resulting sentence is not a *spiritual penalty* as it were (that is, condemnation), but a physical one. For in reality, by the Fall, all mankind is already under a universal condemnation and death sentence leading all unredeemed people inevitably to an eternity of punishment and separation from God. Cain's act of murder does not in reality make him any *more* destined for eternal punishment than he was when he was born. Cain, for his act of murder, along with all those after him who will become murderers, will suffer consequences during this present life, not merely in the hereafter.

So the penalties we see God inflicting throughout scripture tend to be physical impairments of various kinds. Thus, we never see God sending a demon attack against someone, or sending someone to a different level of hell. But sickness, plague, disaster - these we see fairly often.

Gen. 4:13-16 Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." Then the LORD said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD put a mark on

Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

A Lesson In Jurisdiction

It's no surprise that Cain, upon receiving his sentence from God, immediately complains that it is excessive. In a sense, any punishment short of death could be seen as leniency. But as this was a case of first impression - the first instance of punishment for a crime in history - perhaps it is fair to say that Cain would not have had any proper expectations of criminal punishment gained from experience. But he makes four allegations concerning his punishment: 1) he would be driven from the ground; 2) he would be hidden from God's face; 3) he would be a fugitive and wanderer; and 4) whoever finds him will kill hem. The first and third statements were certainly true. The second - that he would be hidden from God's face - was nowhere expressed, but perhaps it can be inferred that he would thereafter be out of God's favor, at the very least.

But his last statement, that whoever finds him will kill him, seems a bit of a stretch. At this point in history, no one had ever been a blood avenger before - why on earth would Cain's mind invent the possibility? But perhaps he knew that if the thought could occur to him, it could occur to anyone else. Yet practically speaking, there were on the earth at that time only Adam, Eve, Cain, and perhaps some other unnamed brothers and sisters, along with other children. Was he genuinely afraid someone from his own family would seek revenge?

Nevertheless, God gave credence to Cain's complaint, and took action to prevent the possibility that someone might avenge Abel. "'Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him *sevenfold*.' And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him." Which begs the question - Why would God protect a murderer? And the answer is, the law of nature - with respect to all crimes, not just murder - only declares what is right and what is wrong. God has all authority, of course, to fully enforce his laws, even to the point of both physical death and spiritual (eternal) death. But the law of nature contains no delegation of law enforcement authority to mankind. At this early point in history, no one has law enforcement authority over crimes except the Lord God Himself. He has not appointed anyone among men to enforce laws on God's behalf.

Thus, at this point in time, anyone who tried to enforce the law of murder by punishing a murderer would be acting without authority to do so.

People often have the wrong idea about *the mark of Cain*. The mark was not an additional punishment or an identification of evil, but a form of *protection*. Cain's mark was God's way of preventing a revenge killing. If you are inclined to look for an analogy in prophecy, the mark of Cain was more like the protective seal of God on the 144,000 (Rev. 14:1), than the mark of the Beast (Rev. 13:16-18). Don't assume the mark of Cain was an indication of evil, just because that's the way it is portrayed in popular culture.

The authority to punish murder and other crimes would not be granted until more than 1,600 years later, after the great flood. (Gen. 9:6). However, it's not as though a revenge killing would be just as bad as what Cain did - it would be *seven times* as bad. Yes, that's what *sevenfold* means. Which, if nothing else, shows how seriously God takes the whole issue of authority. Questions of authority

are not merely a passing concern with God. Authority questions cut to the very core of what we can and cannot do in life. *So we had better pay attention*.

Gen. 4 exemplifies what I call the two ***Supreme Rules of Authority***.

- *First*, God's laws determine what is right and wrong, and man's laws must conform to God's.
- *Second*, it is never enough to merely know right from wrong. One must also determine to whom, and to what extent, God has granted enforcement authority.

Unfortunately, no one ever asks the second question. However, the second question is more important to God than the first - arguably seven times more important. For in this text we see that *human authority extends only to that which God expressly gives us*. No person's authority originates with themselves. Everything we have authority to do must be given to us by the Creator. The logical extension of this line of reasoning is that unless a specific authority has been delegated to us, we don't have it. This is the universal *Law of Enumerated Powers*.

You may be familiar with this idea as a principle of constitutional interpretation. If a power isn't expressly delegated, it does not exist. However, the law of enumerated powers (broadly speaking) is not only a constitutional principle, it is the way the universe works, because that is the way God made it. Thus, I suppose one could say God was protecting His own exclusive right to enforce the law of murder, until such time as He authorized people to enforce that law.

The exact opposite of the law of enumerated powers is the assertion of men that they can do anything they want, unless God has expressly forbidden it. Thus, instead of men having an inherently limited authority, the presumption is that man's authority is unlimited, which always leads to abuse and usurpation. And the extreme denial of God's authority was succinctly expressed by Alistair Crowley, an occultist and alleged satanist, that "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law." In other words, man's will is everything, and God's will is nothing. But to those who are inclined to follow Crowley's example, I caution that God considers issues of authority to be more important than people generally believe, and His priorities will not be ignored.

When the kingdom of darkness eventually reaches its zenith and the Antichrist is unleashed - that penultimate enemy of God - he will not be known as the man who rejected Christ, or as the man who would not be saved. Rather, he will be known as the Man of Lawlessness (2 Th. 2:3), that is, the man who would not submit to God's authority. So don't ever think that God will eventually 'let go' of the importance of authority. What was true at the beginning of history will be true at the end of it, and all the while in between.

Gen. 4:17-21 Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.

The Line of Cain

Let me briefly comment on a teaching that is all too common, springing from the account of Cain and Abel and the genealogy "of the generations of Adam" in the next chapter. Namely, the claim is often made that the genealogy in Gen. 5, tracing from Adam through Seth and down to Noah, is the "godly line of Seth." This is contrasted with the supposed "ungodly line of Cain," described here in Gen. 4. But this whole idea is based on a set of assumptions which simply are not true.

For one thing, the scriptures never declare Seth to be righteous. Yes, his mother regarded him as a replacement for Abel, but the circumstances of his birth hardly qualify as establishing that he later had faith as an adult. And yes, the line of Seth contains two individuals scripture identifies as being righteous (Enoch and Noah). Which is only 2 out of 9 generations. But more than that, surely each of the named individuals had hundreds or thousands of siblings, cousins and other relatives, all descended from Seth. It's not like the nine guys listed in Gen. 5:6-32 are the only descendants of Seth. Nor are the six generations of the line of Cain listed here in Gen. 4 his only descendants.

The scriptures are only giving us the name of the first-born male in each generation. We have to assume for each person listed that there are many unnamed brothers and sisters in each generation. Some scholars estimate that there were 200,000,000 people living on the earth when Noah's flood came. All of whom, except for eight people in Noah's immediate family, perished in the flood along with their sins. On what basis can it be declared that any appreciable percentage of Seth's descendants were righteous? And what is the assumption here, anyway? It is not as though righteousness or belief can be inherited from father to son. Let me rephrase that: *righteousness cannot be inherited*.

So when Gen. 6:5-6 says that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth" and "the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth," this included both the line of Seth and the line of Cain, as well as the descendants of all of Adam and Eve's other children. For all of the descendants of Adam, through Seth, Cain, or otherwise, would have equally been born with a sin nature, equally born separated from God, and equally prone to sin.

For that matter, the scripture never says Cain was an unbeliever who never repented. Sure he was a murderer, but he bore his punishment. Plus, King David was a murderer - did that prevent him from being a believer? No - David had a heart after God's. Acts 13:22. Yes, Cain "went away from the presence of the Lord." But that's because God made him a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth. Cain's punishment was to be ostracized. What else could he do, but leave town and build his own city? It doesn't mean he never repented. And it doesn't mean he did - we simply don't know.

The scripture is very clear. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23). That means *all* of the descendants of Seth, and *all* of the descendants of Cain, were equally born with an inherited sin nature. Every one of them, regardless of who their father was, was born separated from God. So what is this baloney about the godly line of Seth and the ungodly line of Cain? To attribute godliness to the line of Seth, and ungodliness to the line of Cain, is simply ridiculous. All descendants of both Seth and Cain were born with the exact same sin nature.

Gen. 4:22 Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

The Bronze and Iron Ages

Just a brief comment here on how standard histories compare with the scriptures. The Bronze Age is typically regarded as having begun around 3300 BC, where bronze is a mixture of copper and tin. The Iron Age is generally regarded as coming to the fore 2,000 years later around 1300 BC. Iron has a higher melting point than copper and tin, so it is generally regarded as beyond the capability of early societies and primitive furnaces. Although it is recognized that meteoric iron, a natural iron-nickel alloy, was smelted by people as early as 3200 BC.

Whereas, Gen. 4:22 indicates that iron and bronze were smelted by the same people at the same time. When you line up Tubal-cain with biblical genealogies, it turns out he was in the same generation as Methusaleh, who lived around 3300 BC, only 700 years or so after creation. Now it is certainly possible that with the effects of the flood, etc. on later generations, this early knowledge may have been partially lost, or shifted to some societies at different times than other societies, accounting for the evidence extant today.

But what impresses me is that Tubal-Cain, only the 8th generation of men, already had the intellect, capacity and know-how to forge both bronze and iron long before the flood. Early man was no dummy, for they were as much made in the image of God as people are today.

Gen. 4:19 And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

Gen 4:23-24 Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."

Lawlessness Increases

Here we have the account of Lamech, a descendant of Cain and the father of Tubal-Cain. He is known for two things - he is the first recorded bigamist, and he purported to raise the Lord's vengeance on anyone who struck down Cain by 1100%. Both of which things were lawless. I want to say these things were exceptionally lawless, but the reality is He was just manifesting the inherent lawlessness of all human beings at a very early stage, demonstrating the almost unlimited capacity people have for lawlessness, and have always had, ever since the very beginning.

It is one of the easiest arguments to make from an observation of the law of nature in the created order that God only ever designed the institution of marriage to include one man and one woman. He did not make two wives for Adam, even though she was essentially charged with the responsibility of populating the entire human race to the point of filling the earth. One woman for each man is sufficient to serve all the purposes of God's design for families and for dominion. I daresay as well that one woman is plenty enough for any man to show his love toward her, and for him to be all that God desires him to be. I can find no evidence anywhere in scripture that having

a second wife fulfills any godly purpose that God has imposed on men. All it does is fulfill the very human desire to expand one's prowess, and cause a man to overestimate his importance in the world.

There are numerous instances of bigamy in the scriptures, including among the patriarchs of the faith, such as Abraham, Jacob, David and Solomon. But the mere fact these men did these things and God did not immediately strike them dead, does not mean their behavior was approved by God, that is, obedient to the laws of God in nature. As we have seen in the case of Cain, just because God withholds or defers judgment does not mean the behavior was lawful. Abraham is an interesting case, in that when he fathered Ishmael through Hagar, she was not legally (by custom or by nature) his wife, since they never held themselves out to others as being married. So, was Abraham a bigamist (if somehow Hagar is regarded as his wife), or is he merely an adulterer?

Keep in mind that in any case, Sarai's consent or permission is irrelevant, for neither she nor Abram had any authority to set aside the law of nature of marriage, nor to make any exceptions to it. Just because Abraham was a man of faith, doesn't mean everything he did was righteous, nor does it mean he gets a free pass. Even people of faith sin, and it is still as much sin for them as anyone else. There are no excuses, even for a man after God's own heart (*i.e.*, David), who coveted another man's wife and had him killed so he could have her. It might make for a terribly interesting human interest story, but at root it is just another form of immorality.

The other notable accomplishment of Lamech was to self-declare that not only was he more important than Cain, but he could perform for himself what only God could perform. For Cain's protection from revenge was limited to a sevenfold penalty, by God's declaration and the benefit of a mark of protection from God Himself. But here, Lamech announces a promise to exact revenge eleven times greater than any revenge of Cain. But whereas Cain's revenge would be limited to instances of someone killing him, Lamech's would extend revenge for merely being wounded. Plus, Cain's revenge was announced by God, and presumably, that revenge would be carried out by God Himself. Whereas Lamech fully intended to carry out his own revenge on his own behalf, and without any prior actual or implied authorization by God.

So in his extreme hubris, Lamech declared things above and beyond the revenge of Cain, took the matter into his own hands instead of leaving anything to God, and proclaimed his own self-importance to the world. All the while totally unaware that his entire lineage and legacy would be completely wiped out in Noah's flood, and be brought to nothing.

Gen. 4:25-26 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.

The Name of the Lord

According to the genealogy in chapter 5, Seth was born when Adam was 130 years old. The scriptures never tell us Adam's age when Cain and Abel were born, but because of Eve's belief that Seth was a replacement for Abel, he was presumably the third child, or at the very least, the next

male child. And since Seth was the only child whose male descendants survived the great flood, out of all of Adam and Eve's children, he is important not only to the genealogy of Christ, but he is in fact an ancestor of us all. Enosh similarly, as the descendant of Seth, is also a common ancestor of all people alive today. He was born, as Gen. 5:6 tells us, when Seth was 105 years old.

Which means that when people started calling on the name of the Lord, it was about 235 years or so - presumably sometime early in Enosh's life - post-creation. The word used for "Lord" here, as it is used throughout Genesis with only a few exceptions, is the Tetragrammaton, or YHWH, usually pronounced as Yahweh or Jehovah, the proper name of the God of Israel. Of course, Israel did not exist before the flood, and the scriptures nowhere tell us how people suddenly knew what the name of the Lord was at this early date. Did Adam suddenly decide to tell his descendants what to call God, or was it revealed in some other way? We don't know.

It is curious that Moses, when he learns the name of the Lord for the first time at the burning bush (Exo. 3:14-15), he was apparently ignorant of it. Was this knowledge lost among people after the flood? Or was Moses ignorant of it merely because he had been raised as an Egyptian in Pharaoh's household? Did the rest of the Israelites know God's name even though Moses did not? In Exo. 3:14-15 it is implied that when Moses tells the Israelites God's name, they will perhaps recognize it. Of course, it could also be Moses' performance of signs that convinces the people that the name given to Moses is correct. Exo. 4:29-31.

The Lord specifically told Moses to say to the people that he had been sent by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so they would know he had met with the one true God of Israel. Yet in Gen. 14:17-22, when Abraham met with Melchizedek (understood by many to be a theophany of Jesus Christ), Melchizedek is only mentioned as being a priest of the God Most High (Elohim Elyon), not a priest of Jehovah, as such. Yet, Gen. 14:22 records Abraham as stating that, "I have lifted my hand to the LORD, God Most High," that is, "Yahweh, Elohim Elyon." So, did Abraham know the proper name for God, or not? And if so, why did Moses and/or the Israelites not know it? Or did Moses, in compiling and/or writing the Torah later in life, merely use his later acquired knowledge of God's name in referring to past events?

[Note: Some people view the different names for God used in Genesis as indicative of different authors for the texts associated with each name. However, I do not subscribe to the JEDP Theory of the authorship of Genesis, as discussed in the next section.]

For me the bottom line is that Gen. 4:26, when read in the light of Exo. 3:14-15, means that we as creatures do not name the Creator. God names Himself and reveals it to us, consistent with the law of naming authority. The one who names has authority over the one who is named. God names us, his creation - we do not name him. Only God has authority to name Himself, as the uncreated Creator. And God has not named Himself as Allah, Vishnu, or any other name not found in the Bible. To the same effect, "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," (Acts 4:12) except the name of Jesus Christ - a name chosen by God, not man.

CHAPTER 5

Gen. 5:1-2 This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created.

Who Wrote Genesis?

First, the easy question - as to grammar. Note that God refers to both male and female as Man. The modern trend which views this as 'sexist' is out of step with our creation. God - the inventor of language - sets the pattern for proper word usage, not modern (mostly anti-God) sensibilities. This is consistent with the New Testament's treatment of women as included in the adopted sons of God and being heirs of God as much as men.

Second, this phrase, "the book of the generations," appears only this one time in the entire Bible. The more common phrase is, "these are the generations," which appears ten times in Genesis, nine of which are at the beginning of a new branch of human genealogy. The first use of the phrase is in Gen. 2:4, referring to *the generations of the heavens and the earth* in connection with Day 6 of the creation week. But the appearance of this phrase here provides us with the opportunity to consider who really wrote Genesis.

There are two principal camps: the traditional (*i.e.*, conservative) view that Genesis, as with the other books of the Torah, was written by Moses around 1450 B.C.; and the JEDP Theory (*i.e.*, liberal) view that Genesis was written by several (or many) people around 500 years after Moses. Whereas for myself, I consider it beyond any doubt that Moses wrote Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. As for Genesis, I view Moses as most likely being the *compiler* of Genesis - which is to say, Genesis was largely written - not after Moses - but *before* Moses.

My reasoning is simple. The vast majority of the rest of the Bible was written, in the case of each book, by an actual eyewitness to the events described. The one notable exception is Luke, which was actually written by Luke, but he himself was not an eyewitness so much as a compiler of accounts from others. And he states so much in the opening verses of his Gospel. In other words, he didn't hide the fact of how he came about his information. Other portions of scripture, notably the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, were imparted by visions from God to the authors. But again both authors came right out and said they were recounting visions from God, not as eyewitnesses to the future, but as eyewitnesses of the visions.

The question is whether Genesis was dictated to Moses in a dream, vision, or other supernatural revelation - for Moses was most certainly not an actual eyewitness to anything whatsoever recounted in Genesis. Or whether Moses was a compiler, and perhaps an editor, of eyewitness accounts handed down by the patriarchs, inevitably funneling through Noah and his sons as the only possible means of surviving the flood.

I generally discount the idea that Genesis, in its entirety, was dictated to Moses by God. For Genesis most certainly never claims Moses as its author. Nor is it anywhere claimed that the entire contents of Genesis were revealed in a dream or vision. Genesis includes dreams and visions revealed to Joseph, certainly - but again this is not merely presumed or implied, the scriptures come right out

and admit that Joseph had dreams. Nowhere does Genesis say that the rest of the book was revealed in a dream or vision - which we might expect, if that is what happened.

Certainly, Genesis chapter 1 had no human eyewitness, as such, unless perhaps God told Adam what happened during the creation week before Adam was formed. Which would have required Adam to write down what God told him - a feat most scholars would consider impossible. However, Adam was able to speak and have a command of language - what exact language, we don't know - on the very first day of his life. He was able to name all the animals, and as noted previously, he was no dummy. So what secular scholars believe early man was capable of does not decide the matter for me.

As a practical matter, if the years given for the lives of the patriarchs are accurate, any information Adam had could have been given by him to Methuselah, which he could have handed down to Shem, who could have transferred the same to either Abraham, Isaac or Jacob (all of whom were born during Shem's lifetime). So it is not difficult to believe there could have been a scenario where this information was preserved for many years with very few transfers, eventually landing the hands of Moses. Of course, I do not know this.

All I am saying is that it might be possible that Genesis was written in several parts - for the entire book covers a span of 2,300 years or so (*i.e.*, from creation to the time of Joseph) - each part being written by a patriarch who lived at the time and was an eyewitness to the events described. These various parts then could have landed in the care of Moses, who compiled and edited the source material under the Lord's inspiration. Or you can believe the entire book of Genesis was dictated by the Lord to Moses long after the fact - but this would be seriously inconsistent with all the rest of scripture, so it is not my first choice.

Gen. 5:3-5 When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.

A Good Long Life

There is no way to verify this, but according to tradition as accepted by Bishop Ussher and reported in Adams' Synchronological Chart or Map of History (1871), Adam and Eve had a total of 33 sons and 23 daughters. James Ussher (4 January 1581 - 21 March 1656) was the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland between 1625 and 1656. He is famous for developing a chronology and timeline of history based on biblical genealogies which established the initial Creation as occurring on 22 October 4004 BC, according to the Julian calendar worked backwards. Of course, America adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1752 in place of the Julian calendar, which is no longer in use anywhere, but you get the point - Ussher dated the Creation (based on biblical textual evidence) at 4,000 years before the birth of Jesus in 4 BC.

