

A New Future

Growing In Grace & Knowledge: Shelf 4 — Volume 40

In one's study of the Bible, it is sometimes best to step back from individual historical events of human history that are recorded in the Bible in order to connect all the dots of how God planned the eternal redemption program for mankind. When we view the whole context of God's work in human history, from before creation until after the termination of this present heavens and earth, all the pieces of His historical purpose for humanity fall into place.



World-Changing Events

In viewing history as a whole, therefore, we guard ourselves from being either shallow in our understanding of the Bible, or unable to figure out why God intervened in the affairs of humanity with certain traumatic historical events that certainly changed the course of human history. **God's in-time judgments can be understood only when we see the whole of His intervention in the affairs of humanity.**

God's eternal purpose behind the creation of the world and its inhabitants was to bring into existence people who were prepared for eternal dwelling. In this grand plan, humanity went into wickedness, though Noah and his survived a global flood. It was God's plan then to work through people of faith, and eventually a nation, in order to bring the Eternal Redeemer into this world in order that the original purpose for creation be completed.

— PREPARATION —

Therefore, for a moment we must move away from

our “proof text” system of theology, as well as our event-oriented understanding of Bible truth. When we consider human history from God’s eternal point of view, we see a wonderful and wise relationship of God with His creation. We better understand why we were created in the first place, and all that God did in our history in order to fulfill His purpose for creating us, that purpose being to bring us into His presence for eternity.

If we appreciate all that God did in human history in order to prepare the world for the reception of the Son of God, then the puzzle of historical Bible pic-



Incarnation
Of God
Into Our World.

tures all fall into place. We then understand the full view of why God carried out certain traumatic events in the history of humanity. Therefore, we need to take a moment to reflect on what actually transpired before the Son of God was eventually incarnate into this world in order to come to “His own” (the Jews) (John 1:11). For indeed, it was truly in the fullness of the time that the Son of God showed up in the flesh (Galatians 4:4).

In order to begin the construction of our panoramic view of history, we must first raise some questions: What if *“His own”* in John 1:11 (the Jews) did not exist at the time of His coming? What if there were no Jews from whom would come the first disciples? What if there were no prospects of faith who would seek to live by faith? Therefore, we must wonder what God did throughout history in the affairs of human history in order **to produce a people of faith who would accept**, and then become disciples of the Son of God who would come into this world in order to take His people out of this world?

It was after the Jews had returned from their captivity in the year 536 B.C., that both Ezra and Nehemiah realized the seriousness of the social situation of Israel. Both prophets saw that some of the Jews who had been left in the land of Palestine after

the captivities had intermarried with those of different nations who had been imported into the land by conquering nations. He thus pronounced that the land had become “unclean” by those who had been imported with beliefs in pagan gods (See Ezra 9:11). The land was unclean because it was populated with a great number of people who were not true Jews.

Consequently, Ezra rebuked the local Jews for marrying the sons and daughters of Gentiles who were not monotheistic in their faith (See Ezra 9:12). If the Jews continued to remain in such intermarriage relationships, then it would result in a new reality wherein *“there should be no remnant [of Jews] nor escape”* (Ezra 9:14). The Jews as God’s chosen people would simply vanish from the face of the earth. They would socially dissolve into the societies of human history.

In realizing this possibility, which was becoming the new reality, the righteous Ezra wept bitterly (Ezra 10:1). His fellow Jews joined him and *“the people wept very bitterly”* (Ezra 10:1). They subsequently made a covenant with God *“to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them”* (Ezra 10:3; see Nehemiah 13:23-31). As a result of this very difficult repentance, the existence and identity of the Jews, through whom would come the Savior of the world five hundred years later, was preserved. **The Jews were**



preserved as a people of faith who would receive the Redeemer of the world, and thus fulfill the promise made to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). This would be in contrast to the wicked society that had previously existed before the existence of the Jews as a monotheistic nation in the land of Palestine.

