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Character of Adam (Genesis 1-3)

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Intro to the Old Testament

Historical

- Adam (about 4000 BC)
- Noah
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (about 2000 BC)
- Joseph (takes Israel to Egypt as less than 100 people)
- Moses (takes them out of Egypt after 400 years as a half million people)
- Joshua (takes them into the Promise Land)
- Judges concluding with the last judge who is Samuel the Prophet
- People ask Samuel for a King and he gives them Saul so they become a kingdom
- Saul, David, Solomon (about 1000 BC)
- After Solomon, the kingdom is split in half (Israel in the north, Judah in the south)
- All of the kings of Israel are evil, Most of the kings of Judah are evil
- This is a time of spiritual darkness and distance from God for Israel and during this time is when God sends all the prophets to try and guide the people back (800-400BC)
- Then Israel and Judah are both taken captive – Israel by Assyria and Judah by Babylon
- After 70 years, they return and rebuild the temple and the walls of Jerusalem
- Then there is the period of the Maccabees when a guy named Judas Maccabeus leads several revolts against the Roman empire
- The last 400 years BC are silent without any prophets and the people are eagerly waiting the Messiah
- The Old Testament concludes with the birth and ministry of John the Baptist who is the forerunner of Christ and receives Christ

Books

- Torah/Pentateuch/Books of Moses/Law of Moses – 5 books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)
- History – Joshua, Judges, Ruth, ½ Samuel, ½ Kings, ½ Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Tobit, Judith, ½ Maccabees

- Prophets – 4 major, 12 minor
 - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
 - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Genesis

- Genesis is the key to understanding the rest of the Bible – in it we see the relationship of God and man, the fall of man, the plan of salvation, etc.
- Genesis is split in two parts – Ch 1-11 is called Prehistory, 12-50 History
- For easy remembering you can say 10 chapters of prehistory, 10 Abraham, 10 Isaac, 10 Jacob, 10 Joseph. Even though it's not exactly that.
- Author is Moses – even if other scholars now have different theories, Christ Himself said the author was Moses when He quotes it and says “Moses said” or “Moses wrote”
- How did Moses know?
- Everyone back then would pass down their story to their child.
- Revelation of the Holy Spirit – Moses did not write these books alone but was guided by the Holy Spirit. We cannot say that the Holy Spirit wrote these books without Moses or that Moses wrote them without the Holy Spirit

Genesis 1

- “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”
 - this is the main message or the main truth of this chapter. Some people will say “oh he said God created heaven and earth but then in verse 2 He creates heaven...” but that's not how it works. Verse 1 is not talking about how or when or days – it's revealing to us a truth. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”
 - St John continues on the words of Moses. Moses says “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” and John gives us the secret behind it – Who actually made the world.
 - “In the beginning God created...” – means God was there before the beginning. “In the beginning was the Word” – means that the Word already existed at the beginning
 - Many people these days do not believe this one basic truth. I'll tell you a story – a Christian guy invited over an Atheist guy for dinner. And he made him a beautiful deek roumi. And he said “let me tell you something? No one made this deek roumi.” So the guy says “what do you mean?” – “No one made it. No one cooked it or roasted it or anything.” – “Oh so you bought it from the store...” – “No I didn't buy it, it's just like this” – “You didn't make it, nor your wife, nor did you buy it... you want me to believe that? That's ridiculous!” – “You're surprised because someone HAD to have created the deek roumi, and this whole entire universe you say that no one created it? Then your words are ridiculous.”
 - If you believe that this world was created, then there must be a creator and He must be God. Who is God? That's what Genesis will answer for us.
- “The earth was without form, and void”

- he is not talking about the physical earth (since that comes later) but rather the entire universe. This is all before there is heaven, earth, stars. There was nothing
- **“and darkness was on the face of the deep”**
 - He says something about everything Moses said, now scholars write books affirming it. For example, scholars nowadays agree that light came after water (as this verse indicates). “That by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that existed perished, being flooded with water” (2 Peter 3:5) – So this is attested to by Moses, by modern scholarship, and by St Peter
- **“And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”**
 - Water and Spirit? Baptism. In baptism, when the Holy Spirit descends on the water, new life emerges.
- **“Then God said”**
 - God spoke a word, and Who is the Word of God? “Co-creator with the Father” (Liturgy of St Gregory)
- **“Let there be light”**
 - the first thing of Creation is Light – billions of years before the land, before the Creation of the Sun even.
- **“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.”**
 - This is the reconciliation between religion and science. Religion says “God created light” – science says “light came at a certain time” – but this is the reconciliation. That God said “let there be light” and there was light. Science might say “there was light and then from the light we got planets and from those we got...” – our Bible says the same thing, but at every step it has “God said.”
- **“And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.”**
 - Since the Sun is not created yet, it cannot be that these days are 24hr. The word “day” here means “period of time” In 2 Peter, he says “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” – God’s time is different.
 - How about the words evening and morning? Scholars nowadays agree that in the history of the universe, there was probably million of years of darkness followed by millions of years of light followed by millions of years of darkness, etc.
- **“Then God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.”**
 - that means water was already there... again, scholars agree with this statement and state that water was always there
- **“Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.”**
 - As we know today, on earth, all of the water is connected and the land seems to have come up out of it. The seven oceans are all one large body of water.

- “Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth’; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the third day.”
 - We still don’t have a sun!!! The grass and trees were important because they release oxygen. Without them, there cannot be life (whether animals or humans).
 - The way that God created the trees is in a way that He doesn’t need to physically form each one – but each tree has fruits and those fruits have seeds and when the fruit is ripe it falls off the tree and its seeds plant a new tree. And the whole world can be populated with trees.
- “Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth’; and it was so.”
 - So that means there was still chaos between day and night. They needed to be divided. Instead of millions of years of darkness, millions of years of light, etc. Now we will see days, years, seasons, etc.
- “Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.”
 - This is a little bit of an old language to call sun the “greater light” and moon the “lesser light”
- “Then God said, ‘Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.’ So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, 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.’ So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.”
 - So the first of all animals were fish and sea creatures. Scientific scholarship agrees with this
 - Then there were birds
 - “Kind” refers to classifications now (kind, domain, species, etc)
 - Even within the animals, they are like the trees – they can multiply on their own
- “Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind’; and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.”
 - Now the land animals (after the water animals)
 - Again, multiply on their own
 - Before Adam, were billions of years. Adam is the most important of all these things – and Adam is the most important to God (as the Gospel says – Adam, son of God). It’s like when a husband and wife find they are pregnant, they spend all these nine

months preparing for the baby – doing a shower, getting lots of gifts, preparing the nursery, buying diapers and baby food and toys. And THEN the baby comes. The earth, sun, moon, stars, seas, plants, animals, fish were all prepared and THEN Adam was created.

- Remember the Liturgy of St Gregory “Because of the multitude of Your tender mercies, You have brought me into existence when I was not. You have raised heaven as a roof for me, and established the earth for me to walk upon. For my sake, You have bound the sea. For my sake, You have manifested the nature of animals. You have subjected all things under my feet. You have not left me in need of any of the works of Your honor. You are He who formed me, and laid Your hand upon me, and inscribed in me the image of Your authority. You have placed in me the gift of speech, and opened for me Paradise to enjoy” – This is the story of Genesis 1 and 2 (and keeps going to Genesis 3)
- “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness’”
 - Us and Our. This is interesting because Hebrew is like English where if I am speaking I will say “Let me make”
 - I cannot say, as an individual, “Let Us” or man in “Our” image. So we see the Trinity right here in Genesis 1.
 - The image and likeness of God was not mentioned in any other Creation
- “let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
 - So God created man as having dominion over all animals and earth. God created man as king over all of creation. Nowadays, people are scared of animals – scared of a mouse! But back then, man had dominion.
- “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
 - This is very hard to understand, but St Paul helps when he writes “[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.” (Colossians 1:15) – St Athanasius says it too
 - Who is older? Adam or Christ?
 - Christ, of course, in His divinity and timelessness.
 - But, in the flesh, Adam is older
 - But God, in His foreknowledge, knew how Christ would be incarnate, and so created Adam in the image of Christ. We usually say “Christ came in the image of Adam (of man)” but in reality, Christ is older and Adam was created in the image of Christ.
 - This is why St Paul always juxtaposes Adam and Christ
 - We call Christ the Second Adam
 - As Christ said “before Abraham, I AM.”
 - The image of God is more well understood in the New Testament
 - According to Our likeness
 - Likeness means “to be like” God
 - Image is different from likeness... image is what leads to likeness. We want to obtain His likeness.
 - When sin entered, it messed up the path to likeness. But the image was still there!