If we assume Seth was only the third child of Adam, then he had 53 more children over the course of the rest of his life - 800 years - or an average of one child every 15 years. Of course, there is no reason to assume Adam's children were all equally spaced over that time period, which also would

have been limited both by Eve's lifespan and whether she ever went through menopause - questions we cannot answer. But they, like most couples, probably went through a period of frequent childbirth, followed by a period of enjoying their grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, etc. Can you imagine the whole world calling Adam and Eve, 'Pop' and 'Gram' or the equivalent?

I do not take the lifespans as recorded in Gen. 5 as mythic, symbolic, or allegorical - I take them as literal. There are many reasons why people before the flood could have lived much longer than people today. Since rain had not yet fallen on the earth (Gen. 2:5), ostensibly there would not have been any storms either - no hurricanes, tornadoes or thunderstorms, meaning no lightning, no floods, no hail, etc. With all of the topographical changes wrought by the flood - continental drift, the formation of mountains and deserts, changes in sea levels, etc. the earth as a whole could well have been more temperate without any uninhabitable zones or polar ice caps. Although most of these things are debated by scientists, if we take the scriptures at face value it is entirely possible that the environment of the earth could have been much more conducive to a longer lifespan.

Another major factor affecting human lifespans is what happened to our DNA after the flood. And here I make reference to two things: first, the absolutely huge reduction in the human gene pool resulting from only eight persons surviving the flood. Who knows how many gene variations were lost as a result? Second, human DNA began a process by which mutations - mainly through copying errors from one generation to the next - have caused our DNA to degrade over the generations. And mutations almost always impact people negatively in some way. Meaning that over time, the human genome continues to degrade each generation, the undoubted effect of which has been to shorten lifespans.

Regardless of your view of the relative health benefits of eating meat, as it was not authorized by God prior to the flood, we must presume that all of our antediluvian ancestors had a diet that was exclusively plant based - no meat of any kind. When one factors in the dangers of eating uncooked meat, it is quite possible that a meatless diet would have extended lifespans.

And don't get me talking about the corruption of the food supply, by which much of our food has been genetically modified and/or tainted with artificial ingredients. All of which may fight off insects and keep food fresh longer, but essentially degrades the nutritional value of the food and has harmful long-term side effects. Whereas pre-flood, people only ever ate all-natural organic food, uncorrupted, unmodified, and untampered with. No wonder they lived longer. So yes, I take all the lifespans in Genesis literally.

Gen 5:6-32 [Abridged]
When Seth was 105, he fathered Enosh, lived another 807 years, and died at age 912.
When Enosh was 90, he fathered Kenan, lived another 815 years, and died at age 905.
When Kenan was 70, he fathered Mahalalel, lived another 840 years, and died at age 910.
When Mahalalel was 65, he fathered Jared, lived another 830 years, and died at age 895.
When Jared was 162, he fathered Enoch, lived another 800 years, and died at age 962.
When Enoch was 65, he fathered Methuselah, lived another 300 years, and at age 365 God took him, and he was not.
When Methuselah was 187, he fathered Lamech, lived another 782 years, and died at age 969.

When Lamech was 182, he fathered Noah, lived another 595 years, and died at age 777.
After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Real History, Not Myth or Allegory

One of the most unappreciated aspects of the biblical genealogies is that they help establish the biblical record as *fact, not myth*. The genealogies are not just a sequence of names - rather, they are interspersed with historical data that link them with real historical events and cement them as a credible witness of the past. And since the various genealogical records of the scriptures (in Genesis and elsewhere in the Bible) span the entire time from creation until Christ, they help cement the factual nature of the entire Bible, not merely the genealogies themselves.

The genealogy of chapter 5 provides useful timeline information from Adam down to Noah and the flood. For each person in the list, we are given his age when his heir was born, how long he lived after that, and then what his total lifespan was. The fact such data exists helps to establish the genealogies as factual and not merely mythical or allegorical. In other words, the numbers are *meant* to be added together, cross-checked and verified - not just for each individual, but as between different generations. If these records were meant to be taken as mere myth or allegory, there would be no purpose in doing this.

Especially given that the first eleven chapters of Genesis are viewed by many people as non-historical, the type of data we find here provides an additional basis (that is, in addition to the other historical facts presented in Genesis) for considering the genealogies as historical fact. This, in turn, further supports the understanding that all the events described in the first eleven chapters of Genesis (and not merely the genealogies) are historical fact and not mere myth or allegory.

Which is crucial, given that so many of our most fundamental legal principles, including equality, religious freedom, private property, economic liberty, family relationships and mankind's dominion over the creation (to name but a few) all spring from a literal/historical reading of Genesis 1 thru 11. Not to mention that our whole understanding of the fall, man's sinful nature and the absolute necessity of redemption all rest on a shaky foundation if the events of Genesis are not factually and literally true.

By this I mean either we are all of us - every single person - a physical descendant of Adam and the inheritor of a pre-disposition to sin *as a matter of absolute fact*, or the whole story only has as much weight as we choose to give it. If fact, then it doesn't matter what any of us believe, we are all objectively sinful. If not fact, then the whole thing becomes subjective and a lot less like a universal truth. Establishing the Genesis account as a fact is crucial if it is to be understood as *truth*. And this is by no means limited to mankind's sinful nature and the need for spiritual redemption.

Our conceptions of legal equality - based on the sentiments of the Declaration of Independence that *all men are created equal* - are directly derived from Gen. 1:27 and the idea that all people are equally made in God's image. If this verse is not objectively true as a fact, then *legal equality* disappears, and all we are left with is *factual inequality*, for people are obviously born with different traits and abilities into different social and economic situations. Without the *image of God* as a constant in human nature, what else is there that makes everyone equal? If all people are not equally

subject to the laws of God, equally accountable to Him, and equally to be judged by Him, any so-called law of equality is merely wishful thinking.

Without a literal reading of Gen. 1:26-28 (the Dominion Mandate), there is no firm foundation for private property as the gift of God (property then becomes a mere creation of the state). If the Dominion Mandate is not *fact* - and an actual legally binding covenant between God and factual descendants of Adam - then marriage, family and children are no longer inalienable human rights (*i.e.*, rights granted by God, not men). A merely mythical or allegorical Dominion Mandate does not convey any actual legal rights which are absolutely binding, and which actually legally constrain civil governments. Only if Genesis 1-11 is real history, based in fact, are our rights secured.

This is what the genealogy in chapter 5 helps to do. It helps establish the factual credibility for the most fundamental and sacred legal principles we hold dear as the underlying basis for human society. And for this we should be most thankful.

Ancient Chronology

It is solely because of the data contained in the Genesis genealogies that we are able to construct any kind of useful time line for ancient human history. Granted, the dates of birth and death are not as precise as we would like - there are no months and days, only years. Actually, scripture does indicate the month and day of the great flood, namely, "in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month." Gen. 7:11. But that doesn't tell us when Noah was born, or how long that was after creation. So we need the genealogical data to fill in the gaps.

I assume the lifespans given are accurate plus or minus one year, so that the law of averages will make the overall numbers fairly accurate. Even if we assume, as a worst case scenario, each lifespan could be off by as much as a full year (more or less), when you realize there are only 77 generations from Adam to Christ (as indicated in Luke's genealogy), it means that the time line between them (based on genealogical data) is about 4,000 years plus or minus only 77 years. Not 100,000 years, or even 10,000 years. Thus, the range for error is very small, and for purposes of mapping out history, almost negligible. As the data in chapter 5 covers only 10 generations, that means the numerical data is good to within 10 years.

This makes dating certain events (within a few dozen years) fairly easy. Thus, using Bishop Ussher's timeline as an example, Noah was born around 1056 A.M. (*Anno Mundi* - "year of the world," *i.e.*, years after creation), or circa 2948 B.C. The flood itself occurred around 1656 A.M., or 2348 B.C. The dispersion following the Tower of Babel came a mere 150 or so years later. Abraham was born around 1950 A.M., or 2054 B.C. Moses was born around 2460 A.M./1544 B.C., and the Exodus occurred 80 years later, about 1464 B.C. David was born around 1,060 B.C. All these dates are approximate, but in the ball park.

We can tell, within a few dozen years, when all of the O.T. divine covenants were inaugurated (Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic and Davidic). We can chart, with some certainty, the progress of various nations and key interactions between them, such as the Exodus, when Solomon's temple was built, the deportation to Babylon, the rebuilding of the temple, etc. In short, the biblical

genealogies make it possible for us to see the overall plan of history, and to understand some of its patterns.

One of the highlights of biblical chronology is to see which of the patriarchs were alive at the same time. For example, Adam was still alive when Noah's father (Lamech) was born eight generations later. Methuselah - the world's oldest man at 969 years and Noah's grandfather - died in the year of the flood. Methuselah and Adam were both alive for an overlap of about 243 years. Shem was still alive when both Isaac and Jacob were alive, though we can't know if they knew each other. Unusually long lifespans of 450+ years continued for four generations after Noah (from Shem to Eber, namesake of the Hebrews). But beginning with Peleg (during whose lifetime the dispersion from Babel occurred - Gen. 10:25), lifespans began to top out around 200 years or less.

When you realize that Noah was alive for the first 56 years of Abraham's life, and that they could quite possibly have talked directly with each other (even though the nations had scattered by that point), it is conceivable that information going all the way back to creation could have landed in Abraham's hands in only three transfers - Adam to Methusaleh, Methusaleh to Noah, and Noah to Abraham. Just like that, information about the first 2,000 years of human history *as recorded by the people who were there*, could have landed in the care of Abraham to pass down to his descendants. Of course, you have to assume the earliest men were not merely glorified apes who grunted and pointed as their best means of communication. *Ugh! Mwanawana goo goo!*

While I find the dating of biblical events to be a fascinating study, I offer a strong caution against believing that every significant event in the scriptures can be dated with accuracy to not only the number of approximate years, but exact years, even down to the exact number of months, weeks and days. Or believing that all biblical events fall on dates according to set patterns that can be discerned, mathematically calculated and predicted. I feel sorry for all the well intended people making calculations in the 1980's showing the Second Coming of Christ and the start of the Millennium occurring in 2001. That is not why the genealogical data is given to us.

Is the data useful for history, chronology and dating? Yes. But it is not full of wondrous secrets waiting to be unlocked by careful mastery and manipulation using number theory. The genealogical data is *historical fact*, not a *mathematical code*. The Bible tells us that God keeps some things hidden until He decides to reveal them. Deut. 29:29; 1 Cor. 2:7; Col. 1:26, 2:3. What that means is that if God has hidden secret truths in the numbers of the Bible, nothing you do can ever unlock or discover those secrets until God is ready to reveal them. I mean reveal them by *His word*. So don't waste your time playing with the numbers. You are not ever going to crack God's code (if there is one) or hack His system. The things God hides cannot be found.

But the general timing, sequence and flow of history is not one of those secret things. These are things which can be known - not based on science, but on eye-witness testimony - and put to good use to enhance our understanding of the world if we are open to it. After all, the origin of humanity is not primarily a scientific question, nor is it answered primarily by scientific evidence. The scientific method can only measure things now, not 6,000 years ago. And tests developed for dating all have serious limitations and assumptions. The best evidence for understanding the origin of humanity, in particular, is eye-witness testimony and documentary records - which is what Genesis provides.

Law of Inheritance

The genealogy here in chapter 5, as with biblical genealogies in general, only traces the male lineage, never a person's female ancestors or his or her female descendants. Even Mary's genealogy in Luke, though it terminates with her, is strictly concerned with her male ancestors. Why is this? It is not because the biblical genealogies are part of any ideological system that men are inherently dominant or superior to women. Neither are the genealogies indicative of an unjust social system that oppresses women. Frankly, none of what we are about to discuss was the idea of any man or group of men because - I suggest - it was, and is, God's idea.

I start with the assumption that the genealogies, as much as any other part of the Bible, are God-breathed, Holy Spirit inspired, and ultimately authored by God. Thus, not man invented or man perverted. And if that is the case, it may profit us to ask why God would do things this way, whether there is any way to make sense of it, and what we can learn about our world if this be so.

Let me suggest that there is such a thing as the *Law of the Nature of Inheritance*, which is to say, there is a law of inheritance which is part of the law of nature. In biology, the *law of genetics* is such that each human child takes equally from both parents, one of which must be male, and the other which must be female. However, according to the law of the nature of inheritance (hereafter, the *law of inheritance*), each child takes solely from the father and the mother is disregarded. So while genetics says a child takes from his parents 50-50, for purposes of inheritance under the law of nature and also in the scriptures, a child takes 100% from the father and 0% from the mother. Thus the difference between science (genetics) and law (inheritance).

It is most important that these two laws of genetics and inheritance not be confused. The law of genetics applies in the physical realm which mainly pertains to biology. The law of inheritance applies in the legal realm which mainly pertains to authority over property, the right to rule, and also goes to the matters of nationality and ethnicity. Before you get up in arms over gender-equality, let us see what evidence there is in the scriptures for this law of inheritance. What I will do here is give several examples from later scriptures evidencing the law of inheritance, and assume that God is logically consistent with Himself ("for God is not a God of confusion" - 1 Cor. 14:33), so that the same principles hold true here in Gen. 5 as with the rest of scripture.

First, consider the Matthew genealogy (Mat. 1:1-17), which establishes the right of Jesus to rule the nation of Israel as the heir of David. The genealogy makes reference to four non-Jewish women in the lineage from Abraham to Jesus, namely, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. If the right to rule is to be inherited pursuant to the law of genetics, *i.e.*, 50-50 from the father and the mother, then it would taint the genealogy because then Jesus would be less than 100% Jewish, the Son of David.

But none of that matters. As long as each *male* in the lineage was a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then the lineage of Jesus as a descendant of Abraham and David is intact due to the operation of the law of inheritance. The ethnicity of the women is disregarded as irrelevant. And it strongly suggests that for all purposes with which the Matthew genealogy is concerned, only the fathers are important in determining the character and quality of that inheritance which is passed to the next generation.

Second, consider the case of *In re The Daughters of Zelophehad* found in Num 27:1-11 and Josh 17:3-4. In legal cases, the term *in re* (or, *in the matter of*) refers to a judicial proceeding having some item of property at the center of the dispute rather than adverse parties. In this case, the property at issue is the estate of Zelophehad, an Israelite of the tribe of Manasseh who died and was survived by five daughters and no sons. And the law controlling the distribution of the estate was this: "*According to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit*." Num. 26:55.

In other words, property was to be inherited solely from one's father, not the mother. What is unstated, but necessarily implied, is that only the *sons* would inherit from their fathers. If a daughter were to inherit (or a wife), upon her death no one would be able to inherit from her, since she will never have been a father, and the whole system of inheriting only from one's father would unravel quickly. Thus, as an initial rule, no provision was made for either wives or daughters to inherit. But now comes the wrinkle, which had to happen eventually, where a man dies leaving no sons to inherit from him. But his property has to go somewhere, right? So the daughters of Zelophehad came to Moses with a question: where does the property go?

Long story short: the estate was divided among the daughters temporarily, until they could each get married from a man from the tribe of Manasseh, at which time the property would pass to the husband, who could then pass on the property to his sons. In fact, the solution God gives Moses solves two problems: 1) maintaining the integrity of father-to-son inheritance; and 2) maintaining the tribal integrity of Israel (which is why the daughters couldn't marry men from other tribes). Obviously the tribal aspect of the case was peculiar to Israel and not part of the laws of nature, but I suggest, the father-to-son inheritance rule is more generally applicable to all nations.

Third, we also see the law of inheritance applied to the Church, the Body of Christ. Scripture indicates Christians are adopted as *sons of God*, not sons and daughters. Gal. 3:26. In a spiritual sense, God has children, but no daughters. Why? Because daughters do not inherit from their father, *i.e.*, God.

> "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are *sons of God*. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of *adoption as sons*, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then *heirs of God* and fellow heirs with Christ...." Rom. 8:14-17.

I am *not* making the argument that women are not or cannot be heirs with Christ. Rather, that women must be placed in the *position of a son*, legally, in order to be a spiritual heir of God the Father. Gal. 4:7. Thus, the N.T. repeatedly refers to all Christians as the *sons of God*. Luk. 20:36; Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:14, 19; Gal. 3:26; Phlp. 2:15; 1 Jn. 3:1-2. It may not be politically correct in our culture, but this is the way God operates. If your translation of the Bible doesn't carry this concept forward because it serves the false god of gender neutrality, throw it out.

A fourth example is one we have already seen - the Fall of mankind being inherited by the descendants of Adam, for which purpose Eve's transgression was and is disregarded.

A fifth example is something we alluded to in considering Gen. 3:15, namely, the prophecy of the

seed of the woman (not Adam's seed) overcoming the Devil. This prophecy relating to the birth of Christ - considered in light of the law of inheritance - fully explains why and how Jesus was born sinless and without a sin nature. For Jesus had no human father, and therefore inherited no sin nature as a descendant of Adam. His mother Mary, of course, being a descendant of Adam, had a sin nature. But it had no bearing on Jesus, because He inherited nothing from her - mothers being disregarded for inheritance purposes, after all.

Thus, I suggest the law of inheritance is a universal rule throughout scripture, and is part of the eternal law of nature.

CHAPTER 6

Gen. 6:1-2,4 When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. ... The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

Sons of God and Daughters of Man

Up to this point in Genesis, the focus has been on the immediate family of Adam and Eve and their sons, Cain, Abel and Seth. In chapter 5 we have a brief introduction to the lineage from Adam to Noah and his sons, but nothing really about the wider society or culture of humanity. Here in chapter 6, the focus changes to what is happening generally in the world. The narrative is at a point in time (as per verse 3) about 120 years before the flood, or 1536 years after creation.

Some have calculated there may have been as many as 200,000,000 people on the earth when the flood came. However, any such calculations require making certain assumptions about birthrates that cannot be proved. Chapter 5 makes it clear that people often waited until they were over 100 years old before having children, but it is impossible to know whether this was the result of individual choice, or whether God was directing the fertility rate. In any event, I think the 200 million calculation is a bit aggressive, it also being the approximate world population at the time of Christ roughly 2,500 years later. But there were in all likelihood millions of people on the earth before the flood who then perished in it.

The reference to Nephilim is usually understood to mean giants - human beings, no doubt - who were perhaps 8-10 feet tall. I don't know why this should be taken as merely a myth, when there is ample record of people reaching 8 feet in modern times, though they are few. By saying the Nephilim were "on the earth in those days, *and also afterward*," I take it to mean that this was a genetic trait that survived the flood in some select descendants of Noah. But physical evidence of human giants is scant and hard to come by - some claim that such evidence has been intentionally hidden, but I have no means of determining the truth of such claims. Thus, the evidence of giants among us in history is limited to anecdotal evidence, *i.e.*, stories and legends. I might be inclined to say the Nephilim are merely mythic, except the scripture here treats them as real people.

Apparently, the phrases *sons of God* and *daughters of man* have proven difficult for many people to interpret or understand. As a result, there is all kinds of speculation about the meaning of them, such as: 1) the sons of God are angels, and the daughters of man are human, (and according to some, the Nephilim are their unholy offspring); 2) the sons of God are righteous men, and the daughters of man are unrighteous women; and 3) much to the same effect - the sons of God are of the line of Seth (*i.e.*, his descendants), and the daughters of man are of the line of Cain.

Except, angels cannot mate with humans and produce offspring. There is no scriptural evidence whatsoever that angels can reproduce, either among themselves, or with humans. Further, there is no scriptural evidence whatsoever that anyone from the line of Cain survived the flood. And as I said earlier, there is no reason to suppose that all of the descendants of Seth were righteous, as the

descendants of Seth comprise every single person alive today, the vast majority of whom are unrighteous. And one can hardly fault men for desiring to take beautiful women as their wives. I don't doubt that in those days, before the advent of modern diseases, before genetic degradation or a corruption of the food supply, the women generally would have been very attractive.

Yes, sometimes the phrase *sons of God* does refer to angels (Job 1:6). But other times, it refers to believers in Christ, who are adopted sons of God (Gal. 4:5-7). Still other times, both Adam and Christ are recognized as a son of God because neither of them had a human father. In point of fact, anyone is a *son of God* who has been created directly by God, either physically or spiritually via the second birth - and this covers all of these cases.