If the Son of God had to come into a cultural world of wickedness as was typical of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the time of the wickedness of Noah’s generation, **then the people of the world would have dealt with Him as they sought to deal with**

the two angels of God when they showed up at Lot's house (See Gn 19). Those of that wicked society wanted to *“know them,”* that is, engage in sodomy with the angels of God (Genesis 19:5). Those were cultures of homosexuality wherein people lost their moral values.

Nevertheless, Lot did survive that ordeal, but only when the angels struck blind the would-be assailants (Genesis 19:11). The angels then took Lot by the arm and escorted him out of that culture of wickedness. It was a culture that under no circumstances would be willing to receive the angels of God. In being led out of that wicked culture, the seedline of hope of the coming Savior was preserved.

So what if the Son of God showed up in a world culture of wickedness as that which was typical of Sodom and Gomorrah? Would we for a moment conclude that the people of that culture would have accepted the incarnate Son of God when they sought to commit sodomy with the two angels who were sent by God? The point is that people today who have gone in the same way do not.

1. **T or F:** When we understand the whole of human history, we will then begin to understand the specifics of historical events in the Bible.
2. ____ To what did John refer when he used the phrase “His own” in reference to the incarnate Son of God?
(A) The Persians, (B) The Jews, (C) The Gentiles, (D) Angels
3. ____ What two prophets who were sent to Israel after the captivity realized that the Jews were losing their cultural identity by intermarriage with Gentiles?
(A) Ezra and Daniel, (B) Nehemiah and Isaiah, (C) Nehemiah and Ezra, (D) Nehemiah and Hosea
4. ____ Who was led by two angels out of Sodom and Gomorrah?
(A) Jesus, (B) Noah, (C) Job, (D) Lot

— PROMISE —

Promises made to the patriarchs in the Old Testament in reference to the incarnational sacrifice of the Son of God were fully understood only when the promises were fulfilled.

Therefore, we must go back before Lot to a promise that God made to Abraham in order to prepare

the world to receive Someone who would come about two thousand years after Abraham. In preparation for this coming, a promise was made to Abraham that from his seed would come a people (nation), and this people would be given a specific land in which to dwell until the fulfillment of the promised Blessing (Genesis 12:1-3).

We would ask why would God made such a promise to a man on earth? And we must wonder why God would make such a special promise to one person. The promise would be that from this one individual a nation would develop from his seed. Of all the lands of the world, this nation would subsequently be allotted a specific strip of land of all the lands of the world?

The promise of a people and land was made in view of the fact that there was also the promise of One who would come from Abraham's seed in order to be the Blessing. The Blessing would validate the purpose for which God created all humanity. These are indeed profound thoughts that we must consider in reference to our hope of eternal dwelling with our Creator. At the time, these were certainly promises that puzzled Abraham. We would conclude that he did not understand the significance of the promises. For this reason, he is used in the New Testament as one who walked by faith (See Romans 4).

Because we have Bibles in our hands, understanding the preceding promises to Abraham is quite simple. The people who would come forth from the seed of Abraham would be a society of people who would be identified by a monotheistic faith, and thus generally conduct themselves as a society according to the commandments of the God of their faith. They would thus be a society who would to a great extent be receptive to receiving One who came directly from God.

In order to remain unique in a world of wickedness, the beliefs and behavior of this people, there-



**Monotheism
Is The Belief
In One God**

fore, had to be fine tuned with principles that would not allow the totality of the society to digress into a state of wickedness that was typical of Sodom and Gomorrah. On the contrary, regardless of the cycle of struggles through which the people of Israel would go, a remnant of faithfuls would eventually emerge from captivity in order to receive, in the fullness of time, the Blessing who was promised to come through Abraham's seed. This was the impetus behind the drastic move of both Ezra and Nehemiah to lead the people away from those who would eventually corrupt the purity of Israel's monotheistic faith.

5. **T or F:** Abraham did not understand the significance of all the promises that God made to him in Genesis 12..
6. **T or F:** Abraham understood that from his seed a Savior would be born who would go to the cross for our sins.