- Why does he repeat it three times? “Let Us make man in Our image... so God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
 - This is something really big; really important
 - There is a fundamental difference between animals and humans, and this is it. So is it possible for animals to become human? How can an animal which was not created in the image of God become a human? Impossible.
 - Science rejects the idea of evolution of animals to humans. That’s why it’s still called “Theory” of Evolution.
 - Man alone is son of God, in the image of God
 - “male and female He created them” - creation of female was not an afterthought. It wasn’t a mistake. Moses is telling us “mankind” means male and female. Later he will explain to us HOW God made woman out of man, but for now he is affirming that male and female are part of the original design for mankind.
- "Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ And God said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food’; and it was so.”
 - This is one similarity between man and animals... “be fruitful and multiply” so you might say man is an animal... but the difference is the next part. “Fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over...”
 - In the Arabic/Hebrew/Greek, sometimes the “you” is plural and sometimes it’s singular... this is because Adam and Eve are two people, but because of marriage they are one flesh... similar to the Trinity. Three in one. And if you want to understand the Trinity, love your wife!
- “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”
 - We can contemplate on nature and see God’s beauty and artistry, but if we contemplate on mankind, and look into ourselves we see that God is even more beautiful than we can know
- “Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.”
 - From the perspective of creation, Creation is done. But from the perspective of progression, of course the creation will continue to grow and prosper and move around etc.
- “And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.”
 - Sabbath
 - The important word is “ended His work”
 - What is “Rested” - did God get tired? Everything the Bible told us is “God said” - did He get tired of talking? Of course not. Rested means “rejoiced” or “celebrated” - He stopped the work of Creation and started the work of Shepherding. So the day of the Sabbath is a day of God’s rejoicing and celebrating in His creation, and when does that day end? It doesn’t. We are living in the seventh day. See how long it has been

since Adam? We're still in the same day!

- Moses will come and say "Keep the Sabbath holy" - what does that mean? Did God get tired? No! He is happy with mankind! So when Christ came and saw that the Jews understood it wrong, He said to them "My Father has been working until now, and I too am working." (John 5:17)
- God stopped the work of Creation because after creating man, there is nothing better! He created man in His own image! What can be better? He is happy with this and joyful in this.
- It should have been in the OT the day that people take a day off and rejoice in God and pray and thank God. But the Jewish changed the Sabbath to be a day of work - working hard to not do any work.
- When Christ healed on the Sabbath, He began the process of breaking the laws of man (of Pharisees) to restore the Sabbath to its former glory - a day of rejoicing.
 - "And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward." Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent. And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him." (Mark 3)
 - "Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go. Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" And they could not answer Him regarding these things." (Luke 14)
 - Christ tried to appeal to their humanity - most of the Jews thought "Saturday Sunday any day of the week just heal him" and rejoiced when he was healed, but the Pharisees were mad.
 - Which of you if your ox fell would stop and think about the Sabbath or not the Sabbath? No one! Same when I see my children in pain
- Mankind instead of making God happy and giving God rest on the Sabbath, he made God sad. So God told him fine - keep the Sabbath holy and I will fix your mistake.
- The Prophecies say "in that day in that day" - Psalms talk about *another* day - "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it" - but the Sabbath did not have rejoicing or being glad back then - it was a day of remembering sin, death, our problem. So the Sabbath had an issue - it was the day that sin and death entered the world. So God sent the Second Adam to give us a new day, a new creation, and a new celebration. So Saturday has rejoicing in the Creation, but sorrow over the entrance of death. And Sunday has rejoicing in God and His economy of salvation.

- Coptic rite says – no prostrations or abstinence on Saturday and Sunday... why? Because Saturday and Sunday are days of rejoicing. Rejoicing in the Creation, rejoicing in the economy of salvation.
- “Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”
 - So the Seventh day God rested FROM Creation but He did not rest from the Shepherding of His people. Like a mother who after she gives birth she rests – she rests from pregnancy, but she has not rested from motherhood. She will still take care of her new baby.

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Genesis 2

- “This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created”
 - So now Moses is going to review with us the Creation, but in a summarized way while also giving us some different details
- “In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens”
 - This confirms for us that a “day” is not 24hr period. Because he JUST said that it was six days and now he’s saying “the day” – so it confirms for us that the word “day” just refers to a period of time
- “before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground”
 - So here we are getting a detail we didn’t have in chapter 1 - that the plants came and there wasn’t any rain yet
 - And the Fathers take this verse from a spiritual perspective – that if you want to bear fruit in your spiritual life, it requires rain from heaven (God’s grace) and it requires hard work on your part. Both are needed. So the rain symbolizes the grace of God coming from heaven and the tilling the ground represents man’s hard work.
- “But a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground”
- “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being”
 - So in chapter 1 the focus was on God’s image – but now it’s the how. HOW did God create Adam.
 - Adam came from the dust of the ground and this is important for later
 - All animals came from the dust of the ground but only Adam received the breath of life from God. So even if Adam has similarities with animals (created from dust of the ground, called to multiply and fill the earth), there is still a fundamental difference (breath of life, image of God).
 - “And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam was a living being.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.” (1 Corinthians 15:45)
 - There is a first Adam and a last Adam

- The first Adam – his special feature is that he is a living being... he has life but in him is not the source of life. but what happened to this living being? Death entered it! So all of his children are dust and to dust they shall return.
- The last Adam – a life-giving spirit. The authority of life is within Him. He is the source of life.
- So we all have two origins – the dust like the animals, and the breath of life like Adam. But now we have a third origin – the spirit of God (Holy Spirit).
- “However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.” (1 Corinthians 15:46-49)
- **“The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden”**
 - Many people have argued about where Eden is, but the understanding now is that it’s in modern day Iraq near Babylon – a very fertile place, a place with lots of trees and green. Some say Eden was in heaven and Adam fell from heaven but that is not a Christian understanding. Eden was on earth and Adam was created on earth, and Adam was flesh.
 - Some people think that Marriage was the result of the fall – but that is not accurate because Adam and Eve were flesh and were called to multiply before any mention of sin. Marriage was called by God and holy (“be fruitful and multiply”) BEFORE the fall.
- **“and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.”**
 - God gave Adam many good things to eat
- **“The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden”**
 - This is the first mention of the tree of life, and the tree of life will be with us until the last chapter of the book of Revelation
 - The fact that life has a tree. Eat it and you live for eternity – don't eat it you die for eternity. Where is it? In the middle of the garden (the most beautiful part of the garden). And soon we’ll see that God does not allow them to eat from that tree after they sin. But then Christ comes and says “I came to you from heaven” - “I am the true vine” - “I am the bread of life” so those who understand will know He is the Tree of Life. And then in Revelation “You see the tree of life? It bore 12 fruits and the leaves of the tree were for healing!”
 - The Tree of Life was a symbol of Christ in the midst of the garden. Usually when we mention “in the midst” it references Christ “Emmanuel our God is now in our midst with the glory...”
 - Life is tied to the Source of Life which is Christ
- **“and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”**
 - He doesn’t tell us where this tree was
 - Does this mean that Adam has no knowledge? Of course he has knowledge. He knows the animals and he knows their names and he knows his wife – but this tree distinguishes the knowledge of good from the knowledge of evil.
 - There is knowledge of evil that leads to death – any sin starts with the knowledge of evil.

- “Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden”
 - If you read Revelation 21, 22, you’ll find very similar imagery. A river that leads to the Tree of Life.
 - The river (water) typically represents baptism; tree of life represents Eucharist. So Adam from the beginning has the opportunity and the nomination for eternal life – baptism and Eucharist.
 - “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive” (John 7:37-39)
 - He who is searching for Adam’s river, come to Me and he will drink. And John explains it to mean the Holy Spirit
- “And from there it parted and became four riverheads”
 - Four represents four corners of the world (NSEW)
 - So this river of life will reach everyone in the world if they want to drink from it
- “The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stones are there.”
 - These represent the fruits of the Spirit – those who drink of the water will receive different virtues. Some gold, some bdellium, some onyx stones. All of these are precious stones.
- “The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.”
 - All of these are about the water reaching the whole world
- “Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.”
 - Adam is the one who tends and keeps the garden. It is his garden and he is like the “ruler” of the garden.
- “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 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.”
 - The first law is given here. Genesis is all “beginnings” – beginning of Creation, beginning of man knowing God, beginning of life, beginning of the law.
 - The first law is given in such an easy way... eat whatever you want... except this one tree. Sounds easy, right? And this tree brings with it a new word... evil. So far in Creation we saw that everything was good. And at the end everything was very good. But now we see this new word – evil. And unfortunately this word comes on the tail-end of the word “good.” The knowledge of good and evil. Like any sin that we do and we think it’s colorful “it has a good part and a bad part”
 - And the consequence of eating from this tree is death. So here in the beginning we see a link between the law and life. And we see it again when the man asks Christ what should I do to obtain eternal life? And Christ said “keep the law.”
 - When God gives a law, He gives it so that man can have eternal life. If Adam kept the law he would have ate from the tree of life, drank from the river and lived forever. The point of the law is not to punish those who break it. God created man to live not to die.
 - But God gave man the tree and the law so that he has free-will. He gave man free-will to reproduce. Free-will to rule the garden of Eden and name the animals. God is

free and the image of God means free-will. For man to be free, he must have choices, and to have choices there must be a law. So that when man follows the law, he has responded to God's love by his own free-will.