I have even heard preachers scold the *sons of God* for "taking any wife they chose," **as if** there is some biblical doctrine that a righteous man can only choose as a wife the woman whom God shall choose. I confess, I have searched the scriptures for many years, and have never found such a doctrine. Sure, the Israelites were to marry another Israelite, but that isn't a general rule for Gentile nations. (Dt. 7:3). And Christians are exhorted not to be unequally yoked to an unbeliever. (2 Cor. 6:14). But neither of these establish a doctrine or teaching that God chooses every man's wife. Nor does the example of Isaac and Rebekah. Although, I do believe that if a man asks God to provide him with a wife, that is a prayer request the Lord may respond favorably to.

May I humbly suggest, that if people would simply stop trying to read some spiritual aspect into the text, its meaning is pretty clear. The entire context, using words like *man, sons, daughters, wives, children*, and *men* - indicates the text is talking about ***people***. Ordinary human beings. Men and women are getting married and having kids. Remember, Gen. 6 is describing the period in history immediately before the flood of Noah. What do other scriptures have to say about this time in history?

> As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, ***marrying and giving in marriage***, until the day when Noah entered the ark. (Mt. 24:37-38).

Why look for a supernatural and/or spiritual explanation, when the textual explanation is clear?

So why, you may ask, does Gen. 6 use the phrases, *sons of God* and *daughters of man*? It goes straight back to the law of inheritance (we inherit things of a non-genetic nature solely from our fathers), when you put it together with the creation account. Adam was the direct creation of God from the dust of the ground, such that he had no human parent. His only parent was God Himself. Eve, however, was not made from the dust of the ground, but was made from a portion of Adam's side. Meaning that for Eve, *her only parent was Adam*.

Men, taking their inheritance exclusively from their father, are each a son of God in the sense that He (God) is the ultimate parent of every man. In other words, if you trace the ancestry of every male human being to its point of origin, the ultimate parent of all men is God. But women stand in the shoes of Eve, as it were - not taking an inheritance from her as ultimate mother (for nothing is inherited from the mother), but taking through the male line until Adam. In other words, the ultimate parent of all women is Adam, not God, just as it was for Eve. Therefore, all men are sons

of God, and all women are daughters of Adam.

Pay attention to this phrase, *daughters of man*, used twice in this text, which can be equally rendered as daughters of Man (as in Adam, the Man), or as the daughters of Adam. For in fact, the Hebrew word for "man" here in these verses is "Adam," which can be translated either as generic Man, or as the proper name for the first man. Then it becomes clear that Man = Adam, and Adam = Man. So, *daughters of man* = *daughters of Adam*. That's why the text does *not* say, daughters of *men*.

Thus, the phrases, *sons of God* and *daughters of Man* merely reflect who is the ultimate parent of both men and women. And, as the context itself suggests, these phrases simply refer to men and women in general, all of them ordinary people - nothing supernatural, or even spiritual. Angels, and hybrid offspring, are not in the picture. Nor is any distinction being made in this text between the righteous and the unrighteous. It is simply a reference to people who, in Jesus' words, were marrying and giving in marriage.

Gen. 6:3,5-8 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not remain with man forever, because he is also flesh; nevertheless his days shall be 120 years." ... Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of mankind was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. So the LORD was sorry that He had made mankind on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. Then the LORD said, "I will wipe out mankind whom I have created from the face of the land; mankind, and animals as well, and crawling things, and the birds of the sky. For I am sorry that I have made them."

The Law of the Land

Earlier I noted that ever since the Fall and the curse of the ground, the earth reflects the sin condition of its inhabitants. I call this principle the *Law of the Land*. With Adam, this meant that not only he was cursed - along with all of his descendants - but the ground itself was also cursed because of Adam's sin. In other words, the curse of the ground is a literal curse, against the literal surface of the earth. So, in addition to all people being sentenced to die because of Adam, *the land itself was put under a form of bondage* to bring forth thorns and thistles (non-edible and non-useful plants), and to become a harsh taskmaster for all mankind. Gen. 3:17-19. This is true everywhere in the world, because nowhere in the world is the land inhabited by sinless people.

Similarly with Cain, not only was he personally put under punishment for his crime, but the land was put under an additional burden by his dwelling on it, which would follow him wherever he went. Gen. 4:11-12. Thus, Cain's sentence of vagrancy is very typical of the law of the land in operation. And this burden would remain until it was properly atoned for. People often think of Cain's punishment as being personal only to him, but the fact is even after Cain's death, the additional burden his actions placed on the land would survive him and continue to apply, at a minimum, to his descendants.

God later confirms this by stating the general rule as part of the laws given to Israel. "You shall not pollute the land in which you live, for *blood pollutes the land*, and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it." Num. 35:33.

So, not only does every act of bloodshed (murder) separately pollute the land, but every murder also creates the need for a separate act of atonement to remove that pollution. And if any murderer goes uncaught or unpunished - that is, his act of murder goes unatoned for - then the pollution remains on the land even after the murderer's death.

The principle that bloodshed pollutes or defiles the land is a universal law applicable to all people in all places and at all times. It did not arise for the first time when Moses was delivering God's laws for Israel. For the fact that Abel's blood cried out from the ground shows that, in fact, the ground had been polluted by his blood. And the fact that the first family at the time of Abel's murder had not been given any additional verbal revelations of God's laws since the Dominion Mandate was spoken, shows that bloodshed pollution is part of the *laws of nature* (*i.e.*, the laws of creation) which are eternal and universal. Thus, this is not a rule for Israel only, nor is it for the Old Testament only, because it is not a law flowing from any verbal covenant. It applies to all the descendants of Adam made in God's image, which is everybody alive today.

However, bloodshed is not the only sin or crime that pollutes the land in this manner, for idolatry also pollutes the land. We see in Rom. 1:21-25 that idolatry is universally condemned by the law of nature, and every person on earth knows it whether they admit it or not. For which God will judge all the people of the earth, for the many ways in which they have defiled the land, and atone for their sins by thoroughly cleansing the land. Which helps put into perspective God's dispossession of the Jews from the land of Israel for their repeated idolatry as not so much a special case, as an example of a general rule.

Similarly, God told Moses that the people of Canaan, which the people of Israel were about to dispossess, had polluted the land because of their immorality. After listing the various sexual offenses that defiled the land, the Lord said: "Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, and *the land became unclean*, so that I punished its iniquity, and *the land vomited out its inhabitants*." Lev. 18:24-25. Remember, the Canaanites had neither been given the laws of Israel, nor were they subject to them, so the fact they were accountable for these sexual offenses means those offenses are and were part of the laws of nature, not limited as to person, place or time.

This again is confirmed by Rom. 1:26-28, and it is the operative principle behind verses such as Num. 14:18: "The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation."

When the scripture says that bloodshed, idolatry and immorality all pollute or defile the land, it is not talking about a chemical reaction or physical process that will occur to cause chemical or physical pollution. The law of the land is a *spiritual* principle: the pollution is spiritual, and the defilement of the land is spiritual. The earth responds not from a physical reaction, but in a spiritual sense due to the commission of certain kinds of *sin*.

We're not talking about any form of mysticism or animism here. God is not *in* the ground or *in* nature, but rather the creation of God is responding to the laws of God that He imbued in the creation when it was made. The implementation of this principle comes from God enforcing His

own laws of the way He made the world. We are not here talking about a type of pollution that can be measured *scientifically*. But at the same time, this pollution is *real*, that is, it affects things in the natural world, not merely in the spiritual realm.

Which brings us to this text here in chapter 6. In these verses, God gives Noah an advance notice of 120 years that all the people and land animals of the world will be wiped out. Why? Because the "wickedness of mankind was great on the earth, and ... every intent of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually." Additionally, as we learn from verses 11 and 13, violence - from which we may infer bloodshed and murder - was a particular problem. All of which would have continually polluted the land on an ongoing basis.

However, the legal framework governing mankind in the first half of Noah's life has not changed since Cain. In other words, no one had law enforcement authority over crimes except the Lord God Himself. He had not appointed anyone among men to enforce the law - most especially, the law of murder. But the same was true for idolatry and immorality. The method of atonement for murder specified in Num. 35:33 (capital punishment) was not available to anyone yet. Which meant that by the time of the flood, about 1656 A.M., *no atonement for the sins of mankind has yet been made since creation*, and the pollution of the land is piling up, as it were. God's gotta do something drastic. And you can bet God is going to address the lack of law enforcement situation.

Gen. 6:9-13 These are the generations of Noah. ... And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Gen. 6:17 For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.

Atonement and Cleansing of the Earth

The *Law of the Land* has a cumulative effect, not just an immediate one. Over time, as bloodshed goes un-atoned for, and as idolatry and immorality increase unchecked, the defilement of the land begins to accumulate. This accumulation of defilement creates a *sin debt* which burdens the land, weighs it down, and puts the earth under a heavy strain - one that it was never meant to carry indefinitely. This accumulated defilement of the land - unless atoned for - never goes away. Every new defilement which is not atoned for just gets heaped on top of the previous defilements.

> "The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left." Isa. 24:5-6.

God, as the Great Governor of the universe, who made the world and all those who dwell on it (Ps. 24:1), is simply not going to allow the sin debt to accumulate forever, for it is spoiling His creation. He knows all too well the law of atonement, for it is His law, and He knows that nothing other than

the blood of the wrongdoers can atone for the defilement of the earth. So here in Gen. 6, He announces His intention to make an end of all flesh, the result of which will be a monumental shedding of blood. For at this point in time, all the sins of man *in history* have gone un-atoned for, and from a certain point of view, God doesn't really have any choice.

In the context of the law of the land, what does atonement mean, really? Are any of the defilers repenting of their sins, or confessing faith in God? No. Is God extending forgiveness to anyone, or is anyone being redeemed? No. In this context, atonement means the land is being cleansed - wiped clean. The accumulated sin debt is being paid off in full. The defilement and pollution of the land is being removed, and the land is being given a fresh start. Which means, at a minimum, the defilers of the land have all got to die, for atonement can be attained no other way.

I know it is common for people to view God's sparing of Noah and his family from death in the flood as a form of salvation, presaging the work and ministry of Christ. However, while the scripture clearly indicates Noah was a man of faith, it says nothing about the faith of his family members, and there is no reason to assume any of them shared Noah's faith. Besides which, there is nothing in the text of Genesis even hinting that bringing these eight people through the flood worked some kind of individual spiritual cleansing, forgiveness or a change of heart. No, sorry to disappoint, but the only atonement going on in this story is the atonement of the land, and it will definitely not be going to an eternal heavenly reward.

Think back to our example of the Canaanites, who defiled the land of Israel with their immorality. Is God going to take this polluted land and give it to His people as a filthy and corrupted inheritance, with a huge leftover sin debt? No, He is going to first cleanse the land and wipe it clean, so the Israelites will take possession of the land with a fresh start. So when the scriptures say the land vomited out its inhabitants (Lev. 18:25), what that really means is the prior inhabitants all had to die. Their bloodshed would act as an atonement - not for anyone's personal salvation, either for the Canaanites or the Jews - but solely for the cleansing of the land. When Israel took possession of Canaan, no one was personally saved.

So back in Noah's time, faced with the accumulated sin debt of over 1600 years, God doesn't have too many options. It's not time for Jesus to arrive on earth yet, so that means the only way to cleanse the earth and give it a fresh start - paying off the sin debt in full - is to wipe out everyone except for Noah's immediate family. And, as it turns out, do some extensive terraforming at the same time.

Back then, the earth cracked open (think of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge). Continents moved, and mountain ranges were formed. The water level of the oceans undoubtedly rose. Lakes, glaciers, and deep canyons formed where there had been none before. Sediment was piled up everywhere, and the remains of sea creatures were deposited over the entire surface of the earth to become fossilized. From a topographical standpoint, nothing was the same after the flood as it was before. I assume all traces of the original Garden of Eden were wiped out. The courses of the four rivers flowing from Eden (Gen. 2:10-14) undoubtedly changed - the Tigris and Euphrates still exist, but noone knows where the Pishon and Gihon were.

For all of its destructive power and effects, the Genesis flood only took care of the sin debt problem

temporarily. As soon as people began to multiply again, the defilement of the earth and the accumulation of a sin debt just started up all over again. However, the complete destruction of the present earth and the creation of a new earth will do away with the problem forever, since sin, death and the curse of the ground will all be eliminated at that time. (Rev. 21:4; 22:3).

Gen. 6:14-16 Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks.

Building of the Ark

I take this account of the building of the ark to be literal and historical. As for the technical and scientific matters implicated in the building of the ark, I leave to others to describe and defend. The Ark Encounter in Kentucky is probably the leading advocate for showing how, even with the limited technology available at the time, the construction and outfitting of the ark were entirely feasible and reasonable.

Many people have spent their lives and resources trying to locate the ark and prove its existence. I think it no small coincidence that many artifacts mentioned in the Old Testament - Noah's ark, the ark of the covenant, chariots at the bottom of the Red Sea from the time of the Exodus, etc. are, or are thought to be, in locations controlled by Islamic countries, and are therefore largely inaccessible today. The fact is, there are many people in the world who do not want these items to be found, because it would validate biblical history, most especially Jewish history.

I have no doubt that Noah's ark, presumably located somewhere in the mountains of Ararat (in modern Turkey), will one day be found, or rather, exposed. I think this is true for all the "missing" ancient artifacts from the scriptures, because God is waiting to reveal these things at the proper time. Until then, people will have to take the existence of these items and their historicity on faith, as God desires us to do. But with respect to Noah's ark in particular, it being located on a mountain, I have no doubt that it will someday be revealed, because scripture plainly teaches that in the future, all the mountains will be leveled.

> The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and *every mountain and island was removed from its place*. Rev. 6:14. And every island fled away, and *no mountains were to be found*. Rev. 16:20.

I don't know it for a fact, of course, but it just seems to me to be extremely likely, that Noah's ark will be revealed when the mountains are all thrown down by God's doing, if it hasn't already been found before that. (These scriptures refer to the end of the Tribulation.)

Gen. 6:18-22 But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping

thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them." Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

Destruction and Regime Change

I'll discuss the *how* of Noah getting all the animals on the ark in chapter 7. For now, I want to focus on the *why*. The most obvious answer, of course, is that God wanted Noah to bring all the animals with him for the same reason the Lord chose Noah, a man with three adult sons who had wives. That is, to repopulate the planet, with both people and animals.

Yet it is a little odd that God should mention a covenant with Noah at this time, which is presumably still 120 years before the flood, since the covenant only comes after that. Indeed, the word *covenant* is not used again until chapter 9. Some argue this indicates that God and Noah are in some limited sense striking a bargain, or coming to a mutual understanding at least, whereby Noah willingly accepts the coming covenant as shown by his obedience to God's commands. But I suggest there is something more going on - God is subtly indicating to Noah that big changes are coming, not merely to the environment, but in human society as a whole. When Noah gets off the ark on the other side of the flood, human relationships and society are not going to merely resume and pick up where they left off.

A fact that we, having the benefit of scripture and hindsight, now know to be true. For it was only 100-150 years from Noah's emergence from the ark until the Tower of Babel experience - a mere blip in time historically. The Tower of Babel was of course enormously important, linguistically, anthropologically, etc. But the old way of governing the world, as it were, was about to go the way of the dinosaur.

For before the flood, the entirety of the human race was governed by patriarchs - men who were the heads of their families, on a family by family basis. No family was above the rest (does anyone really think Adam was governing or ruling over his great-great grandsons?). There were no nations, nor were there any kings as far as we know, before the flood. People often refer to Adam as the king of the world, but scripture never calls him that.

But after Babel - after the flood - the world was no longer ruled by patriarchs, as such. Governance of the human race was put into the hands of nations, where it has remained ever since. This situation will not change until Christ returns and sets up his earthly Millennial kingdom. And that worldwide government will remain in place until the end of the world, when the heavenly kingdom will take charge of, well everything. Interestingly, each time one of these major regime changes occurs, it will be immediately preceded by a total destruction of the earth.

In the totality of history, God will destroy the earth three times: 1) with a flood of water (Noah's flood); 2) with the great earthquake (the last event of the Tribulation) that will raise every valley, topple every mountain, and make every island flee (Isa. 24:1,19; Rev. 6:12-14; Rev. 16:18-20); and 3) the ultimate destruction of the earth with fire (2 Pet. 3:7, 12). I have heard sermons on the first and the third, but never the second. Why? Most likely it reflects the belief of many (*i.e.*, amills and postmills) that once Jesus returns, history will end and the burning of the earth and heavens by fire

will follow swiftly. Yet the coming earthquake is very real, and is not far off (that is, it is only as far off as the Tribulation itself).

But don't lose the *significance* of these three destructive events, namely, that each marks a fundamental change in the way the world is governed. And each destruction makes it possible for the next form of world government to be ushered in. Which is why I strongly believe the great earthquake will not signal the end of the world, but rather it will prepare the world for the next regime - in this case, the kingdom of Christ. Which is strongly indicated by the association of the great earthquake with Armageddon:

> For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I declare, On that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. The fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the field and all creeping things that creep on the ground, and all the people who are on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence. And *the mountains shall be thrown down*, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground. Eze. 38:19-20.

All of these things are a manifestation of the operation of the law of the land and the accumulated sin debt principle. In Noah's time, the land had to be cleansed from the sin debt of 1656 years, to make way (provide a clean slate) for the emergence of the nations. Since then, God has provided for both human law enforcement (by the creation of nations and implementation of capital punishment) and redemption by Christ to help alleviate the burden of sin in the world. However, the salvation offered by Christ only redeems individuals - it does nothing to cleanse the land. And the efforts of human law enforcement have hardly been effective. The greatest evils of bloodshed in particular have been committed by nations, making the sin debt problem worse, not better.

Which means we now have about 4300 years of accumulated sin debt, and many more people and evildoers than existed in Noah's time, putting the earth under a terrible strain.

> For we know that *the whole creation has been groaning* together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (Rom. 8:22-23).

We know what is required. The earth must be wiped clean, be reformed, and most of the people living on it must die. "Behold, the LORD will empty the earth and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants." Isa. 24:1. Just as God was not willing to have His people Israel possess the Promised Land tainted by its prior occupants, so when Jesus returns to establish His kingdom, the earth must be set free from the pollution and defilements left over from the rise and fall of the Kingdom of Satan.

Even again, when the inhabitants of the earth make a final rebellion against God at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:7-10), the earth will need to be destroyed by fire to set it free from the sin debt, the curse of the ground, and even death. Only then, with the creation of a new earth, will the sin and sin debt problem be completely eliminated permanently.

CHAPTER 7

Gen. 6:9 Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.

Gen. 7:1-5 Then the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground." And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

The Righteousness of Noah

Noah is said to be righteous, blameless, and he walked with God. What does that mean, exactly? Did Noah have faith comparable to Abraham, who believed God and it was counted as righteousness to him? Gen. 15:6. The only other person mentioned in scripture as having walked with God was Enoch. Gen. 5:22, 24. However, we are told next to nothing about Enoch's life to gauge what it was that made him righteous before God. All Heb. 11:5 tells us, somewhat cryptically, is that Enoch "was commended as having pleased God." Although the very next verse states an oft quoted standard of righteousness, "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." Heb. 11:6.

Four times in Genesis we are told that Noah "did all that the Lord commanded him." Gen. 6:22; 7:5; 7:9; and 7:16. It would seem that the chief attribute of righteousness was his obedience. Yet, this obedience is characterized in Heb. 11:7 as a form of *faith*: "By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith." In all probability, therefore, the faith of both Enoch and Noah conformed to the standard of Heb. 11:6, believing that God exists and He rewards those who seek Him.

