Genesis and the Lost World 08/21/22

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A. God’s word is true no matter how implausible it may seem to us. (Romans 4:20- ` 21)

And

B. We can expect persecution when we take a stand for His literal explanation of the world. (2 Timothy 1:12)

Because

C. The Bible is about Jesus. (Luke 24:25-27)

As we continue on in Genesis, I’d like to mention a couple things I’ve been thinking about. I’m seeing more than ever before how important our view of Genesis is as Bible-believing Christians.

SLIDE 1 – Romans 1:18-19

I am aware of my own tendency to subconsciously conform to Romans 1:18-19, which says,**“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them.”**

What I mean here is that I sometimes catch myself doubting God’s Word, or perhaps even more dangerously, I attempt to make it say what I would like for it to say. Too often, I will agree with a biblical teacher who promotes what I already think about a passage, or I cross my arms and disagree with a teacher who has an alternate take on an issue.

Also, I need to constantly remind myself to **“Trust in the Lord with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding.”** (Proverbs 3:5) Does this trust extend to the truth and infallibility of God’s Word? Will I trust it or rely on my own understanding of it?

There are a couple of aspects of Genesis that I will mention the next few weeks that fall into this arena. Before I do, however, I would encourage you to read through these problematic passages, read commentaries, do word studies, and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of God’s word to YOU. Also, as you’re doing this, always check or test your motives. Are the conclusions you come to elevating the name of Jesus or do they diminish Him or His aspects? Do they jive or agree with the rest of scripture? This is important. Any so-called “revelation” that runs counter to the rest of scripture is...counter to the rest of scripture.

You see, as promised, I am preaching, ploughing through it feels like...passages that are difficult, mysterious, or even a little cryptic as I work through Genesis. I think it’s important not to ignore these places in the Bible, though. I also think it’s important for me to be teachable and to be faithful to the intent of God’s Word. I must stay focused on the preeminence of Jesus, I must be humble regarding issues that are disputable, and I must uphold a high view of scripture. Part of this is that I will always tend towards a literal view of scripture and not try to read into it. I will rely on exegesis or study from the original language and the intent and context of the content as much as possible. I will commit to letting the word speak for itself.

I read a really good phrase as I was preparing this week. It was...

SLIDE 2

“The main things are the plain things.” What this means is that the non-negotiable parts of the Bible are clearly, or plainly understood. For instance, in answer to the question, “How is mankind saved?” Romans 10:9 says **“...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”** And John 3:16 says**, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”** These verses are indisputable and crystal clear.

The things that are not clearly stated in the Bible are often things that are interesting and helpful, but not essential to our eternal destination.

SLIDE 3 – No Fighting

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says **that “All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** Meanwhile, Titus 3:9 tells us to **“avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless.”** And 2 Timothy 2:23 says **“avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.”**

Today we will be dealing with a couple of topics that lend themselves to stimulating discussion, and in the next couple of weeks we will deal with major aspects of the biblical narrative that men have tried to interpret in a manner that diminishes the work of God and ultimately degrade the magnificence of God’s plan. Please keep in mind that I am constantly praying about what I’m sharing from the pulpit and that I am gravely concerned with getting God’s word right. I feel very deeply the responsibility I bear toward you all and the accountability I am under as a preacher/teacher.

SLIDE 4 - Recap

To this point, we have gotten away from a chronological treatment of Genesis, since we left off with Cain being banished and went into the five divine institutions. Now we return to the narrative, picking it back up in Genesis chapter 4. We have covered some major attributes of God, His creative act, the Fall of Man, the curse placed on men and the promise of redemption, Man’s being driven from the garden, and the world’s first murder and human death at the hands of Cain, the rebellious first son of Adam. As I just mentioned, we also covered the major building blocks of society: Responsible Labor, Marriage, Family, Government, and Nations. We have also looked at the dispersal of people at the Tower of Babel and the resultant Table of Nations. We have now come to one of the more mysterious and unknown parts of the story of the world, the Antediluvian or pre-flood world, sometimes referred to as the Lost World. Okay. Here we go.