– PROTECTION –

Those who believe in the one God, and His gospel to the world, must always guard themselves against being influenced by the beliefs of the religious world in which they live.

In order to protect the culture of the people who would come forth from the seed of Abraham, **a people of faith as a nation needed to be separated from the influence of the wicked cultures of the rest of the world**, specifically those Canaanites who resided in the land of Palestine at the time when the nation of faith was to possess the land. Therefore, this small parcel of land in all the world was necessarily reserved in which the chosen nation of faith would eventually be settled (See Genesis 15:18). However, in order to settle in the land, **it was God's intention that the existing wicked culture of the land be eradicated from the land**. The end game for preserving a people of monotheistic beliefs explains God's direct command to Joshua to eradicate the wicked Canaanites from the land.

And so the descendants of Abraham eventually became the people of Israel, and the appointed por-

tion of land they would be given in which to settle was the land of Palestine (Genesis 12:7). The moral code that would guarantee the identity of the culture of Abraham's seed, as well as protect the people from becoming a society as Sodom and Gomorrah, would be **the Sinai law**. In reference to national purity and moral integrity, the Israelites were commanded to obey strictly the commandments of the Sinai law.

We know Israel's legacy of rebellion and repentance throughout their history. But this cycle of rebellion and repentance did not negate the reason for their choosing by God to be a special people of God and to be settled in a special land. Their repentance prepared the way to produce a faithful remnant centuries later who would eventually receive the promised Blessing that was made to Abraham.

7. _____ Whom did God choose to eradicate the idolatrous Canaanites from the promised land of Palestine?
(A) Moses, (B) Ezra, (C) Nehemiah, (D) Joshua
8. **T or F:** If the Canaanites were not eradicated from the land, then they would eventually influence the Jews to become in belief and behavior as those of Sodom and Gomorrah.

— PERSEVERANCE —

Throughout history God always prepared societies that would guaranteed the preservation of the seed-line of the Seed for the cross.

All the preceding events were providentially worked by God in the history of mankind for one specific reason, that reason being the Blessing. The blessing that was promised to Abraham would eventually come into a world wherein many faith-oriented people would receive Him. But if the Blessing came into a wicked world culture as Sodom and Gomorrah, or as those who existed during Noah's generation, then He would certainly have been ignored by idolatrous people and killed by a wicked civilization. The world would then have moved on with inhabitants who were not fit for eternal dwelling. And thus, the

entire world would have lost its purpose for being created. If human civilization loses its purpose for existence, then God no longer needs humanity for populating heaven.

Now add to this the fact that if there were no monotheistic people of faith in the world at the time of the coming of the promised Blessing, then there would have been no one of faith who would become disciples of the Blessing. There would be no one to carry on with the message of the Blessing throughout the world. In fact, and as one example, the only “disciple” that came out of the wicked societies of Sodom and Gomorrah was Lot, and he was continually vexed by his generation while living and preaching among the wicked (2 Peter 2:7,8). He had to be protected and eventually carried off to the mountains by two angels in order that he survive the coming destruction of the cities of the plain (Genesis 19:17).

We seem to have the historical record of Sodom and Gomorrah in our Bibles as an historical example that validates the necessity for God calling Abraham’s seed of faith together into a protected land that had been eradicated of wickedness (2 Peter 2:6).

In this way, the spiritual ground work was laid for the sending of the Son of God into the world as the Redeemer of humanity. Because of God’s continued intervention in the affairs of this world, therefore, **there existed at the time of His Son’s coming a monotheistic people of faith who received Him.** All the actions on the part of God

to eradicate generations of wickedness, either globally or regionally, **was for the purpose of the success of the incarnation of the Son of God for the cross.**



All That God Did In History Was For This Purpose.

9. **T or F:** It is the purpose of humanity on earth to produce citizens for heaven.
10. **T or F:** Sodom and Gomorrah gave up their right to exist because their societies no longer accepted the righteousness of God.