- God wanted Adam and Eve to live with Him forever in the garden, eating and drinking and having kids and being happy
- This is why Christ said "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."
- Law = Choice = Freedom = Love = Sonship
- If he doesn't follow the law, then he doesn't love God and if he doesn't love God, he separates himself from God, and if he separates from God, he separates from the Source of Life (remember that Adam did not have life on his own but from God) and this is death. Not following the law is what we now call SIN
- God is an ocean of water. We made a hole in the sand or like a little tunnel/passage, and some water came into it. This is Adam. He has life (water). But if you took a rock and you blocked the tunnel, you block the source of the water; the source of life.
- "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone;'"
 - See how much God loves Adam? He gave Adam all these animals, and He, Himself is with Adam. God's presence is there. And yet He says "it is not good that man should be alone?" But God – You are with Adam 24/7 and taking care of him... how is he alone? But God says "no he needs someone comparable to him. Someone of his own nature"
 - Eve was a gift from God. Marriage is a gift from God to mankind. God wanted Adam to learn sharing – sharing life, sharing garden, etc.
- "I will make him a helper comparable to him."
 - Helper – not servant
 - Comparable – she is equal. Equal in rank, equal in value.
- "Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him."
 - The importance of marriage to the human nature... some may say "I don't want to get married, I am married to my work" – but your work is not comparable to you. Adam worked in naming all the creatures, bringing each one and naming it, but the work was not enough. He needed someone comparable to him.
- "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept;"
 - Why didn't God just create Eve out of the ground? Because God has already rested from the work of Creation! It's the seventh day.
 - He wanted to convey the message to Adam that your wife is from you – she is a piece of you. You must love her because she is from your body.
 - If God created her from dust, she would be a separate creation. But God wanted her to be one with man.
 - Did Adam used to sleep before this? We don't know. But this was a deep sleep so God could perform the surgery as they call it – they call it the first surgery.
- "and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place."
 - Arabic colloquial: They used to say "they took her from his ribs" because if he took her from his head, she would be "above his head" (Arabic colloquial meaning "higher

than him”) and if he took her from his feet, she would be “below his feet” (ta7t regleh – Arabic colloquial meaning “lower than him” comparable to “he would walk all over her”) – but no, He took her from Adam’s rib so that she would be his equal. Neither above him, nor below him. They are equal. And the rib is closest to the heart, so she could be close to his heart and he loves her

- **“Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.”**
 - We still do this today in the rite of the Crowning: Abouna, as ambassador or representative of Christ, takes the bride and presents her to the groom. As the hymn says “receive O bridegroom this bride who is yours, Jesus Christ has given her to you, at the hand of our father the priest he has presented her to you, and blessed you both in His holy name”
- **“And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’”**
 - See how the sacrament of marriage is made so clear to us from the beginning. If everyone understood this verse, there would be no marital problems.
 - If my hand is tired or injured, I’m not going to throw it away – I’m going to lift it up, treat it, care for it because it is weak or sick. If I and my wife treat each other in this way, there will be an understanding of love and unity and one-ness. We are one from the beginning from Genesis.
 - St Paul then uses this same word to describe Christ and the Church.
 - “So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” (Ephesians 5:28-33)
- **“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”**
 - Christ used this verse to defend against divorce and extended them with His own words “therefore what God has joined together let not man separate.”
 - Joined to his wife of course means physical relations, so God is blessing marital relations. Physical relations ONLY within marriage between a husband and wife
- **“And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”**
 - This is like when little children are naked – they don’t have any idea of shame, they just have an idea of love.

Genesis 3

- **“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.”**
 - The serpent as an animal was not more cunning than other animals, but the devil used the serpent.
 - Revelation 20:2 calls Satan “that serpent of old”

- “And he said to the woman,”
 - This is the first interaction we see between man and animal; between man and devil.
 - It started with woman... why woman?
 - Because Eve was weaker?
 - Because Eve was away from her husband and the serpent took advantage?
 - Because Eve likes to talk and Adam doesn't and the serpent wanted to talk?
 - We don't know!
- “And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”
 - First of all, the devil always starts with a lie... did God really say “don't eat?” – God didn't say that! God said “eat of everything except!” – but he says it in a way that makes you want to answer.
 - See how cunning the serpent is? Any response to that question would lead to more questions or continue the conversation. The only valid response would have been for her to flee!
 - When we have a thought of complaining, the best medicine is to flee. Not to dwell on it or try to answer it or try to justify it. This is why Christ said “It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs” – God's law is not for discussion with the devil, with the dogs!
- “And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”
- “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You shall not surely die.’”
 - He just told the woman the exact opposite of what God told them!
 - This happens to us every day
 - God says: “watch out this will make you sad” devil says “this will make you happy”
 - God says: “This leads to death” devil says “lead to death why?”
 - As soon as Eve heard this, she should have turned around. This is the opposite of what God said!
- “For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
 - He made it seem as if God is afraid of Adam and Eve's eyes being opened!
 - The devil is planting seeds of pride – pride is how the devil fell because he wanted to be higher than God. And this is how he wanted man to fall
 - Man always wants to take God's place...
 - “I will decide what's wrong or right”
 - “I will do” and “I will bring” and “I will take”
 - “I will run this place”
 - Three sins of man that Christ conquered at the Temptation
 - Sin of the stomach “eat it even though it's not allowed” – “make this stone to bread”
 - Sin of the eye “woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes” – “See all these kingdoms? I'll give them to you”
 - Sin of pride “you will be like God, knowing good and evil” – “throw yourself so the angels will catch you let the world see!”

- Christ conquered all three whereas Adam fell in all three
- “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes,”
 - Sin brings sin. Converse with the devil and you find grey areas or sin starts to look pleasant.
 - The tree was in the garden all along – how come they never saw it good for food or pleasant to the eyes?? Because there wasn’t a serpent, a complain, a temptation, a sin. This is why Christ said “the lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.” (Matthew 6:22-23)
 - Eve’s eye started to darken here
- “and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.”
 - Eve fell before Adam and Saint Paul makes this point clear (1 Timothy 2). And this is why we love and honor and venerate St Mary so highly. Because St Mary was the opposite of Eve!
 - Eve heard God’s commandment “you shall surely die” and said “ehhh serpent says I won’t.” But St Mary heard God’s commandment and said “Let it be to me according to your word”
 - And as sin entered through Eve, the incarnation and work of salvation came through St Mary
 - And we will see now how sin complicates and distorts and confuses EVERYTHING in the coming verses
- “Then the eyes of both of them were opened”
 - The devil said “your eyes will be opened!” and he said it like it was a good thing... but it was not a good thing
- “and they knew that they were naked;”
 - Their eyes started to have evil! Their simplicity as children left them.
 - There is “opening of eyes” that is good – like those who see saints or like
 - There is “opening of eyes” that is evil – to see evil everywhere... people who can find a dirty joke or make a sinful reference from any sentence
 - This is why Christ said “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin but because you see, you are guilty”
 - When their eyes were opened, they became blind – unable to see God
- “and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.”
 - Since then God hates the fig tree
 - They tried to solve their problem on their own with fig leaves as if these fig leaves will cover their sin – no! they are still naked! They are still blind! It’s a physical solution to a spiritual problem. It’s like trying to make the outside look good when the inside is ugly.
 - Our solution is in Christ, who is crucified to clothe us – “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27)
 - Christ cursed the fig tree – the tree that made Adam and Eve think they weren’t naked when they were naked.
- “And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the

trees of the garden.”

- The first time they encounter God after the fall, they hide from him... see what sin does? Before the fall, I'm sure every time they encountered God they were happy. But sin distances us from God
- “Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’”
 - This is a very important question for all of us. Where are you? Are you hiding among the trees of the garden? Are you hiding behind some fig leaves? Are you hiding behind your wife? Where are you? Why don't you want to sit with me? Why are you running from me?
 - Of course, God knows the answer. But this is the question for all of us
- “So he said, ‘I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid’”
 - Since when?
- “‘because I was naked’”
 - Since when?!?!?
- “and I hid myself.”
 - These are all the complications of sin. Sin complicates our lives. Makes us afraid of God, wanting to hide from God, gives us a feeling of nakedness.
- “And He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked?’”
 - What does God want from Adam?
 - To Confess!!! Come on, confess!!! Confess and we'll figure it out!
- “‘Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?’”
 - Notice God didn't give him the name of the tree. He gave him the law. Did you break the law? There was nothing special about that tree to make it sin – but breaking the law.
 - And all God wants is for Adam to confess. But unfortunately, Adam continues in his sin...
- “Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’”
 - A day ago you were saying “bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh” and now you are blaming the woman and not just the woman... the woman whom YOU gave me. He is trying to bringing God into the sin with him.
 - Before the fall, Adam loves his wife as himself and would give her everything. After the fall, he separates himself from her “the woman whom YOU gave me” and he blames her.
 - But in the New Testament we will see that the husband is the head of the wife and it is the same for Adam. Eve's sin is not greater because she sinned first. Adam's sin is greater because he was responsible for her – because he should have been her head and her guide to tell her “no we can't do that” when she wanted to do something wrong. But he didn't. This is why God went to Adam and not Eve.
- “And the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”
 - No one replies with “I have sinned forgive me” – no one is willing to take blame. Everyone is passing the blame around until it lands on the serpent
- “So the Lord God said to the serpent: ‘Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.’”