Which is ironic, since this verse (Heb. 11:6) is very often interpreted to mean that it is impossible for a non-Christian to please God. Yet Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham - and indeed, every saint who lived during Old Testament times - were not Christians. Not one of those people named Jesus Christ - the only name given among men for salvation. Acts 4:12. Nor did any of the O.T. saints believe in the modern conception of the Gospel, "that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures." 1 Cor. 15:3-4. What is going on?

No, I don't believe, as some do, that when Jesus died on the cross, His death reached back in time to operate retroactively on behalf of the O.T. saints. God never acts retroactively. Something else is at work, having to do with - yes - the law of nature. I believe Heb. 11:6 is, in fact, stating the rule for salvation under the law of nature. Now we know, from Rom. 10:16-20, that the law of nature does, in fact, speak to the matter of salvation. For Paul quotes Ps. 19:4 for the proposition that the words of the Creator imbued in the creation are the word of Christ, and that word includes the Gospel. Then he quotes Isaiah for the proposition that God can - and does - show Himself to anyone

He chooses and bring that person into salvation.

No walking down the aisle, or a raising of hands. No praying the sinner's prayer. No asking Jesus to "come into my heart." No public dedication to the Lord. No running to join a local church. And no water baptism. Merely a belief that God exists, and He rewards those who (diligently) seek him.

As I mentioned at the end of chapter 4, the only names for God used in Genesis were God Most High (Elohim Elyon), and possibly Jehovah (Yahweh). But not Jesus. How does this square with Acts 4:12? Look at that verse carefully: "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." On the one hand, if the word of Christ is indeed imbued in the creation (and it is), then faith and belief conforming to that word is, in fact, faith and belief in Christ. But what about the name?

There is no other name "under heaven." What does that mean? Well, it excludes names *in heaven*. In other words, God Most High and Jehovah are not names "under heaven." To say that the name of Jesus is a name under heaven means that it is the name of a man - a human being. Whereas God Most High and Jehovah are, neither of them, the name of a man. But "Jesus" *is*. So there is no contradiction between belief in God Most High or Jehovah, and the requirement that the only salvific name of a man is Jesus. Of course, Acts 4:12 excludes all other names of men, including without limitation, Buddha, Mohammed, etc. as having any salvific value. But it does not exclude God's heavenly names from having salvific value.

You may be thinking, Wasn't all of this *law of nature of saving faith* stuff obsoleted by Christ? No, it wasn't. Paul, quoting Psalm 19 and Isaiah in Romans 10 - decades after the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus - obviously believed those principles had not changed in his day. Why would it be any different now? Nothing Jesus ever did, in His life, death and resurrection, or in heaven once He ascended, changed any part of the law of nature. He could *not* have - the laws of nature will remain intact until the present earth is destroyed and a new earth is created. Besides, Jesus expressly denied that He came to change any of God's laws. Mat. 5:17. So, as we lawyers like to say, the law of nature of saving faith is *still good law*.

Gen. 7:6-10 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

The Animals Went Willingly

It is hard for us to conceive of it now, but before the flood, there was no enmity, or fear and dread, between animals and people. Mankind had not yet been authorized to eat meat, so the human diet was 100% plant-based. Which meant the animals had no reason to fear being hunted by people for food. It also meant that people had no reason to fear being hunted by animals for food, as the animals - all of them - would have had 100% plant-based diets as well. I would even hazard an educated guess, based on some of God's future plans for the animal kingdom that we'll discuss in

chapter 9, that all animals were essentially tame.

In other words, there were no "wild" animals before the flood. That isn't to say that all animals were fully domesticated - put to useful employment by people or kept as pets. But it does mean that no animals were a danger to people, that is, for people to be mauled, bitten, scratched or trampled, etc. Nor would the animals have preyed upon each other for food, territory, or whatever. There would have been complete peace not only between people and animals, but also between all of the various kinds of animals with each other. I even believe, based on some prophetic scriptures we'll get to later, that before the flood there would have been complete peace between people and the insect kingdom. No insect bites or stings, no insect borne diseases, no destruction of crops or cattle by insects, and no pestilences or plagues of disease.

In other words, before the flood there would have been a total operational rejection of *the survival of the fittest* and its religious underpinnings, namely, evolution. For the whole basis of 'survival of the fittest' is enmity, fear and dread between all species of life, including people, animals and insects. Every single species on earth in one long continuous struggle to live by killing others before being killed. Evolution views all life forms as a potential threat to one's own existence, which can only be overcome by defeating, and if possible eradicating, one's enemies.

However, that is not the world God created. God intended that all creatures would, and for a time long past they did, live in complete peace and harmony with each other and the rest of creation. And one day in the future, that peace will be restored. But this explains how it was that Noah was able to get all the animals on the ark, to obey his commands, not put anyone in danger from the 'wild beasts,' and to keep the animals from attacking or feeding off each other. In the time leading up to the flood, it simply wasn't in their nature. Noah did not need to whip them or force them into the ark, for they went willingly. Plus, whether they knew it or not, it was for their own benefit and the survival of each species.

Whether it was prevalent in the wider culture to mistreat and abuse animals, to cage them merely to possess them, to use animals for entertainment purposes, or to kill animals either for pleasure or sport - not for food, but merely for the fun of it - no one can say. There aren't a whole lot of things we know about the people back then, but the one thing we do know is they were prone to violence. And we know that human nature was fully corrupt from the very beginning. So anything is possible.

Gen. 7:11-16 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.

Water From Above and Below

Verse 11 states that when the flood came, "the windows of the heavens were opened." But earlier, in Gen. 2:5-6 it is said that the Lord had not yet caused it to rain, and the ground was watered by a mist. It must be assumed these conditions prevailed until the flood, when it rained for the first time. But where did the rain come from? Presumably, the ground being watered only by a mist up to that point, there were no clouds in the sky yet.

Many scientists have postulated that before the flood, the earth was surrounded by a vapor canopy - a layer of water above the atmosphere which did not form clouds or produce rain. This would be the result from a literal reading of Gen. 1:6-8, describing Creation Day 2. There, God created an expanse which divided the waters of the earth into those waters above the expanse, and those below - with the expanse itself being called Heaven. So what would be the nature of the waters above Heaven? A vapor canopy, probably, which God caused to fall to the earth in the form of torrential rain at the time of the flood.

[Note: I assume the reference to *heaven* in relation to the second day of creation means the *first heaven*, that is, the atmosphere. Whereas the *second heaven* would refer to outer space, and the *third heaven* to the throne of God where Jesus is waiting until He returns. See 2 Cor. 12:2 for a scriptural reference to the third heaven.]

It is not my intention to fully describe the physical nature of the vapor canopy or prove it scientifically. Those are matters I leave to others. I mention it simply to underscore that the account of the flood in Genesis, whether regarding the gathering of the animals, or the sources of the waters, is reasonable and credible, not mere myth or fantasy. Also, while the vapor canopy was in place, pre-flood, it would have shielded the earth from harmful radiation and been one more mechanism (in addition to others previously mentioned) that prolonged human life for the early patriarchs.

Similarly, the *fountains of the great deep* refers to a fact now well known among scientists that there are vast storehouses of water below the surface of the earth, even today. For many years it was thought that everything below the earth's surface was only hot and dry, being associated with death, the grave and Hades, which biblically is referred to as Sheol, or sometimes as the depths of the earth. But in the popular mind, just think of Hell, and you get the picture. Yet the fact is these storehouses do exist up to 400 miles below ground, where water is often bound up with certain types of minerals. Again, I leave the proof of such things to others, but to me it speaks of the credibility and historical accuracy of the Genesis text.

Gen. 7:17-20 The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep.

A Worldwide Flood

It is popular in scientific quarters to give a partial, and very limited, credence to the account of the

Genesis flood by saying it did happen, but was confined to a local area around the Black Sea and environs. A view which, in essence, denies the global nature of the flood, in spite of worldwide evidence of fossilized sea life all around the globe, even in high elevations. At root, the failure to believe Noah's flood was truly global stems from the belief that the God of the Bible could not possibly be that big, so as to judge all of humanity, and impose and control a flood on a planetary scale.

Yet, it is regular and routine fare in the science fiction genre to imagine people - ordinary human beings - traveling to distant stars, building a man-made structure that completely encloses a star, building a space station capable of destroying an entire planet, capturing the total energy output of a star and redirecting it in the form of a death ray, building a portable device that cannot only completely terraform an entire planet, but create life where there was none before, and erecting a human government (empire) that would span an entire galaxy composed of thousands of planets. In short, man is conceived as being capable of absolutely anything, but God is perceived as being capable of very little.

Earlier I mentioned that God will destroy the earth three times. The second of which - the greatest earthquake of all time - will bring every mountain down (except for parts of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, Zch. 14:10), and raise every valley up, to essentially flatten the entire surface of the earth. That will be no small feat, and to do it, God must have enormous power. If He can do that, flooding the whole earth seems like a relatively small thing. Although, the Genesis flood is probably the mechanism by which the mountains and valleys were created in the first place. But hey, what about the power it took to create the entire world *ex nihilo*, from nothing, just by speaking it into existence? This is no puny God we're talking about here.

The final destruction - burning the entire earth, not merely part of it - requires God to act on a truly planetary scale. Which destruction will be followed by the creation not only of a new earth - likely to be substantially larger than the present earth, by the way - but also the creation of a new heaven. Rev. 21:1. The implication being that not only the earth, but the stars will all be remade (apparently there won't be a need for either sun or moon, Rev. 21:23). Requiring a whole new universe, because if there is no death - ever (Rev. 21:4) - then nothing will ever end, and the law of entropy will itself no longer exist. In other words, nothing will ever wind down, run out of energy, fall apart, or decay. Now *that* requires a Creator God of absolutely staggering power, more than any man could ever conceive. Which is the point, of course.

How big a flood you believe in says volumes about how big a God you believe in.

Gen. 7:21-24 And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

God's Universal Laws

The Genesis narrative, when taken literally and historically, charts a path not only for the origin of our species, but also for the universal nature of the human condition, as well as a number of key universal moral rights, duties and obligations. This path admits of no members of the human race who are not descendants of Adam, for example. There are no people who arose in a time or place apart from the account in chapter 2, and no people who are not fallen, separated from God, prone to sin, and deserving of death from the moment of their birth. The idea that *all people are basically good* is one of those ideas that is completely contradicted by scripture, and has no place in a biblical worldview. This is the universal human condition, and there are no exceptions.

Similarly, as descendants of Adam, all people without exception are subject to and bound by the Dominion Mandate. Thus, all people have a moral duty to be fruitful and multiply, that is, to bear and raise children. I do not say this is a duty enforceable by man - just the opposite - it is strictly between each couple and God as to how many children each family decides to have. But to advocate for Zero Population Growth, engage in the practice of eugenics and/or selective breeding of people, to coerce the sterilization of undesirable populations, and of course, to promote and/or practice abortion - all these directly contradict the Dominion Mandate and have no place in a biblical worldview. Yet there are other duties flowing from the Dominion Mandate as well.

Such as the duty to cultivate and work the ground, and to care for the earth - not to pollute it (either spiritually by sin, or chemically by poisons), and to preserve the earth. Read the laws of warfare in ancient Israel sometime (Dt. 20:19-20), and see how God forbade the destruction of fruit trees during a siege of an enemy, for an idea how the Almighty views land stewardship. "Are the trees in the field human, that they should be besieged by you?" The same kinds of things can be said about mankind's stewardship duties with respect to the fish, the birds, and all the land animals. These are universal moral duties from which no one is exempt or excused. The needs of your business do not override your duties to God.

The situation is exactly the same with respect to the flood. The biblical narrative admits of no one surviving the flood except for the eight members of Noah's family. No one else built their own watercraft and rode out the waves, hid in a mountaintop cave and avoided being drowned, or got far enough away from the flood area that they survived. Literally every person in the world other than Noah's family - perhaps as many as 200 million people - ***died***. This of course affected the human condition in numerous ways, as we will see - anthropologically, linguistically (after Babel), restriction of the human gene pool, etc. No people were born after the flood who were not descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth, which means everyone alive today is a descendant of Noah as much as Adam.

As with the Dominion Mandate, the terms of the Noahic covenant coming up in chapter 9 are universally binding on all people today, without exception. Both the Adamic covenant (Dominion Mandate) and the Noahic covenant, though technically part of the laws of nature's God (God's laws revealed in scripture after creation), they are applicable to the same extent as the laws of nature (the creation laws). Meaning, there is no one in the entire history of the world after the flood, who was not, and is not, subject to and bound by these three sets of laws. These are God's universal laws.

Consequently, the duties imposed by the Noahic covenant are universally binding on all people without exception. Oh, the depths of ignorance among the general population, and the gross neglect and failure among Christian ministers and educators to understand and teach these universal rules God has prescribed. These things are ***not optional***. But everyone thinks they can pick and choose what they will or will not subscribe to. I will speak more about each of the duties flowing from the Noahic covenant in a bit.

Yet, we dare not ignore the flip side - that *our duties towards God are as rights towards men*. The premise of this statement is that duties owed to God are owed to Him alone, so that no one else has the right to interfere with how such duties are performed. Which means that the rights, as well as the duties, coming from God are *inalienable* - meaning they can never be lawfully deprived by other people or governments. As James Madison famously expressed it in his *Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments (1785)*:

> "Religion or the duty which we owe to our Creator and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence." The Religion then of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man; and it is the right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate. This right is in its nature an unalienable right. It is unalienable; because the opinions of men, depending only on the evidence contemplated by their own minds, cannot follow the dictates of other men: It is unalienable also; because what is here a right towards men, is a duty towards the Creator.

Which means that all of the duties we owe to God under the Dominion Mandate - every one of them - are also inalienable rights as against all other people. Thus, the duty to be fruitful and multiply is also an inalienable right to marry, to have children, and to raise children as the parents alone see fit, that government may not abridge. The duty to subdue the earth also translates into an inalienable right to own, use and control private property. The right to rule over every living thing translates into a right to own, use and control livestock and other animals for food, labor, etc. Even the duty before God to exercise dominion over plant life translates into a right to grow the plants one desires, and to own, use and control the crops thereof, without government interference.

Similarly, duties towards God flowing from the Noahic covenant are rights towards men. To be fruitful and multiply, again, is an inalienable right. To eat meat, and to raise and slaughter animals for food is a right, not a privilege. To eat and drink blood is a grave moral sin, one which indicates a degree of moral depravity, but that doesn't necessarily make it a civil matter. And capital punishment is a law enforcement mechanism that, if a people or nation forbid it, only deepens the pollution of the ground and further burdens the sin debt of the land. Every nation has the right, before God, to execute murderers and to help atone for the land.

The extent to which these various inalienable rights granted by God are openly, regularly, and customarily regulated, licensed, taxed, and oftentimes outright banned, shows the extent to which modern laws and governments are opposed to God and operate in defiance of His laws.

CHAPTER 8

Gen. 8:1-5 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

Lessons From the Flood

I think perhaps the most significant phrase in these verses are the words, "But God remembered." Remembered what? Well, He remembered Noah and his family of course, and all of the animals, to preserve them through the flood and enable them to have everything they needed to start fresh. But this isn't a personal salvation story, for Noah was righteous at least 120 years before the flood, and coming out on the other end of the flood with his life intact did not save him spiritually. Further, we have no indication in scripture that any other members of Noah's family were found righteous before God. Although we have Noah's statement in Gen. 9:26 that, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem," Shem is nowhere declared to have believed God, or to have had faith, or that God reckoned Shem as righteous.

I suggest the significance of God having remembered is that He remembered He wasn't done with the human race yet. Or, to rephrase, God remembered his plan for mankind had not yet been completed, and there was much more to do. Back in Gen. 6:6-7, God said He regretted that he had made mankind, and He would blot out man whom He created from the face of the earth. But surely God knew all of this well in advance, even from the very beginning of the creation week. None of this came as a surprise to Him, for He knows all things, past, present and future. So if God knew man would become exceedingly wicked and He would come to regret making man, why did He do it?

I suspect the flood was, in essence, one gigantic object lesson to show all people throughout history who we really are. That we were, and are, completely corrupt from our very inception. That there is no evil in the world that we are incapable of committing. That no one whatsoever is inherently righteous, yet we can draw nearer to God and fellowship with Him if we choose to in conformity with His standards. But the more we reproduce and congregate with our fellow human beings, the more the evil we commit is increased, well beyond our ability to restrain it.

God fitted us perfectly with intellect, a moral awareness of right and wrong, and the ability to reason, so that we could exercise godly self-government to restrain our evil tendencies. However, if left merely to our own devices, without any form of external restraints (that is, earthly law enforcement), we will always fail to restrain our evil natures. And without God's timely interventions in human affairs, we would inevitably be destroyed, for God would take no pleasure in us whatsoever. There is also a strong implication, as a precursor to the Tower of Babel not much later, that the more humanity as a whole is united, the more it tends only to evil.

So naturally, the inevitable tendency of mankind since the flood, and especially since Babel, has been to overcome language, race, nationality, religion, and all the other things that divide people, in order to reunify humanity in an attempt to overthrow God. Not because - and I can't emphasize this enough - not because the world rejects the spiritual salvation God offers to us, but because it rejects the restraints God places on us to constrain our evil tendencies. In other words, the world rejects God's laws - the laws of nature and nature's God - and that is why the world rebels. The world wants to engage in evil behaviors to their hearts' content, unconstrained by God.

> Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us." [***That is, God's laws***.] He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. . . . Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Ps. 2:1-4;10-12.

Gen. 8:6-14 At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore. In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out.

The Physical Laws of Nature

So the ark has finally come to rest on the mountains of Ararat (v. 4), and Noah engages in a testing procedure with a raven and a dove to see whether the waters had subsided enough for him to leave the ark. The living quarters in the ark were probably pretty confining, and I'm sure everyone was anxious to leave, including the animals. Apparently, the little window in the ark did not really afford Noah a good line of sight outside the ark for him to observe the water level for himself. But when he became convinced it was safe, he removed the covering of the ark (a little roof, presumably), and at that point he was finally able to look at the water level for himself. I assume all the time measurements are in reference to Noah's life, so by that reckoning, by the time we get to v. 14, it has been one year and ten days that the flood has lasted.

I do not pretend to know how, meteorologically speaking, God made a wind blow over the earth. I do not know how, scientifically, the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed, how the rain was restrained, or how the waters subsided. We have already discussed the unlimited

power of God to make, destroy, and remake the earth, which is miraculous and supernatural. But that doesn't mean I think God 'broke' or bypassed any natural laws in the way the flood was brought about, the changes it made to the earth, or how the waters were restrained. As far as I'm concerned, the laws of physics and chemistry are the same now as they were in Noah's time.

For when we speak of the laws of nature, in particular, it includes both physical laws and behavioral laws. Turning again to William Blackstone, Commentaries on the Laws of England, Vol. 1, Intro, §2 (1765):

> Law, in its most general and comprehensive sense, signifies a rule of action; and is applied indiscriminately to all kinds of action, whether animate or inanimate, rational or irrational. Thus we say, the laws of motion, of gravitation, of optics, or mechanics, as well as the laws of nature and of nations. . . . Thus when the supreme being formed the universe, and created matter out of nothing, he impressed certain principles upon that matter, from which it can never depart, and without which it would cease to be. . . .
>
> If we farther advance, from mere inactive matter to vegetable and animal life, we shall find them still governed by laws; more numerous indeed, but equally fixed and invariable. The whole progress of plants, from the seed to the root, and from thence to the seed again - the method of animal nutrition, digestion, secretion, and all other branches of vital economy - are not left to chance, or the will of the creature itself, but are performed in a wondrous involuntary manner, and guided by unerring rules laid down by the great creator.
>
> . . . But laws, in their more confined sense . . . denote the rules, not of action in general, but of human action or conduct: that is, the precepts by which man, the noblest of all sublunary beings, a creature endowed with both reason and freewill, is commanded to make use of those faculties in the general regulation of his behavior.

Thus, Blackstone regarded both physical laws and behavioral laws, including the moral laws governing human behavior, as springing from the same source, originating in the same way, and having the same legal characteristics. In other words, all rules of the laws of nature, whether physical or behavioral, were created by God, revealed by God, and mandatorily imposed by God on both the environment and all creatures. Further, all such laws are fixed, uniform and universal, meaning they do not, have not, and cannot be changed since they were first imposed, applying to all people, in all places, and at all times. They are immutable and eternal.