We’ll begin just after Cain was expelled from his family. God sentenced him to a life of wandering and futility. The Lord made an interesting pronouncement in verse 15, saying that whoever would kill Cain would have vengeance taken on him sevenfold, thereby stressing His abhorrence of murder. He marked Cain, setting him apart so that no one would kill him.

SLIDE 5 – Genesis 4:16-17

With our Bibles opened to Genesis chapter 4, we will see what kind of a glimpse we can get of the mysterious pre-flood world. Verses 16 and 17 tells us, **“Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. 17And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch.”**

As we read this, there are a couple of things to keep in mind. To begin with, the archeological record doesn’t give us much to go on here. Radio-carbon dating has always been in dispute and has come under even more scrutiny within the scientific community lately. All of the clocks modern science uses to date that which has not been witnessed directly must operate on the presupposition that nothing ever changes. This is called uniformitarianism. It’s the idea that all natural processes are absolute and unchanging. We will talk more about this later, but for now we don’t have much that is reliable and infallible to draw from regarding the prehistoric world, except for the Bible. None of the clocks (rate of erosion, salination of the ocean, linear speed of light, etc.) agree as to the age claims science makes of the earth and of space. Again, more on that later.

From our Bibles, we know that the Antediluvian world was certainly different from the world we now live in. Genesis 1:7 gives us a clue about how the “waters” were divided. Many creation scientists have used this to construct the idea that there was once a sort of canopy over the earth creating a greenhouse effect. Of this effect, Henry Morris writes, “This, in turn, produced a uniformly mild, warm climate everywhere all year long, with no wind and rain storms. There were extensive land surfaces, covered with lush vegetation and an abundant animal life, all over the world.

The congenial climate, possibly augmented by hyperbaric pressures (a condition of much higher atmospheric pressure than we now have on the earth, occasioned by the weight of the vapor canopy) and the radiation-filtering effect of the canopy enabled the people of that age— and probably the animals as well— to live to much greater ages than is now possible. In recent years, it has been demonstrated in biomedical research that both the existence of such high pressures and the absence of mutation-producing radiations in the environment do contribute significantly to longevity. In addition, of course, the pristine purity of the human genetic system and its bloodstream, with so few accumulated mutant genes, together with the primeval absence of disease-producing organisms (which only gradually developed, through the outworking of the curse) from the originally created beneficent microorganisms, served also to maintain life through great age-spans.”

Now, we’ll take a quick time out here to acknowledge another elephant in the room. Some of you are having a hard time accepting the great ages of people back then. After reading Genesis 4:17, some of you are grappling with two things, the idea of incest in Genesis, and the logistic challenge of their being enough people on earth at this point for Cain to build a city. Again, I’ll call in reinforcements for explanation. Have you ever, or never, wondered why Genesis doesn’t spend any time explaining these things? It’s because when they were written down by Moses, they were common knowledge. Anyway, I’ll let Henry Morris explain...

“Although we have no exact figures, it is possible to make a reasonable guess as to how rapidly the total human population developed. Since, according to the record in Genesis 5, each named patriarch lived many hundreds of years and “begat sons and daughters,” it is reasonable and very conservative to assume that each family had, on the average, at least six children— three sons and three daughters. If it is further assumed that, on the average, these children grew to maturity, married, and began to have children of their own by the time their parents were eighty years old, and that the parents lived through an average of five such “generations,” or four hundred years, then it can easily be calculated that the earth had acquired within its first eight hundred years (presumably approximately the lifetime of Cain, as a minimum) a population of at least one hundred and twenty thousand. It is probable that the figure was much more than this, since people lived to greater ages than assumed and probably had many more children than assumed.

In order to get this process of multiplication started, of course, at least one of Adam’s sons had to marry one of Adam’s daughters. Probably, in that first generation, all marriages were brother-sister marriages. In that early time, there were no mutant genes in the genetic systems of any of these children, so that no genetic harm could have resulted from close marriages. Many, many generations later, during the time of Moses, such mutations had accumulated to the point where such unions were genetically dangerous, so that incest was thenceforth prohibited in the Mosaic laws.[[1]](#footnote-1)

This prohibition against incest is seen in Leviticus 18:6-18. As an aside, but an important one, have you ever wondered why we experience a sense of revulsion over certain human practices like incest? It always happens in regard to something God has forbidden. His law, after all, is written on our hearts.