- Serpents don't eat dust... but who is dust? Mankind is dust! So you gave yourself to the devil, see now what the devil will do to you. And he's about to tell man "dust you are and to dust you shall return"
- "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman,"
 - Enmity is between man and devil. Not between man and man. We should not have enmity with one another.
- "And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."
 - Why didn't He say "the seed of man?" because He will come only from woman
 - Christ will defeat the devil and sin and death
 - He who is living a spiritual and heavenly life, he will step on the serpents head. But he who lives a life in the cares of the world (i.e. his feet touching the ground), the serpent will bruise his heel.
- "To the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children;'"
 - Birth and reproduction was going to come either way – but here He is saying that birth will come with sorrow and conception and pain – as a reminder of sin. Sorrow because you know that you are bringing a child into death – the child that is born will grow up and die. Because she knows that death is in the world.
 - They say this is why babies cry when they are born – because they are coming into the kingdom of death. So she's in pain and screaming and the baby is screaming and crying... and the moment of life becomes a moment of death. The moment of joy becomes a moment of sadness.
- "Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."
 - After the fall, there is jealousy and there is envy – she wants to rule over him and he wants to rule over her. But God's plan was not that. God's plan was mutual love and joy and respect and equality.
- "Then to Adam He said, 'Because you have heeded the voice of your wife,'
 - Adam's sin was that he listened to the voice that told him to do something wrong
- "and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': 'Cursed is the ground for your sake;'"
 - He did not curse Adam – because He loves Adam. If He didn't love Adam He would just pronounce a curse on Adam. But what does God curse? First the serpent, then the ground.
- "In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life."
 - Every time a woman gives birth she is in pain in remembrance of the sin
 - But every time a man had to work he toiled and was in pain
 - You want to get kill this pain? Return to God and repent
- "Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field."
 - You're no longer going to eat from the fruit of the trees that you didn't have to work for, but now you will work and in your hard work you will get herbs with thorns and thistles
 - For Christ they made a crown of thorns and thistles (without understanding) from the ground that is cursed so that He would destroy the curse on the ground
 - When Christ was born the angels said "peace on earth" (or "peace on the ground")

- “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken;”
 - But there are two origins! There is dust and there is the breath of life!
 - Well he already lost life with the fall
 - And now he will return to dust
- “For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”
 - Signs of God’s love to them
 - He did not curse Adam or Eve – punished but not cursed
 - Sign of promise from the Seed of Eve
- “And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.”
 - The name Eve “mother of all living” – even though she was giving birth to death
- “Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.”
 - When a father scolds his child but then takes the child in his arms and hugs them – this is what God was doing. He killed animals and took their skin to make tunics for them.
 - You can imagine Adam and Eve’s response – God do you still love us after all of this? You’re not disgusted by us? You’re still our Father?
 - God did not leave them in their nakedness. But instead showed them His love. And they saw an animal being killed instead of them and with his blood they are covered. They started to have hope – God will save us. God will fix it for us. My deeds were not enough – God will take care of it.
- “Then the Lord God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil.’”
 - Has man become like God? No – but God knows evil in a way that He would never do it. But man knew evil in a way of experience.
 - So since Adam knows the way of evil, now, it would not be good for him to live forever.
- “And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”
 - Taking away the Tree of Life was a grace given by God, not a punishment. Taking it away because if Adam ate from it, he would live in death forever. But God wanted Adam to die in the flesh so that he could be saved and live forever. It was not a punishment, but a grace.
 - The same way that we do not allow someone who has not repented to receive the Eucharist. Not out of punishment, but out of grace – lest they receive it unwillingly.
- “therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”
 - Like the little deacon who holds a candle next to the Eucharist these days (but of course, it should be an older deacon as if holding a sword to make sure no one who is not a Christian, and no one who was a heretic receives the Eucharist)
 - The question arises... who are the Cherubim? Where did they come from? The book of Genesis is a book of beginnings (even the word Genesis means “beginning”). So where is the beginning of the angels? When did God create angels? Many of the fathers say God created them on the first day when He created light. Since they are

beings of light

- Romans 5:12-21 – now we can understand what St Paul was talking about
 - “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned –”
 - Adam messed up, sin entered world, spread to all men, all men are dead
 - “(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.”
 - Before Moses there was no Law, but all who sinned like Adam also receive Judgment of death. So before Moses there was sin, and after Moses there was sin.
 - “But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.”
 - So if by one man Adam, many died. So also by one man Christ, many will live.
 - “And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification.”
 - “For if by one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)”
 - Death reigned through Adam, life reigns through Christ
 - “Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”
 - “Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

01: Introduction and Genesis 1

https://www.youtube.com/embed/nbQo_zv0yNE

02: Genesis 1

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/YbwZQd7cpjU>

03: Genesis 1-2

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/g1eVDttBOO0>

04: Genesis 3

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/yLiOVybZHUA>

05: Genesis 3

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/eJmWI5QWpAI>

06: Genesis 3-4

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/vtprTE-ZXZ8>

07: Genesis 4-5

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/yyABXXSMRo8>

Genesis 4

- **Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord."**
 - "Knew Eve" – marital relation... some people think the Fall of man was because of a marital relation. Absolutely not. God from the beginning said "reproduce" and said "therefore become one flesh" Many Fathers say that before the fall they didn't need this relationship. They were as children. But after the Fall, they started to have those needs.
 - She bore Cain in pain (see last chapter's notes)
 - "A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world." (John 16:21)
 - This is the first time for a person to name another person
 - The name "Cain" means acquired – in this case she named him Cain because she acquired him from the Lord. So it's so important that when we have a child, we recognize that God gave him to us, that he is God's and that we give him a name as such. This is why we name our children "Mina" and "Kirolos" and "Youssef" and "Monica" and "Mariam" and all of these Christian names.
- **Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.**
 - "Tiller of the ground" is different here from "Farmer"
 - St Didymus the Blind writes "Now, Cain was not called a farmer but a tiller of the soil; he was not as noble as Noah, who is called a farmer, not a tiller."
 - (Read more on this in the Didymus notes)
 - We see here that Abel's occupation is mentioned before Cain's. Because even though Cain was the firstborn, he was not first in occupation. And we see from here that the firstborn in the Old Testament typically loses their firstborn status.
 - Who was firstborn? Cain
 - Who was the favored one? Abel
 - Who was the ancestor of Christ? Seth
 - Ishmael and Isaac; Esau and Jacob; Reuben and Judah; Manasseh and Ephraim; David the youngest of 12 sons; etc.
 - This was a sign of what's to come. In Exodus 4:22, God tells Moses "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord: "Israel is My son, My firstborn."'" So Israel has the firstborn status as God's children... but they will lose it. And it will

go to the Gentiles... it will go to the Christians.

- So in this verse we start to see this theme of the firstborn losing their status as firstborn, and we will continue to see this theme all throughout the Old Testament.
- The firstborn of the flesh, is not necessarily firstborn in spirit. And he who is last according to the flesh, will be first according to the spirit.
- This is why St Paul calls the Church "The church of the firstborn" – not everyone in the church is firstborn of their parents... but it refers to the Church taking the firstborn status.
- Science and Archaeology today always talk about "Hunter – Gatherers" – the tiller and the shepherd. There was not agriculture or manufacturing yet.
- Shepherding usually indicates righteousness (Abel, Abraham, Moses, David, Christ as the Good Shepherd). Because Shepherding indicates taking responsibility. Counting their sheep. Protecting their sheep. David saving his sheep from the lion.
- **And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.**
 - Some Fathers take "process of time" to mean he had been delaying... like when one doesn't want to pray and finally just offers a small prayer "didn't even try"
 - Why didn't God accept this offering?
 - The ground is cursed – Cain is giving the fruits of what is cursed
 - The sacrifice of Abel points to the act that God did with Adam and Eve when He clothed them with animal skins. How did He get animal skins? An animal sacrifice.
 - So the Fathers say that Adam and Eve taught their kids that they should sacrifice an animal to God, as God sacrificed an animal for them.
- **Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.**
 - Cain offered as "wageb" (i.e. a duty or out of obligation) and Abel offered as "mazag" (an offering freely given)
 - And this happens today – in prayers, tithes, liturgies, Bible Readings... are they offerings of habit or are they offerings to God? The widow of the two mites offered two mites but they were the most precious and expensive thing she had (but the rich gave from their excess... the thing I don't need, I'll give it to God. They were Cain).
 - Many times we give to God from "what is left" – that is like Cain
 - What is left of time – the last few min, or whatever time I have left
 - What is left of energy – I spend all my energy working and doing in the world, and come to pray and use what's left
 - What is left of our stuff – Empty the closet and the things we don't like or don't wear: instead of throwing them away, let's donate them
 - But if we give from our best, that is like Abel
 - The beginning of our day given to God (time and energy)
 - Getting new things and nice things for the needy
- **And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering.**
 - Keep in mind God did not punish Cain... He did not send fire from heaven or anything like that. He simply did not take note of Cain's offering.
 - Here we see that Cain did not love God. If he loved God, he would have fixed the situation immediately! But because he did not have love, he fell into something

much worse...

- **And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.**
 - ◦ Why is Cain jealous? All he has to do is come up with a better offering... God did not say Cain was bad or a failure or anything... but jealousy would make Cain say that to himself.
 - There is good jealousy and bad jealousy
 - Good:
 - I find someone praying and say "I too want to pray like that"
 - I find someone giving more than tithes "I too want to increase in my giving"
 - I find someone who serves a lot "I too want to live a life of service"
 - Bad:
 - I find someone with a lot of money "Why did God give *him* a lot of money"
 - And we start to see this jealousy throughout the Bible...
 - Joseph's brothers. Why be jealous? He's the younger brother, his mom died, you all have your moms. He never got to know or feel his mother's love. Nope. Jealousy filled their hearts.
 - Cain was **very angry**
 - When you get angry, ask yourself the question God asks Jonah - "Is it right for you to be angry?" You will find that the answer is no.
 - **Countenance fell**
 - Cain felt he was rejected by God. Did God reject Cain? No! God simply accepted Abel's sacrifice. God did not reject Cain, himself. Even to the point that God will go and find Cain and talk to him.
 - Cain is telling himself "You are a failure. Your brother wants to take your place." - we don't see the serpent, but the serpent is working.
- **So the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?'**
 - The first question God asked man - "Where are you?"
 - The second question God asked man - "Why are you angry?"
 - Cain did not need to be jealous
 - First human ever born!
 - Your name means "Acquired from God"
 - Many Fathers say that Eve thought Cain was the Savior that God talked about when He told the serpent that her Seed would trample him. She thought Cain was the Savior! That he would take them back to Eden
 - Why has your countenance fallen? Why look to the ground? You were made to look to heaven.
 - Cain did not answer that question - so you know he was focused on something else - his anger to Abel. "Behold I stand at the door and knock if **anyone hears my voice** and opens the door I will come in and dine with him and he with me"
- **If you do well, will you not be accepted?**
 - A boy comes home from school and he got a bad grade on the test. 5/10. He's mad and says "the other boy got 10/10". His mom takes him on her lap and says "Why are you angry? He studied more. Study more so you can get 10/10."
 - God is telling him that he still has a chance!