It is not my job as a lawyer to describe *how* the creation was formed, *how* the flood came and went, and *how* the earth changed over time. I know that there are numerous creation scientists working constantly on those problems, and I am thankful for their work. A number of scientists have proposed that during the creation itself, and possibly during and immediately after the flood, God may have sped up certain physical processes in the formation or reformation of the earth. I cannot speak to those matters except in a legal sense, namely, that the nature of God's character is such that He would not have created an immutable rule, only to later break it. Therefore, if the Lord sped up certain processes, I am confident that the processes themselves followed all of the laws of nature God had laid down in the beginning.

For the Lord is equally the creator of the physical universe and mankind, and equally the great Governor of the physical universe and mankind, and His nature as such will be preserved in all that He does. For the Lord is indeed a God of both Law and Government over all the earth.

Gen. 8:15-19 Then God said to Noah, "Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

Leaving The Ark

So at last God instructs Noah and his family to leave the ark, and to bring out all the animals from it as well. Meaning, essentially, that the usefulness of the ark was completed, and no longer needed for anything. God did not want Noah and his kin, or the animals, to hang around and make a permanent home in the ark. The ark was simply a means to an end, to get everyone safely from here to there, so they could all continue to live out there purposes in a new home.

The fact both the people and the animals went out from the ark by family groups presages the method of dispersion from Babel, and shows us something about the purposes of God. For God never designed any of His creatures to live in isolation from all other members of their kind. The Dominion Mandate - sort of a Prime Directive for humanity - was intended from the beginning to be carried out by families. Children were to be born, raised, and educated in their families. Property, occupations and commerce were intended to flow through the family unit. God has dealt with humanity consistently in reinforcing and preserving the family unit. This is God's design - that the world should be dominated and ruled over by people in their familial capacities.

Not, ultimately, by nations and governments, and no, not by the Church, which didn't come along until some 4,000 years after creation and was given no dominion authority or powers. But I will defer further comment on this subject.

Gen. 8:20-22 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

God Controls the Environment

If you have ever seen a 'post-apocalyptic' movie, imagining what the world would look like after a global catastrophe, it is always a dismal picture. Typically, the landscape is barren, with water, food and other necessary resources being scarce. Technological advancements are thrown back a hundred or a thousand years, and humanity is reduced to a primitive tribal warfare state. Or, in some

versions, all of civilized humanity is reduced to a single city under a huge dome, or within a huge wall, and the rest of the earth is untamed, dangerous, and uncivilized.

However, when God destroyed the earth and everyone living on it during the Genesis flood, that was not the experience which greeted Noah and his family upon leaving the ark. In some ways, the earth would have seemed foreign to them. Mountains existed where none were before, and storms were now a regular part of life (remember, there were no storms, or even rain, before the flood). And the animal kingdom had suddenly become more hostile.

Yet the earth itself, and all living things, must have recovered very quickly. Noah and his family did not lack for food, clothing, or shelter. God commanded them to begin eating meat, so the animals must have started reproducing rather quickly, and they did not all simply scatter and leave the people hungry. Ostensibly, the flood would have wiped out or covered over all the plants with sediment, yet undoubtedly the plants started to grow and spread again very quickly after the flood.

With the formation of the mountains also came the formation of desert areas which had not been there before. Still, on the whole, the surface of the earth did not dry up and die, but started to flourish again with the spread of plants, animals and people. Nor did people regress to a barbaric or primitive state, though they most likely started out living in caves until other homes could be built. Once the earth was cleansed, nothing remained to prevent it from becoming revitalized.

All of which illustrates that God is in control of the earth and its environment - not just locally, but globally. "The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." Ps. 24:1. So not only does God own and control the earth, *He takes care of it*.

God will never let the earth die before He decides to upgrade it to the new earth 2.0. He will never let it be destroyed by any outside force, such as an asteroid collision, a collision with Planet X or Nibiru, a death ray of extra-planetary origin, or be invaded (much less conquered) by an alien race. Nor will He ever let the earth be destroyed by humanity, whether it be by nuclear explosions, land, water or air being polluted beyond recovery, drilling too deep into the earth, or other actions of men requiring people to relocate to another home world.

The Dominion Mandate requires us to exercise stewardship over the earth, but it never gave mankind the job of "saving the planet." The earth, strictly speaking, does not belong to humanity - it belongs to God who created it. It is therefore God's responsibility, not man's, to heal the earth, restore it, protect it, and save it. And that is God's promise in verse 22: "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." This is, at root, a promise to protect the earth and *guarantee*, if you will, that the present natural processes affecting the earth will be preserved and never changed.

This promise in Gen. 8:22 calls to mind similar promises in Jeremiah. "Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name: 'If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever.'" Jer. 31:35-36. "Thus says the LORD: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then

also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers." Jer. 33:20-21.

All of these promises amount to the same thing. By tying them to the very existence of the earth and the natural order, all these promises are expressly made eternal. That is, until God Himself decides to burn up the current creation and replace it with a new heaven and earth. Nothing mankind does can or will disrupt this. People are not in control of the earth - so get used to it.

Stop making contingency plans to deflect a killer asteroid, repel an alien invasion, or relocate to another planet to preserve the species. There is no Federation of Planets waiting to welcome us as members once we have achieved warp drive or FTL (faster than light) technology. All such efforts are foolishness in the extreme, and betray a profound ignorance of the true nature of the universe.

CHAPTER 9

Gen. 9:1,7 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. ... And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it."

Family and Dominion Affirmed

Noah has just offered sacrifices to the Lord, after which God resolved in the counsel of His will, as it were, not to destroy all living creatures again as He did with the flood, all in anticipation of making a covenant with Noah. Since the scripture plainly says God said this *in his heart*, then presumably no words were spoken out loud and Noah did not hear them at this time. So beginning here in chapter 9, God speaks aloud to Noah, spelling out the exact terms of the covenant. This scenario mirrors the giving of the Dominion Mandate (or the Adamic covenant) in chapter 1. First God resolved what He would do in the counsel of His will in Gen. 1:26, then separately He spoke the exact terms of the covenant aloud to Adam in Gen. 1:28-30.

The first words out of God's mouth *both times*, were "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." Now, it's not as though the Dominion Mandate had expired or terminated. Neither the Fall nor the flood did anything to either halt or modify the Dominion Mandate, so it was still in full force and effect, even if the Lord had said nothing about it to Noah. But psychologically, Noah had to wonder whether the game was still on, because mankind had been quite successful in being fruitful and multiplying, yet God destroyed them all except for his little family. He probably wondered whether God had changed His mind about the matter. He might have needed some assurance about what to do next.

So God provided Noah with a confirmation that His will in this matter had not changed. It was neither a new instruction, nor a revival of one that had died, but merely a confirmation to go and do it all over again. Putting Noah and his wife in the position of Adam and Eve, with Noah being the direct male ancestor of all people born after the flood. Of course, Noah's job in this regard was already done. He already had his children, he would have no other children the rest of his life, and the business of being fruitful and multiplying would fall entirely on Shem, Ham and Japheth. For God's intention for mankind from the very beginning had been that people should increase, thrive and survive. He was not about to let the human race die out completely.

It is fairly to be implied that the rest of the Dominion Mandate - to subdue the earth and rule over every living thing - also remained in full force and effect. For neither the Dominion Mandate, nor any other of God's covenants with men, can be fragmented or split into severable pieces. All of the divine covenants are what I call package deals - they all hang together such that so long as any one portion of them remains effective, every last part of them remain effective. Thus, the human reproduction clause cannot be separated from the dominion clause - so long as either one remains, both of them remain. And obviously, the human reproduction command is still in full force and effect. Therefore dominion must be, as well - including the plants clause.

Thus, with the Abrahamic covenant, the Promised Land clause and the sign of circumcision clause hang together - they cannot be separated, or separately modified, etc. The Abrahamic covenant is one single unitary covenant that cannot be broken into severable pieces. The same is true of the

Mosaic covenant - it is a package deal, whose parts hang together as a single unitary covenant. The moral laws, the judicial laws, and the ceremonial laws are, in God's mind, one unitary covenant. It is not man's job to try to sever the pieces and hold some portions as still in effect, while abandoning other portions to the ash heap of history. And in this light, we must regard both the Adamic and Noahic covenants. Keep that in mind when we consider capital punishment shortly.

Gen. 9:2 The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered.

Enmity Between People and Animals

Earlier I commented on how the animals went willingly into the ark because at that time there was no enmity, or fear and dread, between people and animals. All of that changed here in verse 2, when God told Noah that the fear and dread of mankind would now be part of the innate nature of all the land animals, birds, creeping things and the fish of the sea. This is likely tied together with God's next command - to eat meat, which would necessarily involve an ongoing and systematic slaughtering of animals. It was possible that before the flood, people may have killed animals for clothing or other domestic (household) purposes, and if the example of Abel is any indication, animals may have been routinely sacrificed to God for worship purposes. But with the introduction of meat into the human diet, the killing of animals would have expanded exponentially.

Perhaps, and I'm just guessing here, if God had not put fear and dread into the animals, then they would have yielded themselves up too easily to be slaughtered. Given man's sinful nature, this may have led to a premature extinction of animal species as people went on a hunting spree with no resistance. So, in a sense, by changing the nature of the animal kingdom, God was preserving both the animals and mankind from an extreme and unbridled carnage. As it is, even with the fear and dread firmly in place, people have shown a tendency to kill animals excessively, threatening both their existence and the human food supply.

Additionally, the enmity between people and animals may be tied together with the command to execute murderers. Before the flood, certainly, people were well acquainted with the killing of other people, since murder and violence was a major motivation for God to destroy mankind. But these three commands taken together - enmity with animals, eating meat, and executing murderers - establish a sort of framework in which to understand when killing is, and is not, justified. Killing animals is justified, but they won't make it easy to be captured. Killing people is sometimes unjustified (murder), and sometimes justified (enforcing the law of murder). In all cases, man needs to make a right discernment.

Scriptures also indicate that in the future Millennium, when the kingdom of Christ will cover the earth and Israel is restored in its land and its people, the enmity between man and animals will in some sense be reversed, as indicated by these familiar texts:

> The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.

> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. Isa. 11:6-9.
>
> And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. Hos. 2:18.

Strictly speaking, these scriptures only directly apply to a restored Millennial Israel. However, I postulate that because the fear and dread of man is currently part of the innate nature of animals, to achieve the results indicated in Isa. 11 and Hos. 2, it would require a change in the animals' innate nature. Suggesting that such a change would be worldwide, not merely in Israel, because the entire earth will at that time be full of the knowledge of the Lord. And if that is true, it may be possible that all mankind will stop eating meat. However, the scriptures do not say these things in so many words, and we much be cautious when inferring possible implications. I do not say any of these things with certainty - we will just have to wait and see.

Gen. 9:3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything.

Command to Eat Meat

Unlike the command to continue to be fruitful and multiply in verse 1, which was an affirmation of the prior Dominion Mandate, the command to eat meat in verse 3 was something entirely new. Regardless of whether people *may* have been killing animals for non-food purposes before the flood, there is no reason to suspect meat was part of the human diet back then.

This is yet another instance of the universal *Law of Enumerated Powers*, in which no authority is given unless it is expressly granted. Which is to say, anything not expressly delegated is necessarily withheld. And from the beginning, God had given man only certain plants for food (seed-bearing plants and tree fruit). Gen. 1:29. Thus, no one had the authority to eat meat until God expressly said they could after the flood. God wasn't simply ratifying or acknowledging what people were already doing.

Sure, men were disobedient towards God before the flood, and were capable of sinning in this regard as well. But animals had no fear and dread of mankind before the flood, which they could very well have developed if they were being routinely hunted and killed for food. Plus, it seems evident from the conduct of the animals in coming to and settling in the ark, that none of them were killing each other for food either. Which makes it less likely that anyone was killing animals for food. Perhaps God simply made meat distasteful to people, so no one had any desire to eat meat. It is impossible for us to say if this was true, of course, but it seems evident that eating meat was a new thing for people after the flood.

When God said that meat *shall be food for you*, I take this to mean that it was a command, not a

mere suggestion, nor was God merely adding another potential menu item to man's diet. It was a statement in the sense of *thou shalt eat meat*. However, we cannot and must not infer any requirements as to portions, amounts, or frequencies in the eating of meat, nor any direction as to the choice or selection of the types of meats, whether red meat, fish, poultry, etc. Just like the command to be fruitful and multiply, God does not prescribe any minimums, maximums, quotas, or the like.

This is a matter between each person and family before God, to determine the time, place and manner of compliance with God's command. It is not for one family or group of families to tell other families what their compliance must look like. Nor is it, most especially, not within the authority of either church or state to direct the manner of observance of this command by families and individuals.

I will observe, however, that both vegetarianism (a refusal to eat meat for "moral" reasons - what morality?), and veganism (a refusal to treat animals as commodities, including eating meat), both stand squarely in opposition to God's command, and are therefore sinful on their face. Both deny that eating meat is a duty owed to God, and veganism also fundamentally denies man's dominion over the animal kingdom. However, that makes neither of these a crime punishable by civil authorities, nor something that can be regulated. Violation of the command to eat meat is a moral offense only - much like someone's violation of the Sabbath - that lies solely between that person and God, and to God alone must they give an account.

Notice that none of the restrictions imposed on the Jews by reason of the Kosher food laws in Lev. 11 are stated or implied here in the Noahic covenant. There is no basis for importing any of such laws into verse 3, for the Kosher food laws were not imposed on, and do not apply to, Gentiles of any nation. Further, at the time when Noah and his family left the ark, Abraham had not yet been called, his posterity had not yet been marked out, and the nation of Israel did not yet exist. God does not impose any *ex post facto* or retroactive laws, so when the commands of Lev. 11 were given, they did not reach back in time and alter the Noahic covenant. Nor were they given to Gentiles in the first instance.

Which means that yes, there are a significant number of foods available to be eaten lawfully by Gentiles, that are not lawful for Jews to eat. There is, in fact, nothing Jewish about the Noahic covenant. Rather, it is a universal covenant applicable to all people today.

Gen. 9:4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.

The Life Is In the Blood

No sooner did God command people to eat meat, than He imposed a limitation. Namely, not to eat meat with its blood, because life is in the blood, and life is precious and sacred. This is a theme that will carry into the next command re: capital punishment.

Again, similar to the Kosher food laws, the laws delivered to Israel expanded on this general prohibition and imposed some additional obligations. *See*, Lev. 17:10-16. Thus, the Jews are required to pour blood out and bury it in certain instances. Violation of the command not to eat

blood would result in a person being *cut off from* (ostracized) among the Jews. And in that specific context, God said, "I have given it [blood] for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life." Lev. 17:11.

However - again - the Levitical requirements did not retroactively modify the Noahic covenant, nor did they ever apply to any Gentiles. Hence, we must avoid the temptation to read into Gen. 9:4 things that are not there - specifically, that not eating blood has anything to do with atonement. Blood will play a role in atonement for capital punishment purposes, but that is expressly limited to the *human blood* of wrongdoers. Here, in verse 4, we are concerned only with *animal blood*, and only in the context of food, not the commission of crimes. Don't blithely assume that just because blood factors in two different contexts, their interpretation is the same, or linked together.

As with eating meat, the context of verse 4 is another duty owed by individuals to God, which duty is moral only, and not subject to regulation or punishment by any external authority. Many have interpreted this command such that in preparing meat as food, it must always be cooked well-done. That is certainly one way to thread that needle, but I would say the prohibition at a minimum means that meat must always be cooked, and not eaten raw. Exactly how well to cook meat, or whether eating raw fish is a violation of this command, is not for me to say. Each person must determine the extent of their duty towards God in their own conscience.

However, I will venture to say that drinking blood, whether animal or human blood, as a beverage is a pretty clear violation of this command. It is no wonder then, that drinking blood is often associated with satanism, the occult, and fellowship with demons, for it takes what is precious and sacred and uses it in a defiling way to essentially spit in the face of God. But if you think about it, many of the most flagrant sins people commit are the oldest, having roots in the early chapters of Genesis.

Just think of the innumerable ways people violate the Dominion Mandate (and I can't possibly list them all here): denying that God made people male and female and no other; people who try to change their sex as though God made a mistake; denying the necessity and desirability of marriage; subverting marriage with no-fault divorce; women denying male headship; the adoption and bearing of children by unmarried individuals; denying and subverting parental rights over children; denying man's right to property; denying human dominion over animals; giving animals legal rights and priority over people; mandating or prohibiting activities on the Sabbath - oh, the list goes on and on.

The same is true of the Noahic covenant: vegetarianism and veganism; drinking blood, imposing capital punishment on mere theft and economic offenses; refusing to execute murderers; passing laws or institutional rules about behaviors which are merely moral and between each person and God; regulating or restricting childbirth; imposing coerced sterilizations; assuming we have the power of God to save the planet; insisting that people are inherently good; denying that our actions corrupt and defile the earth - and the list goes on.

However, in the long run, God's laws will always have their way - they cannot be beaten, avoided, or nullified. Mankind may disobey in the short run - OK, it's a 6,000 year short run - but God enforces His own laws and He never forgets, His laws never change, and God never will lose to us mere disposable creatures of His. "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows,

that will he also reap." Gal. 6:7.

Gen. 9:5 And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man.

As To Killer Beasts

Verse 5 builds on the principle that the life is in the blood - all blood - and therefore it is precious and sacred. Therefore, the shedding of blood, either by an animal or by man, requires a reckoning, that is, a penalty. Meaning that if a person is killed by an animal, that animal must die - not as a sacrifice, but as a penalty. So that capital punishment applies to animals that kill people, as well as to people who kill people. This is confirmed in the Mosaic law:

> "When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death." Exo. 21:28-29.

Note what the Mosaic law requires: if a man keeps an animal that has a history of violence towards people, it is his responsibility and he bears the guilt if the animal kills someone. This is not nearly as foreign a concept as you might think, for in the English and American historic common law, there was the well-known principle that "every dog gets one bite." Thus, if a dog with no prior history of violence bites a person, it could be excused as an aberration, or perhaps the animal was provoked or threatened. But if a dog that has bitten before bites again, then it would be immediately put down - in other words, executed per the law of capital punishment.

Now you might think it strange that God would address animals separately in this way. However, the animals went through the flood experience as well as Noah, which Peter expressly referred to as a form of baptism. 1 Pet. 3:20-21. The animals had just been given a new aggressive and hostile nature towards people. And the terms of the Noahic covenant were expressly made applicable to all the animals to the same extent as people. Gen. 9:15-17. So really, it would have been strange if God had *not* included some specific commands for the animals.

Gen. 9:5-6 From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.

Capital Punishment

Here in verse 6 we have the institution of capital punishment, which is the first instance of the grant of any authority to punish crimes, that is, the first grant of any law enforcement authority. You might think that surely people must have had law enforcement of some kind before the flood. But no, the example of Cain and Abel clearly showed that God had not yet (at that time) given anyone the right to punish murder, and if no one could punish such a heinous crime, it is most doubtful anyone would have attempted to punish lesser offenses. Plus, God expressly said, and put a mark

on Cain to make His point evident to other people, that anyone who tried to avenge Abel would suffer sevenfold.

Given the small population of the world at the time, it's not hard to conceive that word of God's prohibition would have spread to everyone very quickly, and then passed to future generations as time went by. It is likely that people also understood, though not expressly stated by God, yet fairly to be implied, that anyone who tried to avenge any future murder victims would similarly incur God's wrath. In other words, God's reservation of law enforcement authority over Cain would have been clearly understood as the withholding of all law enforcement authority over future crimes. Which probably explains why the earth was filled with violence in Noah's time - everyone knew there would be no punishment. I daresay that before the flood, there were not only no blood avengers, but no police, and no jails.