— PURGING —

Because humanity before the flood of Noah's day gave up on God, God gave up on them.

But when we consider all this wicked society business, we are driven back even further in history, back many centuries before the promise was made to Abraham. In order to understand God's intentions to eradicate Sodom, Gomorrah and the Canaanites, we must go back to the days just before the global flood of Noah's day. It was then that God made the decision to purge from the entire face of the earth an entire wicked generation of humanity. The reason for such a drastic measure on the part of God is explained in **Genesis 6:5**:

God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The civilization of the world at the time of Noah had morally digressed into a wickedness that could not be reversed. No person of that wicked culture believed, even though they heard a preacher of righteousness throughout one hundred years of preaching (See 2 Peter 2:5). Therefore, the people of such a culture could never in the future have received the incarnate Blessing that was later promised to come into the world from the seed of Abraham. In fact, righteous Noah struggled with his wicked world civilization for over one hundred years while he built the ark (2 Peter 2:8). But after one hundred years of preaching, only seven souls of faith eventually responded to his invitation (See 1 Peter 3:20).



God Purged The Entire World!

The fact that no one of Noah's generation would

listen to the preaching of righteousness by Noah validated the extermination of that generation from off the face of the earth. The rejection of Noah's preaching revealed that humanity needed a new future, and that future was to be realized only through the heritage of Noah.

If the incarnate Blessing would have come into Noah's world that was consumed with wickedness, then there would have been no reception of Him, other than the household of Noah. No one in the entire world would have believed that He was the Son of God. Therefore, there would have been no world evangelism, for all the world would have been as the world in which righteous Lot lived and preached, but was rejected. If the wicked turned from the message of both Noah and Lot, then surely they would have turned from the Blessing who was promised to Abraham. As a consequence, the purpose for which God created the world and humanity would have come to an end. The ark of Noah, therefore, was an open door to a new future.

We must know all the preceding historical background of wickedness in order to understand why God prepared for four hundred years that the seed of Abraham would become a nation. We can also understand why the nation of Israel eventually entered into a specific land that was promised to them by God centuries before they even existed as a nation. There is no other way to appreciate why God told the Canaanite residents of the land of Palestine for over four hundred years to get out of the land before it was time for the fulfillment of the land promise that was made to Abraham and his seed (nation).

11. ____ Through whom did a new heritage of faith begin after the global flood of Noah's day?
(A) Jesus, (B) Noah, (C) Job, (D) Lot
12. **T or F:** If the incarnate Son of God would have come in the pre-flood world, there would have been only eight people who would have received him.

— PROPHECY —

When believers live among unbelievers, they must guard themselves from accepting the common religious beliefs of the society in which they live.

The Canaanites refused to hand over the land. They persisted in digressing into even more wickedness by the time of the fulfillment of the land promise that was made to Abraham (Gn 15:16). Because of their unbelief and wickedness, we would conclude that the Canaanites had long forgotten why they should vacate the land for the coming nation that was monotheistic in faith.

The unbelief of the Canaanites, therefore, resulted in their eradication from the land, which command of God the Israelites actually never fully completed. When the prophesy was fulfilled that the land should be given to the seed of Abraham, and it was time for Israel to enter the land, God intended to remove all the wicked Canaanites by the Israelite army that He empowered. Unfortunately, the Israelites never fully obeyed God in this matter, and subsequently the leftover Canaanites influenced Israel throughout their history to believe in other gods.

Because Israel never fully removed all the Canaanites from the land, they went the way of idolatry. In fact, they became more wicked than the Canaanites they attempted to displace from the land (2 Kings 21:9). They had left a remnant of wicked influence to dwell among them, and thus this remnant of wicked Canaanites infested Israel with beliefs in Baal gods. And because the Israelites were influenced over the centuries by the Baal believers, they too became a wicked culture of people who were taken into captivity. Only by God's grace a remnant was eventually returned to the land from the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. Only because they repented in their captivity were they redeemed out of captivity as a purified remnant of faith in the one true and living God. Their captivity cured them forever of

again becoming an idolatrous people.