- **And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.**
 - As Christ said: "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." (Matthew 5:21)
 - What is "without a cause"? Can I have a cause?
 - I can be angry at myself because I have not prayed and it causes me to go and pray more.
 - I can be angry at my brother because he is sinning or going in the wrong direction, and out of love for him, I am angry.
 - Cain could have been happy for his brother... he even could have surpassed him.
 - God is telling Cain "I see your heart. I hear your thoughts. You want to get rid of your brother."
 - "But you should rule over it" – You have the authority to say no! You have the authority to tell those thoughts to go away. I created you as a king, not a slave!
 - This verse is the entire definition of Spiritual Warfare. Sin lies at the door. Its desire is for you. But you can rule over it.
 - Whenever you think "life would be easier if xxx wasn't around" or "if xxx wasn't my brother" or "if xxx wasn't my dad" or "if xxx never existed" – your heart is one step closer to Cain's.
- **Now Cain talked with Abel his brother**
 - Cain went in his anger to talk to his brother. If he had talked to God first, and calmed down, his conversation with his brother would have been different.
 - How do we talk to people? Do we talk to people when we are angry? Do we take it out on them?
- **And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.**
 - We went from a sin in Chapter 3 – eating a fruit, to the sin in Chapter 4 – killing of man
 - Sometimes we think we have small sins and say "they won't reach anything" or "they're not a big deal" – but even the smallest things lead to bigger things. Sin leads to sin.
 - The devil is bad. But we give him the chance sometimes – how many people are killed every year? By their siblings, their spouses, their friends... the devil is bad.
- **Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?"**
 - When God asks "Where is your brother?" it means you are responsible for him... where is he in your love? In your care? In your thoughts? Are you paying attention to him? How is his spiritual life?
 - Again, what does God want? For Cain to confess
- **He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"**
 - This is a lie. Cain buried his brother with his own hands to cover his act
 - Lying comes from many reasons, but the two biggest ones are
 - Fear – fear of embarrassment, fear of something they did, etc.
 - For a reward – to receive praise, or honor that doesn't belong to him

- Sin brings sin. Jealousy brought anger brought murder brought lying etc.
 - The devil is not satisfied with one sin. Judas sold Christ – for the devil, that wasn't enough. He pushed Judas to suicide.
- **And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground."**
 - When we raise our children, we teach them to confess their sins. When they do something wrong, they need to tell us. And we make them know that it is wrong.
 - Blood has a voice – has a crying out. And if the blood of Abel has a voice – what do you think the sinless Blood of Christ is saying? This is the point St Paul makes in Hebrews 12 – "You have come to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel."
 - "This is My Blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
- **So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you.**
 - God told Adam "Cursed is the ground for your sake" but when Cain killed, God said "You are cursed from the ground"
 - For Adam it was – work hard so you can eat.
For the man who hates his brother – work hard and you still may not eat and you won't be satisfied with what you eat
 - "You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm;" (Haggai 1:6)
- **A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.**
 - Shouldn't the price of murder be death?
 - God gives Cain an opportunity to repent. Abel will go to paradise – but Cain still needs time to repent
 - If God extends our life it doesn't mean that we are righteous – it means that we need to repent
 - Vagabond (Lost)
 - Most of the people in the world are vagabonds – they're lost. Just wandering. Might get married, get a job, live... but he's lost. And it's because he doesn't know his purpose in life. Doesn't know he was created in God's image, to glorify God, to prepare for an eternal life. He's just focusing on the earthly life. He's just living because he's alive.
 - "Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die" (Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Proverbs, Luke, 1 Corinthians)
 - God's will and plan is for us to love. When you love, you become like God. Love God and love men.
 - When you find yourself lost, you are lacking love. Forget yourself and remember those around you, and you will find your way
- **And Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!"**
 - This sounds like it could be the beginning of repentance!
 - My punishment is too heavy, I cannot bear it in my heart... Christ replies: "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"

- Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.”
 - Feeling of guilt puts blockers in front of your eyes and makes you see things that aren't there... “I am a failure” – “I am hated” – “Everyone hates me”
 - The Lord does not desire the death of a sinner but rather that he returns and lives... it's like imagine a doctor who when someone sick comes to him, he says “get away from me you're sick” – what kind of doctor would this be? No, a doctor goes to those who are sick.
 - There are stories of people who committed a murder and after 20 years, they went and confessed and turned themselves in... even after the lawsuits had closed and people stopped looking for them. Why did they turn themselves in? Because the feeling of guilt was like a prison in their mind that was worse than any prison in the world.
 - Look at how scared Cain is – “Anyone who finds me will kill me” – there's no one around to kill him and no one is gonna find him... but he's terrified.
- And the Lord said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.”
 - If it was me I would say “You deserve it! You brought it upon yourself!” but God is the opposite. He said whoever kills Cain will be avenged seven times more. As if Cain did something good... but God wanted to calm Cain down to bring him to the love of God and to repentance.
- And the Lord set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.
 - What is a mark? A sign?
 - St Athanasius says Christ chose death of the Cross to leave us a sign (The Cross)
- Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden
 - Cain left from his parents and from the presence of the Lord. So he is separating himself from the first family...
 - Someone who makes a mistake might come running to the Church begging for God's mercy. Someone else makes a mistake and runs away from the Church. St John Chrysostom says “the Church is a hospital for sinners not a courthouse.”
 - The family of Adam and Eve symbolizes the first Church. Cain thought he would go to be judged, so he left them and their God. He could have went and his parents would tell him “Repent! Offer a sacrifice to God” but instead he left them.
- And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch
 - Where did his wife come from? (Famous question)
 - Adam and Eve had many more children sons and daughters. And back then in order to populate the earth, it was okay for them to marry their brother or sister until there were many nations.
- And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son – Enoch.
 - This is the first time we hear of a city. And even until we read about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we will see that God does not really like this idea of cities. Cities represent something that is earthly.
 - Cain built a city without God or anyone telling him too. It's as if he now associates himself with the ground... tiller of the ground, killed his brother in the field, buries his

brother in the ground, cursed is the ground to him, built a city on the earth... it's as if he doesn't look up to heaven at all. Many people are like that and don't give God a thought

- What is the name Enoch? Has nothing to do with God
- To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.
 - So all of these are the descendants of Cain, and of course, they don't know who God is. They are living away from Adam and Eve's family. They are learning from Cain who is not mentioning God at all... so they are raised away from God completely.
- Then Lamech took for himself two wives
 - This is against what God said in Genesis 2... so of course they had no idea about God's word or God's law.
- The name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. And 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 harp and flute. And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.
- Then Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, Even a young man for hurting me. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold."
 - Here we start to see an example of the descendants of Cain's behavior... taking multiple wives, murder anyone who hurts them, even killing children, thinking that they will be avenged by God... this becomes the way of the land. This is completely opposite of what God intended for Adam and Eve and humanity.
- And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed."
 - Seth is of course the grandfather of Christ
- And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.
 - This is an indication that Cain's family did not call on the name of the Lord. But Seth and his family were children of God.
 - "For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved'" (Romans 10:13)

Genesis 5

- This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.
 - This is reviewing Genesis 1 of course
- And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.
 - The image and likeness kept going despite the Fall.
 - The image was not lost,

08: Genesis 5-6

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/VGUBB8pqaSM>

Genesis 5

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 - This is reviewing Genesis 1 of course
- And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.
 - The image and likeness kept going despite the Fall. The image was not lost.
- After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; **and he had sons and daughters**. So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.
- Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.
 - What are these big numbers?
 - In the beginning, man was not intended to die. But after the Fall, man began to die but very slowly.
 - And many scholars agree that people in the old days lived much longer than we do. The earth was more pure... the air was clean, the food was clean, not like today. In those days they only ate plants.
 - And we will see in the next chapter that God allows them to eat meat, and He also limits the life of man to 120 years when He finds that the people are living very long times without repenting. Later on it will be less than 100s (in the Psalms)
 - Enosh → Cainin → Mahalel → Jared
 - Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot Enoch.
 - The genealogies usually say “xyz lived xyz years and begot xyz and then died” and continues to the next one. But sometimes they’ll get to a name and stop and say something. So this is a message to us – be careful that you don’t live your life as a name and number. No one remembers Enosh or Mahalel’s names... but we get to Enoch and we all know Enoch.
 - So what gives a man significance in history, and makes him remembered by all? His relationship with God.
 - The genealogy pauses here to tell us about Enoch.

- Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.
- Enoch walked with God – first person this word is said about and it's used twice.
- We don't know anything about Enoch – we know "Enoch walked with God." To the extent that God took him or God "translated him" (Septuagint)
- Let's see where Enoch is mentioned in the New Testament
 - Where did they get this info? Inspired by the Holy Spirit, but also possibly from a Jewish tradition
 - "By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, 'and was not found, because God had taken him'; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:5-6)
 - Someone who knows that God is there and has complete faith that God hears him, would never stop talking to God
 - "Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (Jude 1:14-15)
 - God revealed to Enoch the plan of judgment and Second Coming even those many years ago
 - See what simply walking with God can do for you? That God took him and said "you don't need to die right now"?
- Does this mean it is possible for a man not to die?
 - In Hebrews 9 it says "it is appointed for men to die once" – so every man must die.
 - The Church understands that every person needs to die. And we have Enoch and Elijah that don't die in the Bible but are taken up and translated to God. So they didn't die... but their death was not canceled, it was postponed.
 - If we open Revelation 11, we will read about two witnesses sent by God to preach and they are killed and then resurrected. These are understood by the Church to be Enoch and Elijah
- Walked with God
 - Friend of God – two people walking together are friends
 - "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you."
 - Abraham walked with God and God came down and literally walked with him and said "should I hide what I intend to do from Abraham?" And He told Abraham about Sodom and Gomorrah and Abraham even negotiated

with God. And God told Abraham your children will be in Egypt in hardship 400 years but I will deliver them! This is friendship.

- God wants to be our friend! He is the one that comes to us and says “I want to be your friend”
- “The Lord was with Joseph” – it always says that in Genesis. And it means that Joseph was aware of it! God is with all of us – but how many of us are aware and see God in everything and remember God at all times?

Chapter 6

- Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.
 - Who are the sons of God and the daughters of men?
 - St Luke answers this in his genealogy of Christ “Enosh son of Seth son of Adam son of God”
 - The sons of God are the sons of Seth; the daughters of men are the children of Cain
 - Seth taught his children about God; to love God and to want to be with God – you see it because Enoch came from this line and Noah came from this line
 - Cain did not do that
 - Like when we say “children of God” and “children of the world” – it is not because we are better than them (we are all human) but imagine if a Christian, son of God, went and married someone who did not know “Our Father who art in heaven...” what would be the result? How would the kids be? This is what happened in this generation
 - As you know, the wife can change the husband’s mind... so all these daughters of men, influenced their husbands and before long, no one in the world knew God. The world removed God from everything
 - “of all whom they chose”
 - Children of God, God should choose for them – they always ask God to help them make a decision. We will see this same phrase when we talk about Lot and Abraham because Lot makes the same decision and chooses for himself a land that looks good – and it ended in disaster for them
 - They were beautiful
 - “Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.” (Proverbs 31:30)
 - Yes they were beautiful – but they did not know repentance or prayer or God
- And the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever”
 - God found that there was no good in these people and every generation is worse than their parents. Imagine they are growing up as kids and all they know is bad, wrong, sin. They have completely suppressed their conscience.
 - When someone rejects God, God will try with him – and he will try for one year, two years, ten years, even fifty years. But God will not strive with you forever. If you keep rejecting, rejecting, rejecting... you get to the verse that says “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions” (Romans 1:26) – you reach the point where God

tells you “inta 7or” – but this is a word you never want to hear.

- You are walking towards the devil – I am trying to pull you by your shirt, but you reject it
- The people of that generation had a chance to repent and they didn’t
- Why can’t God strive with man forever? Because man is not immortal.
- For he is indeed flesh
 - Man is as if he is flesh – he rejects the spiritual and the good – he has become carnal like animals. He has rejected the image of God in himself, and preferred the image of flesh like an animal.
 - There are two types of people
 - Those who take seriously the image of God and strive to be like Christ; concerned with the heavenly; with virtues
 - Those who prefer to be like animals – carnal – preferring the desires of the flesh (let us eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die)
 - If he doesn’t like someone he might kill him
 - If he wants something he might steal it
 - He’ll cheat on a test
 - He’ll get a boyfriend or girlfriend
 - He’ll eat and drink whatever he wants
- Yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”
 - This was the first thing God tried with man – let me make their years short so that they are not living hundreds of years in sin without repentance. Maybe there are some who will die righteous
- There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them.
 - Giants here refers to mighty men – men who liked to fight and go to war and kill lots of people. Like they would measure their success in life by how many men they killed and how many things they stole
- Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.
 - This is what the devil loves – to take those people are the most sinful and to give them a name on earth. To make them famous. To make them admired
- Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually
 - Imagine that not a single good thought would enter their mind. Every single intent and thought of their heart was evil. You have to understand the kind of people we’re talking about here – murderers, adulteries, fornicators, thefts, every kind of sin. You know in those they would do things like child sacrifice – kill their children. They would harass and abuse their daughters. Even animals do not do these things.
 - So when God saw that every thought in their heart was evil – He said mafeesh fayda. That’s it.
 - Nowadays someone who steals – he still has something in his heart telling him that what he’s doing is wrong. Guilt. Or he knows it’s wrong but he tries to justify it... or he feels bad. All of these are good thoughts – they are thoughts that are pushing him towards repentance. But imagine if “every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”

- This is what Christ was referencing when He said “Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.” (Matthew 15:11) and then gives examples: “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man” (Matthew 15:19)
- This is why in Christianity we care that the heart is pure.
- “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:45)
- Sadly, doesn't all of this remind us of the world we live in today?

09: Genesis 6

https://www.youtube.com/embed/ma9_Fc6f9IA

Genesis 6

- And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.
 - Does “the Lord was sorry” mean that God sinned? Or that God made a mistake? Or that God regretted what He did? All of these things go against the definition of God
 - But the Fathers teach us an important lesson. That for God to connect or relate to us, as men, uses some expressions of humans that we can understand. God is incomprehensible and God is Spirit – it is hard for me to understand or comprehend God. It is impossible for me to contain Him. So God’s use of human expressions lets us understand the meaning.
 - When it says God was sad (grieved in His heart) – it doesn’t mean that God had a human feeling of sadness before His incarnation – but that His rejection of evil let Him be something like “human sadness” and feel something like “human sorrow”
- So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air”
 - Imagine if the whole story of mankind was just six chapters... Creation in chapter 1, and the end of the world in chapter 6... this is what it seems like so far
 - Many times we contemplate on God’s love – but we should also contemplate on God’s hatred of evil. The same amount that God loves us, He hates evil. And this should give us fear – the same amount that we rejoice in God’s love, we should fear evil.
- “for I am sorry that I have made them.”
 - Why is God so upset? You know when Christ said “there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety nine righteous persons who do not need to repent” – imagine that if just one person on earth had repented, there would be rejoicing in heaven. But there was not even one.
 - **When the judgement day comes, God will not ask you “why did you do this sin” or “why did you do this sin” – He will ask you “why didn’t you repent!?”**
 - You sinned because you’re weak; because Satan wants you to fall; because your nature still has sin; because your environment is full of evil. Fine. But why didn’t you repent? Repentance is as easy as a prayer “Have mercy on me O Lord a sinner”
- But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
 - This verse gives us comfort for three reasons

- In the midst of God's sorrow and plan to destroy man, one man found grace in the eyes of God
- God does not look at the whole group or humanity as a whole – He looks at each individual one-by-one
- In the midst of evil – even when everyone around you is evil, it is still possible to be good
 - Many examples of this: Joseph in Egypt kept his righteousness, Abraham in his generation interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah, Moses was told by God leave this congregation and I'll make a people from you
 - How did Noah do it? Is he an angel or a man? He's a man. Did Noah make mistakes? Yes, and we'll see this soon
 - Why did Noah find grace in the eyes of the Lord when no one else around him did? Because he had faith in God
 - The person who is different from his generation – finds grace in the eyes of the Lord. The person who rejects evil – finds grace in the eyes of the Lord.
 - The easy way is to do like all the people and think like all the people and live like all the people. "But narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:14)
 - We can learn a prayer from this verse "Lord let me find grace in Your eyes – give me grace in Your eyes. Be happy with me. Don't let me be the reason of sorrow but the reason for rejoicing when I live my life of repentance"
- This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations.
 - Just! Perfect! Big words. Who is just or who is perfect?
 - In 2 chapters we will see that Noah sinned – so how is he perfect? The Bible is telling us that as humans, being perfect doesn't mean that you never sin again. No – because no one is without sin. But it means to live with God. The person who lives his whole life with God – he is perfect.
 - Of course he is not perfect – only God is perfect. But relative to his generation – he was perfect.
- Noah walked with God.
 - When did we hear about someone who "walked with God"? Enoch! And he was translated or taken by God!
 - What does it mean? He is living with God – as two people who live together.
 - Walking with God makes man perfect
 - Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses – all of these walked with God. Must be nice! But what about us? Can I walk with God?
 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever – if you want to walk with God, you can do it. Walk with God and don't think of anything but Him. If God hates laziness, I won't be lazy. If He hates liars, I won't lie. If He hates jealousy, I won't get jealous. That is the way to walk with God.
- And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth
 - Lest someone claim that their wife or kids get in the way of them being with God, the Bible tells us immediately that Noah had a wife and children
- The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on

the earth.