Consequently, capital punishment is not part of the laws of nature. It proceeds directly from the Noahic covenant, and being entirely covenant based, not creation based, it only applies to whomever the covenant applies to, making it a part of the laws of nature's God, being revealed only in the Bible. Yet in this case, it happens to apply to every single person, nation and government in the world, because we are all descendants of Noah. And it has never expired, because as long as the rainbow is in the sky and God's promise not to flood the world again holds, all the terms of the covenant (including the death penalty) still apply to all people, without exception. With the caveat, as we have noted many times before, that the command of God is limited to its terms and not to be understood as being more expansive than it really is.

Which brings us to a modern Christian fallacy taught by many today, that Gen. 9:6 is the beginning of human government, and it is the basic foundation upon which human government was to be established. Oh Lord, deliver us from this gross error! First and foremost, when the command to implement capital punishment was given, there were only eight persons alive in the whole world, and *there were no civil governments then in existence*. Indeed, before there could be any civil governments there first had to be *nations*, and nations did not come about for at least another century, following the dispersion at the Tower of Babel. The development of civil governments would have been slow and gradual from that point, such that they were only in an infant state by the time of Abraham, roughly 2000 B.C. (perhaps 250 years after Babel).

In point of fact, all of the commands included in the Noahic covenant were given to Noah and his family in their private capacities. Notice, that the commands to be fruitful and multiply, to eat meat, and to execute murderers were all given to the exact same people at the exact same time. We cannot come along centuries after the fact and say, "well this command goes to this group of people, and that command goes to this other group of people." It absolutely never would have been understood that way by Noah, and we cannot go back and impose an unnatural understanding of the covenant now. In fact, I doubt anyone understood the command of capital punishment to be a "government" thing until the modern age.

Who was it, exactly, who had the power of capital punishment in the old days? Why, the blood avenger, of course. In other words, most usually, the nearest male relative of the murder victim. *Not* a police officer, *not* a government official, and *not* someone hired by the local head of government to punish criminals. For the most part, the blood avenger was a family member, who

acted on behalf of the victim's family, to safeguard the family from possible further attacks. Which is exactly what we should expect, given that the Noahic covenant itself was directed to families (be fruitful and multiply, remember?).

So when the nation of Israel comes along some 900 years or so after the flood, what do we see? There are eleven references to the avenger of blood in Num. 35, Deut. 19, and Jos. 20, wherein cities of refuge are established to which an alleged murderer may flee and be protected. Yet in all of this, the role of the blood avenger is recognized as legitimate, and is an integral part of Jewish law enforcement. For even yet - centuries after Babel and the establishment of nations - no one had thought of putting capital punishment exclusively in the hands of civil government. No one yet thought that's what the Noahic covenant required. So where do people get off putting capital punishment - as a matter of biblical interpretation - exclusively into government hands?

Let us not engage in *eisegesis* and read into Gen. 9 things that were never there. Let us plainly acknowledge God never said anywhere in Gen. 9 that capital punishment was an authority granted solely to civil governments, and never said that Noah was made a civil ruler or was made a federal head of all civil rulers to come in the future. Nor did God ever say that any terms of the Noahic covenant were grants of authority to civil governments.

I suggest that the modern belief that capital punishment is, and always was, exclusively within the jurisdiction of civil governments, doesn't spring from a reading of Gen. 9:6 at all. Rather, it springs from a reading of Rom. 13:1-4 that is then retrofitted and superimposed onto Gen. 9. You know, the authorities which exist have been instituted by God, and the civil ruler does not bear the sword in vain, etc., etc. But I want you to ask a question you probably have never asked before. Given that Romans 13 was written at least 2400 years after the end of the flood, ***at what point exactly during that time did God place capital punishment authority in the hands of civil rulers?*** I must strongly caution you: if you think you will find any such thing in scripture, you will not, and you will search in vain.

There is a simple and fundamental truth, that although God clearly created, or instituted, the nations of the earth, He never instituted any civil government. I suppose we can argue whether God actually established ancient Israel's government or not, but He clearly never instituted the civil government in any Gentile nation. I'm not saying that Rom. 13:1-7 is in any way wrong, I'm simply saying that the way most people read that text is wrong. Ah, but now you want an explanation, maybe. I won't go into the biblical proof here, but will merely refer you to chapter 13 of *A LONANG Commentary of Romans*, authored by me. And the operative principle is this: *God makes nations; men make governments.*

The Scope of Authority

Under the Noahic covenant, the command of capital punishment covers murder only, for the penalty is specifically linked to a reckoning for the life of a person. It has always been understood to cover murders accomplished without any actual bloodshed, such as intentional suffocations, drowning, electrocution, poisoning, etc. Yet, beyond the case of murder, the command to inflict the death penalty does not apply. This is the rule for all the Gentile nations for all time.

By way of contrast, the Mosaic law designated 22 capital crimes for ancient Israel:

Offenses against God.
1. Profaning sabbath. Ex. 31:14-15.
2. Layman who "comes near" the tabernacle of God. Num. 1:51; 3:10; 18:7.
3. Blasphemy. Lev. 24:16.
4. Idolatry. Deut. 17:2-7. Ex. 22:20.
5. False prophet (inciting to idolatry). Deut. 13:5-11.
6. Spiritism or sorcery. Lev. 20:27. Ex. 22:18.

Rebellion against institutional authorities.
7. Cursing parents. Ex. 21:17, Lev. 20:9.
8. Striking parents. Ex. 21:15.
9. Rebellion against parents. Deut. 21:18-21.
10. Civil contempt. Joshua 1:18.
11. Judicial contempt. Deut. 17:8-13.

Offenses against individuals.
12. Murder. Ex. 21:12-14, Num. 35:16-34.
13. Kidnaping. Ex. 21:16, Deut. 24:7.
14. Harboring dangerous animal. Ex. 21:29.
15. Infanticide. Lev. 20:2.
16. Rape of a married or engaged woman. Deut. 22:25-27.

Sexual offenses.
17. Adultery. Lev. 20:10, Deut. 22:22-29.
18. Incest (mother, step-mother, daughter-in-law only). Lev. 20:11-12.
19. Sodomy/homosexuality. Lev. 20:13.
20. Lewdness (man marries woman and her mother). Lev. 20:14.
21. Bestiality. Lev. 20:15-16. Ex. 22:19.
22. Harlotry. Deut. 22:20-21.

Despite the clear language and meaning of Gen. 9:6, Gentiles rulers have raised all kinds of spurious arguments to expand the list of capital crimes. Thus, the ostensibly well-intentioned Puritans of Massachusetts in their Body of Liberties (1641), thinking themselves inheritors of, and bound by, the Mosaic law (which was only ever binding of biological Jews), did declare twelve capital crimes taken straight from the Mosaic law, even citing chapter and verse in their statute book to “validate” the enactment of the Jewish laws in America. Such capital crimes included worship of false gods, blasphemy, witchcraft, three forms of murder, bestiality, homosexuality, adultery, kidnaping, being a false witness in a capital case, and insurrection or public rebellion (essentially, treason).

Sorry to say, in their attempt to be good Christians, the settlers of Massachusetts wrought a great evil. We all know how well the punishment of witchcraft panned out. “The road to hell is paved with good intentions.” Though, truth be told, it would be hard to find any nation on earth that did a better job of carrying out God’s command with respect to only murder. I suspect the very first crime made a capital offense in any nation would likely be treason. In spite of all the heinous offenses against nature and against God’s laws, the one that always grabs the first attention of any lawgiver is treason against the government of the lawgiver.

Even our beloved history of jurisprudence in England and America, went way overboard. William Blackstone, in his Commentaries Vol. 4, reported that capital crimes in England included forgery, robbery, compassing (thinking about) the king's death, killing the king's deer, and a whole host of offenses not derived from any natural law, but only based on social rights recognized by Parliament. In fact, he reckoned there were at least 160 capital offense in England in 1769. Even though Blackstone specifically quoted Gen. 9:6 and recited the binding nature of the Noahic covenant, he did not see that as any kind of limitation on Parliament, always deferring to the collective judgment of what was best for the country so long as it had been debated in public.

Thus, the very limited authority which God gave man has been grossly exaggerated and abused for many centuries, as nations continue to do so today. But I suppose no one should really be surprised by that.

Jesus and Capital Punishment

Some have objected to capital punishment on the basis that Jesus, in not condemning the woman caught in adultery (Jn. 8:2-11), impliedly ignored, modified or suspended the law of adultery and/or the law of capital punishment. Nothing could be further from the truth, and to even suggest such a thing shows a great disrespect for our Lord. Gal. 4:4 says Jesus was born under the law, meaning that from His birth, Jesus was a Jew obligated to follow and obey the Mosaic law in its entirety.

In Mat. 5:17-19, Jesus affirms this by explicitly stating He did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill (that is keep, or obey) it. People get this scripture so inexcusably twisted around by saying that He 'fulfilled' the law in a way which brought about its completion, which is just another way of saying He brought it to an end. This is functionally no different than abolishing the law, which Jesus expressly said He did not come to do. And why would He modify a law which, truth be told, He was the author of, since Jesus is Jehovah and the very Word (or voice) of God when the Mosaic laws were given? The very concept is ludicrous, which He made explicit by saying that not a stroke or letter of the law would expire before heaven and earth had passed away. If the entire ceremonial law of Moses had somehow been altered, it would make Jesus a big fat liar.

Which brings us back to Jn. 8, when the Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman caught in the act of adultery saying, "the law commands us to stone such a woman, what do you say?" The Pharisees were a bunch for scheming deceivers, of course. They knew they could not trick Jesus by stating a full lie, so they told a half-truth. What does the law actually say? "If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel." Dt. 22:22. In other words, the Pharisees conveniently neglected to mention the man, neglected to mention they knew who he was (she was 'caught in the act,' remember), and neglected to mention that it takes two to commit adultery and they could only be prosecuted together.

But here they are, accusing the woman of a two-person crime, pretending they have everything they need to proceed. Which now presents them with a big problem - Dt. 22:22 has not been complied with. As Jn. 8 points out, the Pharisees are there to test Jesus - test Him about what? Test Him whether He will, in fact, obey the law He is obligated by birth to obey, and the law He has promised to obey. The great irony being that those who wish to test whether Jesus followed the law have not

followed the law themselves.

"Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." What is that, a requirement that no one can prosecute anyone else unless he is sinless? Of course not – if that were true, nor one could ever be prosecuted and law enforcement would entirely fail. Was it a requirement that the accusers not be an adulterer themselves? Hardly. Though possible someone among them might have been an adulterer, the vast majority would not, and so they would still be able to prosecute. Perhaps it was a requirement that "let him who has prosecuted this woman in full compliance of the law cast the first stone." Ah, here now, is something of which every person present was guilty. None of them was without sin in making this prosecution.

"Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more." Well guess what, even Jesus who was truly sinless, could not prosecute this woman because the man was still not present. He was legally unable to prosecute her. He wasn't forgiving her. He wasn't challenging Gen. 9:6 or Dt. 22:22. There was nothing he could do to judge her. Plus, as Jesus famously said in Lk. 12:14, "who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" Answer: no one. That wasn't Jesus' job. All He could possibly do was send the woman on her way. Which He did.

The whole purpose of the *pericope adulterae* is to show that Jesus obeyed the law, just as He said He would. Not to change, challenge, modify, abolish, terminate or maneuver around the law, for He Himself is the author of each and every law of God. Why on earth would He violate His own law? He would not. He could not. He did not.

Gen. 8:20 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Gen. 9:8-11 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

A Universal Covenant

Noah's sacrifice of burnt offerings, together with the express use of covenant terminology here in chapter 9, calls to mind the account of Abraham in Gen. 15:7-21, where Abraham first sacrificed three animals and two birds, and then the Lord caused a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch to pass between them. After which the scripture says that God made a covenant with Abraham on that day. Gen. 15:18. All the promises and commands of God disclosed to Noah in chapter 9 are easily identified as a divine covenant, in this case the Noahic covenant, between God and all mankind. Thus, the Noahic covenant stands among the handful of divine covenants revealed in the Old Testament, including the Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, and the Davidic covenant.

These O.T. divine covenants constitute the bulk of the laws of nature's God, by which we mean the laws of God not originating in the creation of the world as with the law of nature, but originating afterwards by special (that is, verbal) revelation, to be found only in the holy scriptures. These

divine covenants are of supreme importance, because they essentially organize and define the relationships between God and men throughout time. There are no stray or independent laws of God floating around out there which are unconnected to a divine covenant. All of God's laws not revealed in nature are either imbedded within a divine covenant, or were delivered under a specific covenant for the purpose of implementing it. Thus, the Mosaic laws were all issued under the aegis of the Ten Commandments for the purpose of implementing them in Jewish society.

But I would not have you think that the Noahic covenant was the first such divine covenant between God and men. For the Dominion Mandate (Gen. 1:28-30), also known as the Adamic covenant, was the first such divine covenant. Some people are thrown by the fact there was no sacrifice made, or covenant terminology used in Gen. 1. In fact, it is not even specifically made applicable to anyone's descendants, as other divine covenants are. Let me digress for a moment and explain why I think that was the case.

I attribute the unique circumstances of the Adamic covenant to the fact that at the time, Adam and Eve had not yet sinned. In that condition, they were in perfect communion with God, had no barriers in their understanding with God, nor did God lack credibility in their eyes, for they simply accepted all God said as being completely true. In addition, they had no sin needing to be atoned for or covered, no separation from God to be overcome by faith or belief, and no reason to pledge themselves for they had not yet been in any way disobedient. In other words, there was simply no need for any solemnization procedures or words binding their future behavior. They were already perfectly in tune with the will of God, and neither party required any assurances of future conduct.

Thus, I number the Adamic covenant among the handful of divine covenants in the O.T., meaning five covenants exactly - no more and no less - the Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic and Davidic. The first two of which are universal, applying to all people today without exception, and the last three being peculiar to the nation of Israel. Every single law of God revealed in the O.T. not traceable to the creation account was implemented pursuant to or as part of one of these five divine covenants. But all five such covenants are distinguished from the New Covenant in Christ in that they all apply solely on the basis of biological ancestry, whereas the covenant in Christ ignores biology entirely and applies solely on the basis of faith or belief.

Now, as to the Noahic covenant specifically, it is unique in that it is the only divine covenant expressly made applicable to the birds and all land animals. However, the language used here recalls the Lord's covenant with the day and His covenant with the night mentioned in Jer. 33:20, 25. Both the animal kingdom and the fixed order of day and night are indicative of the natural world, which can be traced back to the original creation week. The significance is not that the animals are consenting to the covenant, but that their inclusion indicates the covenant is intended to be permanent - as long as the natural order exists. Only when the natural order is itself destroyed, will the Noahic covenant come to an end.

Gen. 9:12-17 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every

living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

The Sign of the Covenant

As an additional indication of its permanence, the Noahic covenant is given a visible sign. As long as the rainbow is visible in the sky, the Noahic covenant is still in effect in its entirety. In other words, the Noahic covenant is a package deal. Its provisions cannot be severed from each other - the rainbow covers all of its provisions. Thus, of course, the rainbow signifies that God will not curse the ground again, not kill all the living creatures again, not flood the earth again, and not disrupt the seasons or night and day. Which is the extent to which the rainbow is generally recognized by even most Christians.

But in fact the rainbow is a visible sign of the re-affirmation of our duty to procreate and fill the earth. The rainbow is a sign of the fear and dread between men and animals, birds and fish. The rainbow signifies that every moving thing has been added as food for us, in addition to the seed-bearing plants. The rainbow is a sign that capital punishment has been instituted for all people until the end of time. And the rainbow is a sign that all the people of the earth are descendants of Noah, who are bound to obey and benefit from the terms of the Noahic covenant. There is much more to the rainbow than just the promise not to flood the world again.

It is reminiscent of the sign of circumcision given to Abraham in Gen. 17, for circumcision is not merely a sign of ethnicity, as it were, indicating that a male is a physical descendant of Abraham. Circumcision also signifies all that the Abrahamic covenant entails - that Abraham would become the father of many nations, that kings shall come from him, that God would establish a future covenant with the descendants of Abraham (the Israelites), and that all the land of Canaan would become the everlasting possession of the Jews. Far from being merely a sign of religious or community belonging, each circumcised Jew carries a sign in his body of the promise of national restoration and territorial possession.

It is no accident that both the rainbow and circumcision carry this significance as well - they are each a physical sign of a physical (biological) reality. For it is not possible for a physical sign to indicate a spiritual reality. Physical signs indicate physical things, and spiritual things must be indicated by spiritual signs. Thus, in Christianity there are no physical signs of a life that has been redeemed by Christ. The 'circumcision of the heart' (Rom. 2:29) and the 'sealing of the Holy Spirit' (Eph. 1:13) are both invisible and do not lend themselves to any physical manifestation. It is impossible that anyone should be able to look at another person and discern whether they are a true believer in Christ or not. Only God can look at a person's heart and determine if they are truly saved.

Of course, that doesn't stop people from trying to look righteous, whether it is by making the sign of the cross, by a public baptism, and wearing special clothes or jewelry, but these prove nothing. Thus, I find it amusing that people sometimes argue the primary significance of the Noahic covenant is spiritual. Usually such arguments center around the salvation of Noah and his family through the

flood, or the grace of God in restraining His judgment by not destroying everyone including Noah. Both of which arguments go to the circumstances surrounding the flood experience, and have no relation to the words of the covenant. For the express words of the Noahic covenant have nothing spiritual in them, dealing only with the physical relationship between people, animals, and the earth. And, as far as we know, the experience of going through the flood changed no one's heart, brought no one to faith, and no one other than Noah is ever said to have been righteous before God.

People make the same arguments regarding the Adamic covenant, that its importance lies in God's covering of Adam and Eve with animal skins after the Fall. But the Fall is not part of the covenant, which happened sometime later, and circumstances do not a covenant make. The express words of the Adamic covenant (the Dominion Mandate) have only to do with the relationship between husband and wife, their children, and the natural environment. There is nothing spiritual about them.

In fact, I will be so bold as to say that none of the O.T. covenants (Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, or Davidic) were spiritual at all. Not one of them prescribed the means of personal salvation, and not one of them passed the faith of the persons entering into the covenant to their descendants. Merely being a person covered under the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants made no one righteous or redeemed. Which tells me that God Himself is concerned with much more than our spiritual well-being, and our conception of Him needs to reflect that fact.

Noahide Laws Distinguished

The terms of the Noahic covenant are not to be confused with the so-called Noahide laws. The Noahide laws come from the Jewish Talmud, which is essentially equivalent to a theological commentary written by various rabbis regarding the scriptures. For that reason, the Noahide laws are extra-biblical and are not authoritative - which doesn't make any of them necessarily wrong, *per se*, but it makes the possibility that God delivered this set of rules to the sons of Noah (or to Adam, as some claim) extremely unlikely.

According to Jewish tradition, the Noahide laws are universally binding on all nations, much as the terms of the Noahic covenant are - but without a covenant framework which makes them binding. Supposedly, a Gentile who abides by the Noahide laws may be considered 'righteous,' if that person also acknowledges that the laws are of divine origin. However, this essentially makes righteousness before God a matter of law-keeping, which is a very Jewish idea, but not in accord with the standard of righteousness attributed to Abraham (which was based on belief, not obedience), nor the standard of faith in Christ (also based in faith, not obedience).

In any event, the Noahide laws are as follows:

1. Do not worship idols or deny God.
2. Do not murder.
3. Do not steal.
4. Do not engage in adultery or other sexual immorality.
5. Do not blaspheme or curse God.
6. Do not eat flesh torn from a living animal.
7. Establish courts and legal systems to ensure obedience of these laws.

As you can see, the first four of these laws are borrowed directly from the Ten Commandments, which I have remarked elsewhere are binding on all people not because they were given to the Jews at Mt. Sinai, but because they are each traceable to the creation and are part of the universal laws of nature. The fifth law is similar to the commandment not to take the Lord's name in vain, and in any event, is also traceable to the creation account and is a part of the laws of nature. The sixth law is essentially the same as the provision of the Noahic covenant not to eat flesh with its blood. As for the seventh Noahide law (courts of justice), I'd be very surprised if any such courts ever existed before Babel (when the nations were first formed), and probably not until some years afterward as those early nations began to acquire governments.