However, we would conclude that at the time of their entrance into the assigned land of promise after coming out of Egyptian captivity, at least Gentile Rahab was the exception to the rule, for by faith she said to Joshua's spies,

I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that your terror has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you (Joshua 2:9).

All the Canaanites in the land knew, therefore, that the land of Palestine had been promised to the descendants of Abraham, and thus, **to be given to the nation of Israel upon their release from Egyptian captivity**. They knew that it was their destiny that they should move out of the land in order to allow Israel to take possession of the land. But because they did not understand the eternal redemptive plan of God through the Blessing of Abraham's seed, they resisted.

- 13. T or F:** The invading Israelites, through the leadership of Joshua, completely eradicated the Canaanites from the land of promise.
- 14.** ____ What Canaanite person remain in the land while the Israelites worked to eradicate the Canaanites from the land?
(A) Rahab, (B) Martha, (C) Sarah, (D) Deborah

— POSSESSION —

Possession of the land of promise by the Jews was necessary only until the promised Blessing fulfilled His mission into this world.

The Canaanites did not understand, as many today do not understand, that the giving of the land to the seed of Abraham **was only temporary**. **Israel would possess the land only until God fulfilled His purpose for giving the land to the seed of Abraham**. That purpose was to preserve a nation of faith until the Blessing came. After the coming of the Blessing for all humanity, and all who would believe in the

Blessing became one man (nation) in Christ (Galatians 3:26-29), **then the need for the land vanished away.** There was no need to continue Israel's occupation of the promised land because the promised Blessing had come and gone into heaven, leaving on the entire earth the spiritual Israel of God, the church.

As the unique nation of Israel was consummated in Christ, so Israel's possession of the land of Palestine as a unique location in the world, was also consummated. The nature of the faith of the people in the Son of God now points them toward the future where they will be taken into a new heavens and earth (2 Peter 3:12). Their hope is far beyond the land of Palestine. They have hope for a new future because the promised Blessing that came from the seed of Abraham **was fulfilled.**

God had given the Canaanites over four hundred years to get their act together. If they did not, then they had to be eradicated from the land. Unfortunately, they persisted in becoming as those who lived during the days of Noah. And because they would not vacate the land after four hundred years while Israel was being prepared as a nation in Egypt, it was time for them to suffer the same in-time judgment from God that came upon the wicked world in the days of Noah.

Since the Canaanites would not remove themselves from the land, God had to remove them with the army of Joshua. They were removed for the purpose of providing for Israel a land sanctuary wherein God would preserve a segment of humanity who believed in the one true and living God. It would be these people whom God would prepare to receive the Blessing that had been promised to Abraham centuries before the release of the Israelites from Egyptian captivity, long before Israel even existed as a nation of people.

- 15. T or F:** God intended that the Israelites possess the land of promise until Jesus comes again at the end of time.
- 16. T or F:** When the promised Blessing came into the world, and fulfilled His redemptive purpose on the cross, then there was no more a need to preserve Israel in the promised land.

— A NEW FUTURE —

When a society ceases being able to produce believers for eternal dwelling, then it has given up its right to exist.

Now consider this for a moment. If the land promise that was made to Abraham was not fulfilled, then there would have been no sanctuary in which to preserve a culture of faith to receive the promised Blessing. If the wicked culture of the world during the days of Noah was allowed to continue on earth without end, then the Blessing that was later promised to Abraham would have come into a wicked world that was characteristic of the wicked society of Sodom and Gomorrah. As that culture of wickedness rejected righteous Lot, they would have likewise rejected the coming of the Blessing. The Blessing would have also been reject as Noah as He, too, preached a message of righteousness and faith. And since the wicked cultures of both Noah and Lot's generations did not receive either Noah or Lot, then what makes us think that such wicked people would have received the incarnate Son of God. They did not accept Him even though He was raised from the dead (See Luke 16:31).