SLIDE 6 – Civilization Develops

The next pieces of information we receive in Chapter 4 comes in the form of another genealogy. We see in verse 20 that Jabal is the “father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. We know that these animals were not intended for consumption. God did not allow that until after the flood. Cattle and other livestock were to be kept to provide materials for shelter and clothing, to be sacrifices, and to be beasts of burden. It was likely, though, that people had begun to consume them for food, in violation of God’s wishes.

In verse 21 we are told that Jubal is the father of all those that play the harp and flute. In verse 22, Tubal-Cain is named as the one who instructed craftsmanship in bronze and iron. All of this means that civilization is taking off. There was plenty. Men were fruitful, and they were multiplying. There was art, entertainment, and the production of goods and tools on a large scale.

Back in verse 17, it is worth noting that the city of Enoch is the first city in the verifiable written record. This is urbanization in the second generation of the history of man. So I’ll check in with you all. If we can assume that you accept that God made all that exists from nothing, how are you doing with the Genesis account? Remember, we are talking here about a man, the very first man’s son, building a city which of course would be populated with people, lots of people. In all likelihood, this was within Adam’s lifetime. Is your mind divided? Are you choosing to shut down your doubts and take this account as it is given? Or are these doubts persistent? How could this be? There is no way God could create the universe and the earth in six days. Have you even seen some of the recent images from our space telescopes? Wait a minute...you’re saying that Adam appeared on the earth as a grown man, and that God made Eve from his rib? People can’t live that long! Incest is gross! We all came from one man and one woman? No way! This is stupid! You see, for many, Genesis is a deal-breaker. Jesus? Okay, maybe, but all this stuff? Nope. Can you feel it? The tension inside? Romans 1:18 is in effect. So is the voice of the serpent. Did God really say...? Well, yes, He did. Well, anyway, I was just checking. Back to the world as it was before the world-wide, completely global flood that destroyed every breathing creature that wasn’t on the ark.

SLIDE 7 – Evil Lamech

By verse 23, we have arrived at Lamech, who led the Cainite line into open rebellion to God. We know this because in verse 19 he defied God’s ordained plan for marriage by taking two wives. and that he was disdainful of God’s Lordship, bragging that he had not only killed at least one man, but that he should be avenged far more than great-great-great-grandpa Cain. Basically, what Lamech is saying here is, “If God promises a sevenfold vengeance on anyone killing Cain, I myself guarantee a seventy-sevenfold vengeance on anyone who even hurts me!”

In general, at this point we can assume that men continued to proliferate on the earth, developing technologies and urbanizing, growing unchecked by any organized form of government or fear of God. We are given some context for this malignancy by looking at Jude 11. Here Jude is referring to the “...men who were long ago marked out for condemnation, ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ (who are one and the same).” These are unbelievers, who have gone in the way of Cain. This describes the people of Cain’s day, who were eventually destroyed, all but a tiny remnant, a group of eight who came from the line of Seth, the righteous son of Adam and Eve. Genesis will describe the state of the human population in Chapter 6, but in the meantime, Chapter 5 sets up this line of righteous people who fear the Lord, a people who serve as the vehicle for God’s plan.

SLIDE 8 – The Line of Seth

So these last two verses of Chapter 4 (25 and 26), speak of Seth, a new and different line coming directly from Adam. Eve tells the world that Seth will replace Abel who was slain. Ultimately, it is through Seth’s line that Jesus would come. In verse 26 we are told that through the line of Seth and then his son Enos, men began once again to call on the name of Jehovah.