On the whole, I am not persuaded that the Noahide laws were ever delivered by God to anyone as a set of universal rules, and even less convinced that they set forth a standard of righteousness for Gentiles prior to the advent of Christ. I place them in the category of Jewish folklore, at best.

Gen. 9:18-19 The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed.

[I will discuss the dispersal and anthropology of mankind in chapter 10.]

Gen. 9:20-29 Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers." He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant."

A Minor Incident; A Major Prophecy

Scripture never tells us what Noah did - occupationally - before he began building the ark. But it seems that after the flood he became a farmer and a winemaker. And in the course of things, he became naked and drunk in his own tent. Notice that in this narrative, no fault or sin is imputed to Noah himself for this. I find reassurance in the fact that none of this made him any less righteous before God, who has the capacity to overlook ordinary human excesses and lapses of judgment. Ham, on the other hand, walks in on his father, and instead of showing the good sense in covering his father, runs and tells his brothers about it. They, being wiser, cover Noah's nakedness until he wakes up.

I look at this incident as being somewhat trivial. After all, in Lev. 18, in describing the sins of the Canaanites, the phrase "uncover the nakedness of your father" has a very definite sexual connotation and refers to sexual immorality. But when Ham sees his father naked, there is no suggestion whatsoever that anything of a sexual nature is involved. He merely sees, but does nothing about it,

whereas his brothers - possibly out of a desire to spare Noah some personal shame - cover him up. But the incident is noteworthy for its prophetic implications.

For many years - shamefully - this account was used to justify African slavery in America and elsewhere, as though Noah's curse of Canaan was somehow an indictment of all colored people to a life of servitude in favor of the white man. Supposedly, as the African continent is populated largely by the descendants of Ham, Noah's curse applied to all Africans. This is nowhere supported by the text, of course, as Ham was not cursed, but Canaan was, and the Canaanites never lived in Africa. Nor is there any reason to suppose that Noah and his sons were, in fact, "white people," since the development of both very light skinned and very dark skinned people would not have occurred until after the dispersion from Babel when the nations were first formed.

However, I do see the effects of Noah's curse of Canaan playing out in the world today, as the descendants of the Canaanites of old are in fact the people living in Gaza today, that is, the Palestinians - the Philistines of old. And the curse of the Canaanites is to be the *servant of servants*, or in effect, a subjugated people, often conquered by the Semites and Japhethites. For that is pretty much what we see today - not outright slavery, as such - but the Palestinians are a universally despised and unwanted people. Nobody else wants them in their country, for they are consummate troublemakers. And of course, they universally hate all Jews and want to see the eradication of Israel, a hatred they are taught from birth.

The destruction of Gaza and the descendants of the Philistines living there has long been foretold.

> For the LORD is destroying the Philistines, the remnant of the coastland of Caphtor. Baldness has come upon Gaza; Ashkelon has perished. O remnant of their valley, how long will you gash yourselves? Jer. 47:4-5.

> Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they carried into exile a whole people to deliver them up to Edom. So I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza, and it shall devour her strongholds. I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod, and him who holds the scepter from Ashkelon; I will turn my hand against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish," says the Lord GOD." Amo. 1:6-8.

And if you're wondering what the future holds for Gaza, the scriptures address that, too.

> For Gaza shall be deserted, and Ashkelon shall become a desolation; Ashdod's people shall be driven out at noon, and Ekron shall be uprooted. Woe to you inhabitants of the seacoast, you nation of the Cherethites! The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines; and I will destroy you until no inhabitant is left. And you, O seacoast, shall be pastures, with meadows for shepherds and folds for flocks. The seacoast shall become the possession of the remnant of the house of Judah, on which they shall graze, and in the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening. For the LORD their God will be mindful of them and restore their fortunes. Zph. 2:4-7.

So this little encounter with Noah, trivial in itself, is merely an occasion for making one of the more significant prophecies in the history of the world.

Gen. 9:28-29 After the flood Noah lived 350 years. All the days of Noah were 950 years, and he died.

This verse, as I see it, is essentially a fitting conclusion to the genealogy of chapter 5. But it is put here because it concludes the discussion of the life of Noah.

CHAPTER 10

Gen. 10:1 These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

Gen. 10:32 These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

The Table of Nations

These before and after statements frame the Table of Nations in verses 2 through 31. Reminiscent of the creation account in chapters 1 and 2, we first have a listing of the family groups - what will become separate nations - flowing from the dispersion from Babel, followed by a look back to the circumstances giving rise to the dispersion. In other words, chronologically, the first 9 verses of chapter 11 happened before the families were dispersed in chapter 10. But we will take them in the order presented, with that background knowledge in mind.

The first thing to notice is that the dispersion from Babel, even though the word Babel means *confusion*, was itself done in a very orderly manner. Even if we assume that each family group was fairly large, consisting of a husband, wife, and twelve kids, that would still only yield a total population of about 1,000 people. Adding up the generations in chapter 11, it was only 101 years from the end of the flood until the birth of Peleg (in whose days the earth was divided, Gen. 10:25), and it was only 30 years until Peleg fathered a son. So, in all likelihood, there had only been at most 131 years of population growth from the flood until Babel. So, maybe less than 1,000 people in total.

But my point is, when God scattered the people from Babel, He did not send them in a thousand different directions, or give them a thousand different languages. He gave them only as many languages as there were named family groups, and each member of each family group would have spoken the same language after the dispersion. That is the only way they could have continued to communicate with each other afterwards, to marry within their group, and raise children who would speak the same language. In other words, God respected family group integrity, facilitating family unity and growth. After all, God had generated the entire world population from a single family twice before - with Adam and Eve, and with Noah and his sons. So to use the same methodology here would not have been a stretch.

And of course, of necessity, each family group would have had to separate from all the others, find a place to settle down that did not interfere with others, and undoubtedly some would have settled quite far away from where they started. The development of the ability to understand other languages, to begin to engage in commerce between groups, and the separate development of governments and governing structures all would have followed some years after the dispersion. In addition, each family group would have begun to develop unique physical characteristics, including skin color, following the dispersion.

If you're wondering, according to the Genesis genealogies it was only about 200 years from the birth of Peleg until the birth of Abram, and another 75 years from then until Abram was called by God.

The second thing to notice is the number of family groups, or nations, counted in the dispersion. There were a total of 70 nations: 14 from the lineage of Japheth, 30 from the lineage of Ham, and 26 from the lineage of Shem. Thus, the apostle Paul could rightly say that the Lord "made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place." Acts 17:26. And yes, true enough, the historic places where each of those nascent nations chose to settle is pretty much exactly where their descendants still live today.

However, that number of nations is neither random nor accidental. For Deu. 32:8 tells us that "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel." (NASB). About this, the scripture is quite clear. Exo. 1:5 "All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons." Exo. 1:5. "Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons." Deu. 10:22. So once again, the Lord had a plan, and that plan was organized and orderly. There was nothing random or haphazard about it.

Now that we are going to spend the rest of the chapter considering the nations of the world dispersed from Babel, it is perhaps appropriate to consider them in their national capacities, and how God intended for civil government to fit into this picture.

Gen. 10:2-5 The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations.

God Is the Creator of Nations

When the world and mankind were created, there were no nations. The people who lived before the flood essentially governed themselves - since no one had any law enforcement authority - under the authority of their separate and independent families. Adam, and perhaps others, would have been regarded as a patriarch - the father of all, or the father of many - but he was not a king or monarch of the world, as some have speculated. Each family, consisting of a husband and wife who had *left their parents and held fast to each other* (Gen. 2:24) would have been an independent self-governing unit. Merely being born in an earlier generation gave no one *ruling authority* over any later generation, because no one had any ruling authority beyond their own immediate family.

Standard evolutionary thinking regards not only families, but nations and governments as things which developed slowly over time as people found it convenient or useful to do so. This assumes in essence, that all nations and governments, and even the family unit itself, have been invented or instituted by men. One of the consequences of this mode of thinking is that families, nations and governments can be either retained or disposed of according to the unfettered discretion of the people. We have certainly seen this manifested, especially since the close of World War II, in constant attempts to attack and redefine families, nations and governments.

Setting aside consideration of families and focusing on nations (in keeping with the text), in recent decades this has manifested in two distinct ways: 1) multiculturalism, or the promotion of multiple

cultural traditions within a nation; and 2) globalization, or the process of international integration across national borders. The first assumes that all national cultures and traditions are inherently equal in value and beneficial to mankind. The second assumes that whatever mankind constructed in the past can be deconstructed in the future, leading to a disdain and disregard for nations and most especially for national borders.

However, the Table of Nations genealogy thoroughly explains the origin of nations among men. The development of distinct national and/or ethnic cultures was a direct result of families being separated from each other by language barriers which took many generations to overcome. The main upshot of which is this: nations are not the product of a diverse evolutionary development of the human species. Rather, nations are the special and deliberate creation of God. Cultures and governing structures, on the other hand, *are* the creation of men, the value and benefit of which largely depend on the extent to which they conform to the will of God (meaning, cultural traditions and forms of government are *not* all equal).

To emphasize, this separation of mankind into nations by language and ethnicity was not the invention of any man or group of men. The division of the world into nations was not founded on the directives of any human leader, the consent of any committee, nor was it the result of a natural evolutionary process. Rather, it was entirely God's idea - an idea imposed on mankind without its consent as a form of divine judgment. God is the maker of the nations of the world, not men.

Even, I daresay, in the case of nations formed subsequent to Babel. For Israel, most certainly, was a nation called out from among the descendants of Abraham by God for a national purpose. "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son." Hos. 11:1. Modernly, the United States was formed by people who believed they had been called out for a mighty purpose, to be a city on a hill, a new Israel, and a light to the nations, for at that time national Israel did not exist. We can argue about whether those beliefs were well-founded, but it isn't difficult to argue that God called out America to have a unique place among the nations of the world, including carrying the torch of Christianity as a light to other nations.

That was the view of the apostle Paul (as to Israel) as mentioned in the prior section. "When *the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance*, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God." Deut. 32:8. "And *he* [God] *made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth*, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place." Acts 17:26. Who made the nations? God did. Who fixed the borders of the nations? God did.

One can reasonably infer from this that God did not intend for men to ever undo what God had done, for He never gave mankind the authority to undo, or redo, the things God has made. This strongly suggests there is a "sanctity" of nations, and to some extent national borders, and it is not the lawful business of mankind to unify the nations under a single government or economy. It is no wonder that evolutionary thinking denigrates the thing God has created (nations) and worships the thing man has created (governments and cultures).

However, when God made the nations, He gave not one of them a form of government. Notice that there are no kings or rulers denominated among the Table of Nations. How they governed

themselves was up to each of them to determine in their own way and in their own time. Even back in Gen. 9:6, when God instructed the descendants of Noah to implement capital punishment - commonly regarded as the first delegation of civil power (the power of the sword) - there was no civil government yet instituted to wield this new power. In fact, at that time there were not yet even any nations - all of mankind was one community.

So we may say that biblically and historically, both *civil power* (Gen. 9:6) and *nationality* (Gen. 10:32) preceded the formation of any civil government. Private civil power came first, then nations, and civil governments only followed later.

> 1) If nations and civil governments arose at different times, they likely arose by different means and were instigated by different persons. Sure enough, though scripture has abundant evidence of the hand of God in creating the nations, there is a conspicuous absence of similar evidence (except for the limited instance of Israel) that He had a hand in creating any civil government.
>
> 2) Civil government was not (and is not) necessary for either the existence of nations, or the existence of the valid use of civil power. At this point we come to an *inconvenient truth*: civil government may be useful, but in the plan of the God who made man, it is not indispensable. Which means that in a certain sense, not to be exercised for light and transient reasons, governments being the creation of men and not God, are disposable.

We'll consider this in more detail in the next section.

Gen. 10:6-20 The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and Caphtorim. Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites dispersed. And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

Governments Are Instituted Among Men

What we have as between God and men is a division of labor. God makes nations and He grants and defines the nature of civil power. God establishes rules and parameters (*i.e.*, laws) by which all civil governments are constrained, but He does not actually *form* (that is, create or structure) civil governments. What man does is to determine the form of government, what documents (if any) will establish and/or define that government, what powers may be exercised in what ways, and the manner of succession. God does not interfere in such matters.

The one exception, of a sort, was ancient Israel, which was a unique situation in the history of the world. What made it unique is that ancient Israel is the only nation in which God was actually: 1) a party to the national covenant (*i.e.*, constitution); and 2) king of the nation. These two things are what make for the existence of a true theocracy. No other nation in the history of the world can make the claim to be a theocracy in the sense that Israel was. The case of ancient Israel is unique.

Now the nation of Israel was not formed at Babel as were other nations, but was made from the descendants of Jacob (renamed Israel) - an act of God, not men. But Israel was not an *independent* nation until centuries later when they were delivered from bondage in Egypt and crossed the Red Sea. It was at this point that the people of Israel first began the task of organizing a government.

In Exo. 19:5-6 God first announced His intention with respect to the nation. "If you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." The response of the people is recorded in Exo. 19:8: "All the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do.'"

In other words, before any form of government was instituted, the first act of the people was to agree to make a national covenant with the Creator, who had called them to be a special people and a holy nation. This agreement was made by the people of their own free choice, and not by coercion. Then, after the Ten Commandments had been delivered and various laws and rules had been spoken in the hearing of all the people (*i.e.*, when the people actually heard the terms of the covenant), they gave their consent again.

> Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words." Exo. 24:7-8.

The first system of government adopted in ancient Israel was a system of judges, whereby the judge would be the court of last resort in a judicial sense and also wield some limited executive power (*i.e.*, leader of the army, a commander-in-chief function). But even this system was largely self-directed by the people. Moses, at the urging of his father-in-law Jethro (not God) was advised to:

> "look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves." Exo. 18:21-22.

Israel's government during the time of the judges was one of the most de-centralized national governments in the history of the world. Most all government matters such as disputes and law enforcement were carried out in this multi-tiered fashion whereby the bulk of government functions occurred at the local level, not the national level.

Which brings us to the last verse in the book of Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (Jdg. 21:25.) This verse is often taken by commentators as an implicit indictment against the Jewish people, but I read it differently.

If nothing else, it indicates that the system of judges was highly de-centralized, had very limited powers, and essentially left the people to govern themselves as they saw fit. In other words, both God and man placed a high value on self-government. *Which was a good thing*, because that's what God intended. It's not exactly the first thing that comes to mind when you envision a theocracy, is it?

What happens next in the history of Israel is even more instructive. The transition from a system of judges to a monarchy wasn't God's idea either. It was driven by popular demand.

> Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, ... "Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." And the Lord said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ... Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them." 1 Sam. 8:4-5, 7, 9.

So when it came to governing the theocracy, God (the Creator, the Almighty, and the king of Israel) deferred to the wishes of the people. He neither forced a monarchy upon them, nor did He veto a change in the form of government when the people asked for it. He merely warned them what a more centralized government with a strong executive power would look like. Then He let the people decide what to do. And they decided to go for it, despite the warnings. 1 Sam. 8:19-20.

Ah, but you may say, "Didn't God anoint the kings over Israel, thus proving that He instituted the monarchy?" Yes, God did anoint the kings over Israel. But this made none of them actually king.

Saul was anointed by Samuel in 1 Sam. 10:1, but he was not actually made king until he was presented to the people and the people shouted, "Long live the king!" in 1 Sam. 10:24. Similarly, David was anointed Israel's next king in 1 Sam. 16:13. But Saul was still king at the time, and David was probably only a teenager. In any event, it was several years before David actually became king, and then only when accepted as king by the people.

It is precisely this situation which Samuel Rutherford used to argue that it is the people who make a king, not God. "If the Lord's immediate designation of David, and his anointing by the divine authority of Samuel, had been that which alone, without the election of the people, made David formally king of Israel, then there were two kings in Israel at one time," a situation which Rutherford called "most repugnant to God's truth and sound reason." Rutherford, *Lex Rex*, Question 4 (1644).

In fact, David ruled over only the tribe of Judah for 7½ years. 2 Sam. 2:11. He was not installed as king over the entire nation until the elders of all the tribes of Israel came to David and made a covenant with him, *i.e.*, until David had the consent of the people. 2 Sam. 5:1-4. Although God had a hand in conferring succession to the throne of Israel with David's descendants (2 Sam. 7:16), this did not put God in the business of instituting Israel's form of government, which by that point had already been established by the people.

Besides, God retains the authority and discretion to raise up and remove leaders in any nation, not just ancient Israel, none of which puts Him in the *government formation* business.

So even though ancient Israel was an exceptional case - a theocracy - the form of its government was driven by the consent of the people, not by divine imposition. In a way, ancient Israel is our hardest case. If God let the people choose their form of government in a theocracy, then why on earth would He intervene by imposing a form of government in any other non-theocratic nation? And if He had ever imposed a civil government elsewhere, *what nation would it be and where is the evidence for it?*

It would seem the general rule in Gentile nations is that civil governments are instituted among men via the consent of the governed. At least, that is what the American founders believed: *governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed* (Declaration of Independence). The founders were also familiar with what the scriptures said about ancient Israel: "Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction." 1 Co. 10:11.

Gen. 10:21-31 To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born. The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. Arpachshad fathered Shelah; and Shelah fathered Eber. To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east. These are the sons of Shem, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

A Nation and its Government Are Not the Same

The next thing to consider is whether a nation and its government are two different things, or one and the same. If they are the same, then to destroy a government is to destroy a nation which God has created. If they are not the same, then to destroy a government has the potential to leave a nation intact and leave God's creation untouched. Obviously the preceding discussion heavily leans toward a nation and its government being two separate things. But let us examine the matter more closely by comparing the case examples of ancient Israel and the United States of America.

As discussed above, after Israel had existed for about 400 years, it radically changed its form of government. From the time of Moses up through Samuel, Israel was governed by a series of judges which was highly decentralized and had a tribal and familial organization. Similarly, the national army was really a militia-based system which was also organized along tribal and familial lines.

Nobody's going to argue the ancient Israelites did a terrific job at governing themselves under the judges, but that's not the point. That's the way God intended for them to be governed, like it or not, and He had no intention of changing it. But the Israelites had other ideas, which is what eventually brought about the monarchy.

And there is another lesson to be learned besides *consent of the governed*. When ancient Israel abolished its form of civil government (the system of judges) and adopted a new form of government (a monarchy), the nation as an entity - its people, language, culture, territory and for the most part,

its laws - were unchanged. *Abolishing the prior form of government did not destroy the nation*. The nation itself remained intact. Why? Because a nation and its government are not the same thing.

The writers of the Declaration of Independence were familiar with the Old Testament scriptures and adopted a legal framework consistent with that model. Thus, the Declaration states that although rights are endowed by the Creator, "governments are instituted among men." Meaning, *governments are <u>not</u> created by God, and rights are <u>not</u> created by men*. God and men are not opposed to each other, but they play different roles and are involved in separate aspects of national formation and governance.

The plain fact is that the Declaration made no pretense to form a government of the United States. Its sole purpose was to create the nation of the United States. The formation of its government would have to come later, and be done separately. And we know from history that this is exactly how things played out - the Declaration was made in 1776, and the first national government didn't come along until 1781 in the form of the Articles of Confederation. But we are no longer governed by the Articles of Confederation. So what happened?

The Articles were replaced by the U.S. Constitution (drafted in 1787, implemented in 1789). Which is a polite way of saying the government instituted by the Articles of Confederation was *abolished*. The mission of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 was merely to alter or amend the Articles of Confederation, but instead the delegates decided to discard the Articles altogether. And far from destroying the United States as a nation, the nation was strengthened as a result. One might even say that changing the form of government was a good thing.

When you think about it, the national histories of ancient Israel and the U.S.A. have some remarkable parallels. Both were created and existed for some time before any form of government was established. When created, the initial form of government in each nation was fully consented to by the people, but in each case the people grew dissatisfied with that form of government and decided to reformulate it in significant ways.