- Why does it keep bringing up the earth? Because God created the earth to be like heaven – as we say “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” – He even came down from heaven and was incarnate to the earth – but man did not want that. Starting with Adam and Eve.
- “All flesh had corrupted their way on the earth”
 - Each person has the choice to corrupt their way and to live a life of evil, or to live a life of good. Each person has the choice.
 - If you want to live a righteous life, you will live a righteous life, and God will help you. But if you want to live a life of sin, you will live a life of sin, and not even God can stop you
- And God said to Noah
 - Every time we see “____ walked with God” we’ll soon after see “God said to ____”
 - All of us love God. No one here will say they don’t love God. But when will someone say “he walks with God” or “she walks with God?” When he or she hears God’s voice.
 - Walking with God leads to hearing God’s voice
- “The end of all flesh has come before Me”
 - Who is Noah that God would tell him His plan for all of earth? Noah is a human – one of Your creation – and You tell him what You’re thinking?
 - God is telling His friend – like when God goes to Abraham and says “Sodom and Gomorrah” or when God goes to Moses and says “the children of Israel are being difficult”
 - And none of those people were gonna go out and say “oh God told me His plans yeah I’m cool with God” – because God would not tell His secrets except to those who are humble. If they weren’t humble, the devils would play with them and give them false messages as if from God – and this is where false prophets came from. But the difference between false prophets, and real prophets like Enoch, Noah and Abraham... is humility.
- For the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.
 - Noah is listening to God tell him that He’s gonna destroy the earth
- Make yourself an ark of gopherwood
 - God is giving two truths here that still have 100 years until they happen. God is giving him the news early!
 - We will destroy the whole earth
 - Make yourself an ark
 - If You created me, and You’re destroying the world, don’t You have another way to save me besides spending 100 years building an ark? You’re a God of wonders and miracles – why don’t You just take me somewhere, destroy the earth and bring me back? Is anything too much for God?
 - But God chose Noah’s salvation to be in this way. For Noah to play a part in his own salvation
 - If God didn’t wait for Noah to build the ark; if God didn’t bless Noah’s work building the ark; if God didn’t shut the door on Noah’s ark – Noah would have drowned like anyone else!

- But God loves the salvation of His children, but He also loves His children's role in their salvation
 - Make for yourself a way of salvation – draw a circle around yourself that you won't go outside. Take care of yourself. Separate yourself from the other people
 - The Ark in the New Testament
 - The Church is in the shape of an ark to remind us with the meaning – he who is inside the ark lives, and he who is outside the ark dies.
 - The Fathers say “there is no salvation outside of the Church” – and of course “the Church” doesn't refer to a physical building, but even the physical building is a sign of something spiritual
 - The ark, which brought salvation, is made of wood
 - The Cross, which is made of wood, brought salvation
 - Make yourself an ark of gopherwood – take up your cross and follow Me
- Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.
 - To fix your tongue, first fix your heart
 - Fix your inside then your outside – when you fix your inside, your outside will follow
- The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits
 - **Allegory:** Numerology – Origen: See page 96 part (5)
- You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side.
 - **Allegory:** Why the side? The wood of the ark represents the Cross and on the Cross, out of Christ's side was a wound [didn't really understand this part – something about he who lives by the sword dies by the sword maybe?
 - But it made me think that the door to the ark was on the side, and with the Ark as the Cross, out of Christ's side came blood and water – a representation of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the door to salvation
- You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.
 - **Allegory:** Origen says that these three decks represent the three levels of Biblical Interpretation: Lower deck – literary, Second deck – moral, Third deck – allegorical (relationship of these words to our salvation)
- And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die.
 - Why would God destroy the animals and the birds?
 - Remember that all creation was made FOR man. Man was given dominion over all of the animals and the trees. So if man is walking in the way of death, then all that is his and all that is for him is also walking in the way of death. As if God is trying to convey to us – all of these good things were made for you, so all of these things must die because of you.
- But I will establish My covenant with you
 - This is the first time we hear the word covenant
 - Covenant means a deal or a promise

- God makes a Covenant in the Bible and He always keeps His end of the deal, but man fails to keep their end... so God renews the covenant again. And He keeps His part but man fails... so God renews the covenant and tries again
- And you shall go into the ark – you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.
 - The Family
 - Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord... and yet because of Noah and on behalf of Noah, his whole family gets to enter the ark.
 - This doesn't mean that his family had no faith – if they truly had no faith, they would have done like all the other people – laugh at him and not get in the ark.
 - Noah's sons had less faith than him – but they still had the foundation. This is why parenting is important. Raise your children in the way of God – even if they aren't as faithful as you. Because of you, they could be saved... or because of you they could be lost.
 - Take your wife because you and your wife are one. Take your sons – and your sons bring their wives because they and their wives are one. So the law here, though it isn't written down yet, is already established by the words of God in Genesis 2
 - The Church
 - We can say that the Garden of Eden was the first Church ever made but it was made by God. So then the ark is the first Church ever made by hands.
 - He and his family will enter and they will pray (Noah is a man of prayer)
 - All who are outside die, and all who are inside are saved
 - The ark is a symbol of Baptism
 - The number 8 (eight people were saved) is important
 - God created the world in 7 days. The 8th day or 8 in general represents “what is after the world” or “what is after life” – the number 8 represents eternal life
 - Sunday is which day of the week? You can call it the 1st day of the week, or the day after the 7th day of the week which is (1 + 7)? 8th day of the week
 - 7th day is for the earthly. 8th day is for the heavenly. “This is the day that the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad in it.”
- 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 after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive.
 - Those who understand science know there's a difference between Domain/Kingdom/Phylum/Class/Order/Family/Genus/Species. He did not need to take one of every species, but one of every family or maybe of every genus. And from those kinds you arrive at many different species (microevolution, cross breeding, etc).
 - So Noah's job ended up being pretty hard – gather a bunch of wood, build a huge ark, bring all the animals in, gather up a lot of food, keep the animals alive, feed your family. So it's very hard. And it will take a long time. And it's the kind of thing that will make you seem crazy.

- If you were going to build a boat in those days... where would you do it? By the water – by the sea. Because why build it and then try to figure out how you're gonna move it to the water – just build it at the water. But to build a boat in the middle of nowhere or on a mountain requires – faith. Noah believed exactly what God told him – that a flood was coming.
- Of course, when Noah told this to anyone, they laughed at him – what do you mean a flood to the top of the mountains? If it rains, we'll just go to higher ground – it will never reach the top of a mountain. And with every nail he hammered and every piece of wood he glued, they laughed at him more and more.
- And the same thing happens with us
 - Every time you do the right thing – give to the poor, serve others, live a chaste life, people look at you and say “are you crazy” or say “you're weird” or say “you're not cool” – and if you look at them and say “I do this because I want to go to heaven” they'll ask “have you seen heaven with your eyes? Do you have proof?” No. But I know it. I know it because God said it and I believe God. Noah had faith.
 - But it's much easier for us – we have millions of people before us and tens of thousands of people among us alive today who believe the same thing as us – encouraging one another. Comforting one another. Teaching one another. Noah had no one to be his rock – he supported his seven family members, and the whole world was against him.
 - “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”
- And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them.”
- Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

10: Genesis 7

https://www.youtube.com/embed/F_vHHL9m6v4

Genesis 7

- Then the Lord said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.”
 - We talked about the ark already as being a symbol of the Church and even Churches nowadays being physically symbols of the ark
 - Entering the ark required a sort of righteousness
 - When we enter the church we should stop and pray “But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; in fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.”
 - Unfortunately, there are some who enter the church very casually, and without realizing their mistake. Because entering the church symbolizes entering heaven.
 - When the priest is praying the Circuit of Incense, he comes to that Western door and raises incense saying “He opened the gate of Paradise” – why raise incense to a door? There’s an altar and icons... This door has honor. It represents the gate of Paradise.
 - In the story of St Mary of Egypt, she went to Jerusalem as a sinner living a life of prostitution and she was unable to enter the door of the church. Some force was stopping her. And she realized it was because of her own impurity. So she repented and promised to live an ascetic life and immediately she could enter the church. So she left and became a hermit and lived in solitude the rest of her life. See the importance of the door of the Church
 - Every time you enter the door of the Church you can pray “Thank You God for your permission to enter” – “I am not worthy O Lord to enter the dwelling place of your saints and angels”
 - We are also entering the Church to increase in righteousness – to find our shelter in God
 - “He took what is ours and gave us what is His”
- You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female; also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth.
 - We read in the last chapter that Noah will take two of each... now it says seven. Is this a contradiction? No! It’s more of a clarification – yes you will bring two but of every clean animal, you will bring seven.