Slide 9 – The Books and the Writers of the Books

Chapter then 5 gives the genealogical line of the promised seed, but the words that lead it off amount to what is the signature of none other than Adam himself. It is entirely possible that this book, Genesis 1-4, was originally written by the first human source of God’s inspired word, Adam. Moses then would have copied it all in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. The same thing, a signature, happens in Genesis 6:9, only this time, Noah is credited with writing the section beginning with 5:1b and ending with 6:9. Moses essentially collected this information then credited Adam and Noah with writing these accounts, which lends them even more authenticity. These manuscripts from Adam and Noah would have made it through time to Moses, who then transcribed them, compiling them into what you now have on your lap. It is kind of mind blowing to think that the words you read in the first four chapters of Genesis were actually penned by the world’s first man, Adam!

A fascinating parallel here is that while the Old Testament is referred to first as a “book” in Genesis 5:1 which chronicles the beginnings of all things, the New Testament begins the same way in Matthew 1:1 **(“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham...”)** Thus the first book (The Old Testament) tells of the origins of the Creative Order (Genesis 2:4), the First Adam (see Genesis 5:1 and Romans 5:14) and The second book (The New Testament) tells of the origins of the last Adam, who is the Lord from heaven (1 Corinthians 15:47)

SLIDE 9 – The Timeline

So, the chronology of pre-flood history as given in Genesis goes like this: In Genesis 2:4 we have the “book” or Hebrew “toledoth” of the Heavens and the Earth, in Genesis we have the book or toledoth of Adam (Genesis 5:1), and finally in Genesis 6:9 we have the book or toledoth of Noah. These three books combine to give us a timeline from Adam to the flood. Assuming there are no genealogical gaps (why would we assume that there are?), that places the flood at 1656 years after the creation of Adam and Eve.

In yet another fun and surprising display of the cohesiveness of scripture, Henry Morris points out that, “Taking the recorded ages at face value, it is interesting to note that Adam lived until Lamech, the father of Noah, was fifty-six years old, and Noah was born only fourteen years after the death of Seth. Most likely, the oldest of the living patriarchs maintained the primary responsibility for preserving and promulgating God’s Word to his contemporaries. Since both Enoch and Lamech were outlived by their fathers, there were only seven men in the line before Noah, who had this responsibility. This probably explains why, in II Peter 2:5, Noah is called “eighth preacher of righteousness” in the “old world.” 2 Peter 2:5 says, **“God... did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of* eight *people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly**...” One of eight people could mean literally one of the eight who was spared, but it could also mean that Noah was one of eight successive Godly men who preserved and proclaimed the word of God.

Chapter 5, then, chronicles or gives a timeline of the pre-flood patriarchs beginning with Adam and ending with three of Noah’s sons, Shem, Japheth, and Ham. These three are mentioned because they believed and got on the ark. There were ten patriarchs listed from Adam through Noah. There are some names that are repeated here, Enoch and Lamech. Enoch, the seventh from Adam in the line of Seth was amazingly close to God, so much so that for some reason, he took Good Enoch to heaven without his having to die. As for the Lamech in the Sethite line, he was a righteous man, and was Noah’s father. He died five years before the flood. Ninety-five years before Lamech’s death, the Lord spoke to his son Noah, and told him that judgment was coming, and that he was to build an ark. In faith, Noah obeyed. I’m quite sure he got a lot of help from his dad, Lamech.

Again, what can we make of all this? The place I’d like for all of us to come to is that even though we tend to suppress the truth in our fallen minds, God word is truth. We can and should take it literally. In other words, it’s okay to believe exactly what it says without trying to manipulate it and add to it to make it accommodate our human thinking. If we stick to it, this means we will be scoffed at, made fun of, and one day, we will even be persecuted for our stance.

Another take away here is that if we look closely, we can see God’s plan for Jesus to save us unfold in His word. The plan ever and always was to provide a perfect sacrifice for us – Jesus. So we have three things to focus on here:

SLIDE 10

1. God’s word is true no matter how implausible it may seem to us. (Romans 4:20-21)

And

2. We can expect persecution when we take a stand for His literal explanation of the world. (2 Timothy 1:12)

Because

3. The Bible is about Jesus. (Luke 24:25-27)

Next week we will take a look at God’s reason for intervening once again in human affairs and wiping almost every single human being from the earth, while saving a remnant in His merciful grace.

1. Morris, Henry. *The Genesis Record.* Baker Books. 2009 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)