Many places of the world today we are experiencing the same rejection that both Noah and Lot experienced. The majority of the people of the world today have no interest in accepting Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

All this finds substance in God's statement to the serpent (Satan) after Adam and Eve introduced sin into the world: ***"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He will bruise your head, and you will bruise His heel"*** (Genesis 3:15).

Therefore, in order for the promise of Genesis 3:15 to be fulfilled at some time in human history, the wicked civilization of Noah's time had to go. The wicked societies of Sodom and Gomorrah, and

the cities around them, also had to go. The wicked Canaanites in the land of Palestine had to go. All these wicked civilizations that would in some way affect God's intentions of crushing the head of Satan through the redemptive actions of His only begotten Son, had to go.

On the other hand, Israel, as God's vehicle of faith, had to be preserved. Israel had to be preserved in order that the Blessing, who would come into the world for the salvation of the world, would be received by a people of faith. And thus, there were people of faith in existence on earth at the time of the incarnation of the Son of God. Of these people, there were at first twelve recipients, then one hundred and twenty, and then three thousand, five thousand, and beyond into all the world (See Acts 17:6).

If the world culture at the time of the fulfillment of the promise that was made to Abraham was as it was during the times of Noah, Lot and the Canaanites, then there would have been no such thing as a people of faith who would receive the One who would crush the head of Satan. The Blessing would have simply come into a wicked world, been executed as some religious fanatic, and then the world would have continued on in its wickedness as it was during the days of Noah. There would have been no new future for humanity.

The Blessing could have come into a wicked world as in Noah's generation, but there would have been no such thing as disciples of faith who would carry on with the gospel mission of the Son of a one true and living God. If there were no Israel, all the world would certainly have been as that which was culturally characteristic of the wickedness that prevailed in the days of Noah, Lot, and Joshua as he led the seed of Abraham into the promised land of milk and honey.

In cultures of such wickedness, there would simply have been no receptivity for the incarnate Son of God and His sacrificial offering. Jesus would have simply been some religious leader who came and

went in a world of wickedness. He would have had no disciples of faith who would carry on with His mission. It would have been useless for Him to convince some people to be His disciples since no one would listen to the message of His disciples. Even if He had only two disciples as Noah and Lot, a wicked world would have rejected them.

All the preceding would certainly confirm the truth of what the Holy Spirit stated in **2 Peter 2:9**:

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment (See 2 Pt 2:10).

God delivered those who had faith in the fact that He would bring a new future. And such He has done through the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, *“we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells”* (2 Peter 3:13).

- 17. T or F:** Though the society of the world becomes as it was in Genesis 6:5, we would expect that people would still obey the gospel.
- 18. T or F:** In order for God to continue His mission to send His Son into the world in the centuries to come, except for Noah’s family, the entire generation of Noah’s day had to be eradicated from off the face of the earth.
- 19. T or F:** The nation of Israel was only a national vehicle through which God would send His Son into the world.
- 20. T or F:** Regardless of how wicked a society may become, God can still deliver His people from wickedness.



CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. What was God’s purpose in creating the nation of Israel through the seed of Abraham?
2. Why were the Israelites taken into Assyrian and Babylonian captivity?
3. What was God’s purpose in bringing a remnant of Israelites back from captivity into the land of promise?
4. Why did the prophet Ezra call for the remnant of returning Jews to put away their foreign wives?
5. Why were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed?
6. Why did God eradicate the world’s civilization that existed before the flood of Noah’s day?
7. What made Abraham different from the society in which he

lived in Ur of the Chaldeas?

8. Why were the Canaanites to be moved out of the land of Canaan when the Israelites were to be move in?
9. In view of Genesis 6:5, what was the purpose of the Sinai Law?
10. Why was the nation of Israel to be dissolved when the Son of God came into the world?
11. In reference to the incarnational redemption of the Christ, what was the new future to anyone who was of Jewish heritage in the first century?
12. In reference to one having obeyed the gospel today, what is their new future?

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