At that point in each nation's history, duly appointed representatives of the people met and decided to adopt a new form of government, which actions were ratified by the people. When the old form of government was discarded, no thought was ever given to the possibility that the nation itself ceased to exist, or was in jeopardy. The people continued as one nation through the transition to a new form of government.

In each case the initial form of government was, in a real sense, disposable, *i.e.*, not critical to the existence of the nation. And in the case of America, the initial form of government was not merely disposable, but in fact was commonly viewed as defective and/or injurious to the well being of the nation. Which is a polite way of saying the national government was more harmful than good. Its presence was not sacrosanct, but onerous.

In both ancient Israel and America the transition from one form of government to another was accomplished peacefully, without violence. No one thought that because people were proposing the adoption of a new form of government and a discarding of the old form, the proponents of change (*i.e.*, delegates to the Constitutional Convention) were traitors, rebellious, or insurrectionist. No one

viewed the proposal to change governments as a threat, a crime, an act of terror, or an act of war.

So let me ask you - If a similar thing were to happen today, who would be standing in line with our own history, with the laws of nature and nature's God, and with natural right? The peaceful proponents of change who would dare to attempt to curtail tyranny, or those who would crush any such attempt with force and violence to preserve the *status quo*? When a law enforcement officer or a military person take an oath the protect and defend the nation, who and what are they protecting against whom?

Why should the abolition of any government - even the U.S. government - be feared? Frankly, I don't see the problem. It is not only theoretically possible to alter or abolish a nation's form of government without being destructive to the nation or its people, but it has actually happened both in ancient and in modern times. So what is there to fear?

Which brings me to a final point. Every nation of course has a right to preserve its government against foreign threats and from the lawless actions of persons within its borders. However, *no government has the right of self-preservation as against the will of its own people*. The people who have the right to form a government have the inherent right to re-form it (alter) or un-form it (abolish). This right is an inalienable (God-given) right which can never under any circumstances be denied.

The creature (civil government) cannot ever say to the creator (the people), "You cannot unmake me." This is the lesson from the potter and the clay, is it not? (Jer. 18:1-11.) The creator always has complete authority over anything it creates. Self-preservation only applies to those persons and institutions which God has created, ordained and established (individual, family and Church), not to other associations and institutions created and established by men. Civil governments fall into this second category, not the first. A civil government has *no inalienable right to life*.

Of course, there's always the problem of coming up with a suitable replacement government that will hopefully be better. But if that one doesn't work well, it can be replaced, too. Although, I have to admit there is no such thing as a perfect system of government. All government systems will eventually become corrupted and fail, because that is man's unavoidable nature. Until we have perfect men, there will never be a perfect government system. And that will never happen - short of the Second Coming of Christ and His establishment of a perfect and incorruptible world government. Which will only be made possible because the resurrected saints, who are foretold to "rule and reign" with Christ, are likely (in my opinion) to be serving as incorruptible officials in the kingdom of Christ.

The American founders had a fairly good appreciation of man's fallen nature. They tried to build in checks and balances to avoid concentrating too much power in any one place so as to prevent corruption and tyranny. Today, I'm not sure that mentality prevails anywhere. If anything, people in government positions today are pursuing a civil utopia with a zeal that tells me they either think man is perfectible, or government is. In either case, they are dead wrong.

I also don't fear people wanting to re-form the government so much as I fear people will want to un-make our nation. In the case of America, that would mean not merely throwing out the Constitution,

but actually undoing the Declaration of Independence and forming an entirely new nation. The main problem with that - and the usual motivation for anyone having that goal - is in getting rid of the laws of nature and of nature's God as the basis for our nation's laws. Now *that* I have a problem with, because there simply isn't any better legal context for establishing a nation, regardless of its form of government.

Postscript

As you consider the nations listed in the Table of Nations, remember that at the time of dispersion, each "nation" consisted of only a small group of persons - perhaps a dozen people - related to the person named in Genesis. There were no "governments" or governmental structures instituted in any of them - certainly not by God, nor by men. The person named in the Table of Nations was most probably the head of his clan, and functioned as its leader in all the ways you would expect. But there were, initially, no organs or departments of government, no constitutions or founding documents, and no hierarchies of officials wielding specified powers.

All those things came along eventually, of course, as each family clan expanded, got more organized, and established their own sets of laws and regulations for their own internal governance. But the dispersion at Babel was not based on anyone's consent. No one *agreed* to being unable to communicate with people from other clans, or to being dispersed far and wide over all the face of the earth.

No one planned out in advance where they would migrate to, but were driven by circumstances to settle in parts unknown. No one set out to claim a certain territory for their people, but were at the mercy of how fast their populations multiplied, and to what extent they could defend or attack their neighbors. No one decided whom to pick to be included or excluded as members of their clan. And most importantly, no one decided what skills or special knowledge the people in their clan would possess, discover, or develop. All these things would be directed in the sole and exclusive discretion of God.

I'm sure none of these early nations just sat on their hands waiting for things to happen, but were very proactive in improving themselves, getting organized, bolstering their defenses, and even developing a unique culture. By the time of Abraham, perhaps 250 years later, many of these clans had built cities, made people kings, and had already gone to war. Some, perhaps, had adopted rudimentary laws for their internal conduct. But that would have been about as far as any of them would get in that amount of time. We know from history, of course, that the progress of societies and cultures continued to develop from there. But none of them, through the application of long periods of time and random chance, "evolved." As if the creation of families and nations were the invention of men - the very idea!

CHAPTER 11

Gen. 11:1-9 Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

Tower of Babel

Both the ESV and the KJV indicate that in verse 2, the people migrated *from* the east, meaning that they were heading west. Whereas the NASB and NASB95 indicate they were heading east. If we accept that Noah and his family disembarked from the ark somewhere in the mountains of Ararat in modern Turkey, and the plain of Shinar is essentially the land of Babylonia (which would make sense, if Babel is essentially *Babylon*), then I take it the mass of humanity was heading *east*. Remember, it was only 100-130 years from leaving the ark until Babel.

But immediately there is a problem. For both in the Dominion Mandate and again in the Noahic covenant, God specifically told mankind to "be fruitful and multiply, and *fill the earth*." Which at the very least would require everyone to *not* settle in the same spot, and to spread out over the face of the earth. Yet in verse 4, the people expressed an intention to *not* be dispersed over the whole face of the earth. So while it may seem a small thing to us, the reality is that in the totality of human experience, God had only given mankind a total of ten commands or less (depending on how you parse the language) between the Adamic and Noahic covenants. Only one of which was repeated - *be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*.

Which means that the decision of the people was a unified and deliberate disobedience of the command of God. Truth be told, the group action would not have been perceived by God merely as disobedience against His command, but as *rebellion* against Him. Just as the refusal of the Jews to enter the Promised Land was viewed by God as a rebellion, leading to a judgment that they wander for forty years. Heb. 3:15-19. And here at Babel, as with the Jews many years later, the rebellion of the group resulted in a group punishment. Specifically, by the confusion of their language, God's judgment accomplished the purpose He had originally given them, and forced them to do the one thing they had expressly said they did not want to do - to fill the earth.

Besides explaining the reason and manner of dispersion from Babel, there are a number of ancillary lessons to be gleaned from this account. One of which is the theme running throughout the Bible of the distinction between stones and bricks. Stones refer to people and events fashioned by the hand of God, just as Jesus is the *stone made without hands* (Dan. 2:34) and the *stone the builders*

rejected (1 Pet. 2:6-7). Thus, when God gave the Israelites instructions on how to make an altar, He required that only uncut or unchiseled stones could be used (Exo. 20:25), in other words, a *natural* stone (one that God had made).

Bricks, on the other hand, are man-made. Bricks are often symbolic of slavery (as in Egypt) and godless human ambition (such as here the Tower of Babel). Bricks are not unique, but are uniform, and designed to be mass produced. Rather than being conformed to the will of God, they are made to be conformed to the will of man. And, in this case, bricks are indicative of raw human ambition, untempered by God.

A second theme is the connection between the Tower of Babel and the origin of the false religions of the world. It is not for nothing that the Tower of Babel was located in Babylonia, and when the false religions of the world are judged in the future, they are collectively referred to as "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." Rev. 17:5. For Babylon always did, and always will, produce a profound confusion among men. In other words, *nations and languages were not the only thing dispersed from Babel*, and *the languages of men were not the only thing that became confused*.

Notice that in the whole account of the Tower of Babel, no mention is made of anyone having a change of heart as a result. The dispersion from Babel was not a spiritual experience, at least in the sense that anyone repented of their sin, that anyone professed or exhibited belief or faith in God, or that God redeemed or saved anyone from their sins. What we must assume, and what history and prophecy have only ever confirmed, is that all the nations and clans dispersed from Babel carried with them their beliefs in their own greatness, a disdain for the laws and commands of God, and an undoubted propensity to believe in false deities.

Thus, Babel's true legacy (which remains today) is that it was the mother of all false religions. Whatever unity the people had before they were scattered, it was not a unity of the Spirit of God, but was a unity of rebellion and sinfulness before God. Which every nation then carried with them as they made their way to distant lands. It is no wonder the Jews regarded the Gentile nations as a cesspool of idolatry. And it is only by the grace of God through Jesus Christ that provision was eventually made for the Gentiles to escape their legacies of ignorance and darkness.

Tower of Babel 2.0

Another lesson we can learn from the Tower of Babel experience is that human nature has never really changed. Here people were, some 4,200 years ago or more, congregating all in one place, engaged in a single task to do what, really? To build a monument to their own greatness. And God sees that since they are *one people* having a common purpose, "this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them."

So here we are centuries later, doing what? Trying to unify the world by obliterating borders and forming a one-world economic system of co-dependency. Global markets, global communications, global transportation, and global surveillance. Getting ready, like an episode of *Star Trek*, to present ourselves as *one people* eager and willing to make First Contact with an alien race, to finally figure out we are not alone in the universe. Meanwhile, to keep the momentum going, we are rushing

headlong down the path of forming a global government as a monument to our own greatness. All while being completely oblivious of the fact that we have never been alone - God has always been with us. *Immanuel*.

Nothing has really changed - our vision has just gotten larger. Our ego is more puffed up, and our authority is more supreme. Our technology is vastly superior. *We have evolved*. See how wonderful we are. What on earth do we need God for? Thus we see that God created the nations specifically for the purpose of *preventing the world's population from being unified and acting as one people*. Because when all of humanity gets together, its primary purpose is to rebel against God.

All of which plays right into the Devil's plan. The world is much easier to control when all the people are coordinated and acting together, and it also makes it much easier to foment a rebellion against the God who split them apart in the first place. So you may think that the globalization effort is very new, but in fact it is very old. It is just that the forces of darkness never had the means to bring about a unification of the world since Babel until now. This is the moment they have been waiting for.

Meanwhile, churches will continue preaching self-actualization and self-empowerment, in order to become part of a global spiritual body. Do you see how, with kernels of truth, the Gospel message can be turned into the message of a global brotherhood of man? *God made us all, and He loves us all.* A message which prepares people for the triumphant unification of humanity. Except, of course, it will be an evil empire. No matter - as long as you feel good about yourself ...

Yes, what the people at Babel accomplished, compared to what people have done since, is positively puny. Our modern accomplishments are so much more magnificent. *But our natures have not changed.* The people at Babel were every bit as ambitious as people today - they simply lacked the skills and the resources we have. But those were the very people who determined, notwithstanding being later scattered across the earth, that they would persist in their ambitions until they had the skills and resources they needed to pull them off. *They were us, and we are them*. The technology we have is the fruit of *their* ambition, applied over time. We are their children, after all.

God knew this all along. He knew people would eventually get to exactly where we are right now. But He didn't want that to happen millennia ago, so He built into the world's population a delay mechanism which held back cooperative efforts and discoveries to slow our progress. This delay mechanism - differing languages - has now been overcome, thanks to computers and the internet. So all the original ambitions are now free to be pursued uninhibited. Nothing can stop us.

And in a certain sense, this new one world government to come is merely a return to the historical method of combining church and state, or at least, religion and government. The goal of which is - as always - to exact and extract the maximum amount of submission from the people. That is, to use the purported authority of God, and the collective authority of mankind, to speak with one voice, thereby quashing all dissent or opposition. The old sins are the best sins, after all.

Except, of course, God did not allow man's ambitions to be pursued unchecked the first time. And He is of no mood to allow them to go unchecked a second time. We are fast approaching the time when God will say, "Enough!" Because, ultimately, *we are not in charge* of this earth, the cosmos,

or even ourselves. God is in charge, and He will reign us in, along with our false claims of authority. After all, no one can ever become greater than their creator - and that goes for each of us. This little rebellion of ours will itself be quashed when the time comes - make no mistake.

Gen. 11:10-26 [Abridged] These are the generations of Shem.
When Shem was 100 years old, he fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood. He lived another 500 years and had other sons and daughters.
When Arpachshad was 35, he fathered Shelah, lived another 403 years and had other children.
When Shelah was 30, he fathered Eber, lived another 403 years and had other children.
When Eber was 34, he fathered Peleg, lived another 430 years and had other children.
When Peleg was 30, he fathered Reu, lived another 209 years and had other children.
When Reu was 32, he fathered Serug, lived another 207 years and had other children.
When Serug was 30, he fathered Nahor, lived another 200 years and had other children.
When Nahor was 29, he fathered Terah, lived another 119 years and had other children.
When Terah was 70, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Nationality and Ethnicity

I suggest that ethnicity or nationality also follows the law of the nature of inheritance. Meaning, that every person takes his or her ethnicity from the father and no part from the mother. The rule applies to women and men equally. And while the principle is easily observed with respect to ancient Israel (though not without some controversy), it is by no means limited to that nation. I assert the principle is universal and applies to all nations and ethnicities.

The national identity of ancient Israel was essentially *defined* as "the sons of Israel." We see this when the initial seed population of the nation, *i.e.*, Jacob and all his household, first came to Egypt in the time of Joseph's rule and was referred to as the *sons of Israel*. Ex. 1:1. We see it when the nation coming out of Egypt was counted in the first census. "Take a census of all the congregation of the people of Israel, by clans, by fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male, head by head." Num. 1:2. Similarly with respect to the second census in Num. 26.

Thus, when God called out the *house of Jacob* and the *people of Israel* as a special people among all the nations of the earth (Ex. 19:3-6), it is understood to refer to the *sons of Israel* and their households. The Israelites are referred to as the *sons of Israel* some 30 times in the Bible.

Historical evidence (albeit anecdotal) suggests it is quite possible Solomon had a son with the Queen of Sheba, who returned to her home country (somewhere in the vicinity of Ethiopia, most likely). When the son came of age and married, most likely he would have chosen a bride from the local population of Africans. He and his descendants would have looked African, but ethnically would be Jewish, if indeed parentage traced back to Solomon. Coincidentally, an identifiable culture of Ethiopian Jews a/k/a *Beta Israel* still exists today.

Yet that result is no different from what happened to *all* the Jews in the diaspora. To the extent the sons of Israel intermarried with local populations their descendants would take on the physical characteristics of the local population, yet would still be ethnically Jewish via the male line. This

is no mere hypothetical. If you are interested, just look into the history of the Sephardic Jews and Ashkenazic Jews - both the results of intermarriage between Jews and varying local populations.

There is a longstanding tradition (via the *Halakha*) that Jewishness is determined not by one's father, but by one's mother. Although, there is a minority report, as it were, which is even older, that Jewishness is determined by one's father. Both sides have citations from the O.T. scriptures and rabbinic writings to back up their claims.

What people fail to take into account is that God has His own way of doing things. He has His own rules for determining Jewishness and He keeps His own records. Thus, when the 144,000 Jews are called out from among the nations in the Tribulation, 12,000 *males* from each of the tribes of Israel (Rev. 7:1-8), God will know exactly who the *sons of Israel* are at that time. Then as now, the question will not be about Jewish *self-identity*. Rather, the question is how *God* operates.

What is ethnicity, if not an inherited nationality? And the universal rule used to determine national identity in the Bible is the *law of inheritance.* See, *e.g.*, the Table of Nations (Gen. 10:5, 20, 31):

> The sons of Japheth: ... From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations. ...
> These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.
> ...
> These are the sons of Shem, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

So we see that before the nation of Israel even existed, the Bible uniformly refers to all national identities as being determined by who the father was, and those ethnicities carried *exclusively* through the male line. Refer back to the discussion of the *Law of Inheritance* at the end of chapter 5, if you need to be reminded of the proofs.

Gen. 11:27-32 Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans. And Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. Now Sarai was barren; she had no child. Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there. The days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran.

World Population Growth

Allow me to digress at this point, to consider one of the fundamental upshots of both chapters 10 and 11. Namely, that the entire population of the world today consists of the offspring of six people (*i.e.*, Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives) who lived less than 4,500 years ago.

Currently, the world population stands at slightly more than 8.2 billion. Most of this growth has occurred in the last 200 years, as the world population is estimated to have been only 1 billion in the year 1800. Before that, as I've already mentioned, the world population is estimated to have been

about 200,000,000 in 1 AD, and about 5,000,000 in 8000 BC at the supposed dawn of agriculture. One of the objections to the biblical timeline of events is that it is just too short - all the people on the earth today cannot possibly be the descendants of just a single mating pair (Adam and Eve) some 6,000 years ago (so the experts say). But of course, if we take the Genesis genealogies at face value, the Table of Nations in chapters 10 and 11 were dispersed around 2240 BC, a mere 4,265 years ago. This would make everyone alive today the descendants of only three mating pairs (Noah's sons).

The starting point of conventional wisdom is that mankind originated at least 100,000 years ago, people gradually evolved from lower ancestral forms of life, and multiple family lines developed more or less concurrently. And significantly, the origin point for human evolution was in - South Africa? Yes, that's what is claimed. In other words, popular science completely rejects a history of mankind that is only 6,000 years, the separate (or special) creation of man distinct from the origin of other animals, and the idea that the whole human race is the product of only two original people. Geographically, it also rejects the Garden of Eden having been near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and rejects the Tower of Babel as the place of later dispersion from Babylonia. Really, it rejects those two places and events as non-existent for a mythological African origin.

However, there is a slight mathematical problem, wonderfully described in *Evolution and the Population Problem*, Institute for Creation Research, by Henry Morris, Ph.D., March, 1975. The problem is this: if humanity originated the way conventional wisdom posits it, at current or relatively recent population growth rates (between 1% and 2%; currently at about 1.13% per year), there would be a current world population several orders of magnitude greater than what we actually have. Thus, either mankind originated significantly less than 100,000 years ago, or the historic population growth rate was just a tiny fraction of what it is today.

Morris takes the former approach: "an initial population of only two people, increasing at 2% per year, would become 3.5 billion people in only 1075 years. ... [A]n average population growth rate of only (1/2)% would generate the present world population in only 4000 years." Worldometers takes the opposite approach, positing that human population grew at a rate of only 0.05% for most of world history until A.D. 1800. In other words, that people reproduced at only 0.04% of the current growth rate for 99,000 years.

Now start from a biblical perspective, as informed by the genealogies. Namely, that the entire world population started with only two individuals about 6,000 years ago; that all but 8 persons were wiped out about 4,360 years ago in a worldwide flood, and that everyone alive today is a descendant of those eight survivors. I will not rehearse here the math and science involved, but suffice it to say the biblical record is sufficient to explain the origin of the human race and the present population of the world from a very few individuals only a few thousand years ago.

If you want more information on this matter, I gratefully acknowledge and recommend for your perusal: *ABO Blood and Human Origins*, Institute for Creation Research, by Daniel Criswell, Ph.D., February, 2008. Criswell concludes: "Whether the origin of blood type O was in Adam and Eve at Creation or whether it arose as a mutational event that took place shortly before or after the Flood, it strongly supports that all humans today are descendants of two individuals or a small group of people that eventually populated the globe." Thus, the biblical account of biological anthropology can be reasonably corroborated and ought to be trusted.

Other publications by Gerald R. Thompson:

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