- We want to clarify here, as well, that we do not believe in macroevolution – a species evolving into another species. That is refuted by us, and not proved by any science. Microevolution – changes to a species, adaptation, etc. sure. This has a place both in our spiritual life, and in science. But from species to species... no. Or else why would God require two of each a male and a female? Why not just bring some fish and eventually you have dogs and cats?
- Why seven of each clean animal? Because Noah is going to offer sacrifices!
- How did Noah know what is clean or unclean? That isn't written until Moses...
 - There is a "Natural Law"
 - Between Adam and God there was a law. When Adam saw God offering an animal and clothing him with skin, he understood. And for sure, more words were said.
 - This is why when Abel offered, he took from his best sheep – that was the expectation for sacrifices. What Cain did was against the law – but there was no law! But there was tradition, there was a handing-down.
- For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth
 - The first time God told Noah, He didn't tell him when (it was 100 years early). Then when Noah finished, God came and said "it's starting in 7 days"
 - Same with Abraham – God told him he would have a son. 20 years later, he doesn't have a son. But God comes and says "this time next year Sarah will give birth."
 - Usually the promises at first are very general or blurry or without details, and then God comes and says "next week" or "next year"
 - Some people want – the first time they pray to get a date and time when the prayer will be answered. But God doesn't work that way – and they may receive the answer – once they forget about asking for a date and time!
 - Noah got used to it – a hundred years of work. And all of a sudden he got the voice that said "one more week. It's time. Get the food, get the animals, bring them in"
 - Everything needs to be in the ark **before the rain starts**
 - If someone did not repent, and then saw Christ on the judgment seat – can he still repent? No. It's too late.
 - If someone did not repent, and the rain came – can he still repent? No. It's too late.
 - Like the 10 virgins – 5 wise and 5 foolish and the foolish were outside. And Christ will say "why were you outside?"
 - It is risky to say "when I grow up I'll go to church" or "when I have more time I will go to church."
- For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made." And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him.
 - Noah's patience
 - Noah had every excuse
 - No one there to encourage him. In fact he still has to encourage his kids
 - The work is hard. It's a huge wooden ark piece by piece
 - He's old! He started at 500 years old and went for 100 years
 - Noah's faith

- In our spiritual life, we have ups and downs. We might have some time where we stop praying but then we go back. We might have a time when we forget to read the Bible, but we go back and read it. The important thing is not to stop.
 - Noah might have had ups and downs in those 100 years – but he never stopped. What if Noah had built only half the ark? Then it's useless – he would have drowned.
 - We cannot say "I prayed a lot a long time ago" – no! You're only halfway done! "I loved and served the people but now it's time for me time" – no!
- Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth. So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah.
 - Male and female
 - How many times did we hear "male and female" so far in Genesis?
 - God created the animals male and female; God created man male and female; God created marriage between one male and one female; Noah was to go in with his wife; Noah's sons were to go in with their wives; they had to take males and females of every animal...
 - Anything that is against nature is against the will of God. Many claim that other things are natural – but no! The Bible tells us what is natural
 - We saw Sodom and Gomorrah because of their lack of respect for what is natural were destroyed
 - Adam saw that all of the animals around him had a helpmate – and he was lonely. As if God waited to create Eve so that Adam could realize that he was missing something
- And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.
 - The rain here is representation of the end of the first Creation. It is a typology for the end of the world
 - And we can imagine that we are all playing the part Noah played – we need to build for ourselves an ark. At the same time, we need to tell the world – it's time to repent! The end of the world is coming and you have to be ready. But the people will laugh at us and say "what are you Christians talking about?"
 - Many people today out of the abundance of their knowledge (especially scientific) deny that the Flood happened. They might say something like "well when it rains, the water will go down the mountains, maybe cover the land a little but then drain into the ocean." But what they fail to notice is this verse – the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. It was not just rain, but it was as if the ocean was lifting up flood waters.
 - Like the 2013 Tsunami in the Philippines... it came all of a sudden and 200,000 people were dead. Just like that.
- And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

- On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark –
 - Great is the family that is attached to the ark. Great is the family that is attached to the Church.
 - Noah and his wife were not just successful in their work with the ark, but they were successful in raising their children – because not one of them was lost – and even their children-in-law.
 - Here we see from the beginning, from the story of Noah, the perfect example of marriage and parenting. They took each other into the ark.
 - Likewise, when choosing a spouse for your child, make sure that they are attached to the Church and all that is in Her (Sacraments, Service, Meetings, etc). So that they can encourage their spouse in their spiritual life. Nowadays you might have family members who when you go to church make fun of you “oh everything is church church church?”
- They and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird of every sort. And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life.
 - Some might ask how did Noah get the animals into the ark?
 - Remember that Adam was in the garden with the animals and they loved him and played with him. There was no enmity between man and animals. The Fathers say that as man comes closer to God, he starts to resemble Christ, he starts to resemble Adam, and the animals may treat him like Adam.
 - For example, the story of St Barsoum – he was a hermit, and there is a huge snake that lived in the cave he went into. He became friends with the snake. It was a regular snake... but he was not a regular man.
 - Daniel in the lion's den – were they real lions? Yeah! Real lions that eat humans... humans after the fall, but not humans before the fall. So the more a person becomes like Adam before the Fall, the more he becomes like Christ, the more he becomes perfect and righteous, the more the animals will recognize their Creator in him.
 - Look how organized it all was – it's always organized. God loves order.
 - We can learn from this – many times these days we are not organized in our service, for example
- So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.
 - The Lord shut him in
 - This is a beautiful message – that once we do all we can, and we reach a point we can do nothing about it, God will take care of it. How could Noah shut the door of the ark? A huge door (maybe with a big ramp on it)? It would be impossible. God took care of it. But he didn't stop in the beginning and say “I won't be able to close the door so this is useless”
 - Similar to the women after the burial of Christ – they were going to anoint Christ's body with spices and ointment but they had a problem – who will roll the stone away from the tomb for us? And when they couldn't get someone to roll it, did they just stay home and say “oh well”? No. They went. Knowing that

God would take care of the rest.

- God will take care of it. Many people get upset when they hear “God will take care of it”. That word is annoying when there’s something you can do... but if it’s out of your hands, then you can use that word. God will take care of it.

When Christ was raising Lazarus He told them to move the stone.

- They were in the Lord’s hands, as if He closed His hands around them to protect them. God gives us the feeling that He has us in His hands.
- Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.
 - The ark was gradually lifted up so as to keep those inside it safe (not like a huge hit of water to knock it over)
 - The Church is always lifted up – despite what is going on around it
- The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters.
 - So as the world outside the ark is being destroyed, Noah is waking up, hearing the birds, praying with his family, feeding the animals, and they are living in another kingdom
 - Christ says “The Kingdom of God is within you” – you are in a different kingdom from what is outside... Outside they kill each other, curse each other, etc.
- And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered.
 - Why is prevailed repeated? Emphasizes how much water there was, and how much flood there is. And this is exactly what will happen at the end of days – no one can imagine how in the blink of an eye, the whole world would be lost.
 - Mountains represent pride or ego – and it was all destroyed

11: Genesis 7-9

https://www.youtube.com/embed/j8E8ivvO_EQ

Genesis 7

- And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died.
 - Those who reject the Flood and say it can't have happened that he got all animals of all types – they forget one point... that more than half of animals can swim. And those that can swim, he wouldn't take in the ark (why would he?). He also takes from every kind not necessarily every species. He also might take the smallest he can find and they will grow.
- So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.
 - Noah and his family were in the ark but they did not know how long it would last. And this is what happens with us – sometimes we are in a hardship and we don't know how long it will last. But God knows. And God knows how much food they have and how much time they can last in the ark, and how much food they have for animals, and how the animals will grow. God takes all of this into account.

Genesis 8

- Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark.
 - The expressions are human expressions just for our human understanding. "God remembered" doesn't mean that God had forgotten. But rather it means that God determined the time was right.
- And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased.
 - The wind did a lot of things – stopped the fountains, closed the rains, etc.
 - One thing he forgot to mention before is that this idea of a great flood is attested to by many ancient myths and legends from around the world... Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Mexican, etc. So since it's mentioned all over the world, it must have some basis.

- Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.
 - They say this mountain is in Armenia now (near Turkey in Asia Minor)
 - Several years ago they made a discovery that was remnants of a large boat with the same type of wood, preserved under ice for a while...
- And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.
 - Spiritual understanding: The wind usually represents the Holy Spirit. We see that whenever there is chaos, the Spirit of God appears to bring order. For example in Genesis 1 – the earth was without form and void and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. Now we see that the earth is covered in water, and a great wind comes. The Holy Spirit typically comes to bring life to what is dead (Giver of Life).
- So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth.
 - So Noah opened the window to see what was going on, sent out a raven but he found no way for his feet
- He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself.
- And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth.
 - This means that there are trees starting to appear!
 - A dove holding a green olive leaf – green leaf is a symbol of life. The dove that carried the leaf is St Mary. We call St Mary “the pure turtledove”. When the dove came back with an olive leaf, their family must have rejoiced in knowing that there was life! That the waters were receding!
- So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.
 - An invitation to leave the ark
- And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.
 - The difference between second month and first month is when Noah looked out, he saw that they could probably walk on the ground but it was still wet... but a month later, the land had dried.
- Then God spoke to Noah, saying, “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your son and your sons’ wives with you.
 - Noah sent the dove and it didn’t come back – so it must be ok to leave. He took off the covering and looked at the ground and it was dry – so it must be ok to leave. But Noah did not leave until God told him.
 - Patience of Noah – even though his mind, eyes and ears are telling him he’s good, he puts those senses to the side and waits for God

- When we want to make a decision, think about it, research it, ask people, get an understanding – but don't you dare make the decision without praying. Even if in your reasoning and knowledge you see that it's a good decision, lean on God.
- This reminds us of another story in Genesis – when Jacob's sons came and told him "Joseph is alive and he's ruling over Egypt" – Joseph, his favorite son, he said "I must go see him before I die." And what did he do? He went and offered sacrifices to God and prayed and God spoke to him and said "go to Egypt, see your son, I will go with you and I will bring you back"
- Men of God ask and think but don't enter a decision until they have talked to God
- Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."
 - So obviously the idea of taking a male and a female was so they could reproduce
- So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.
- Then Noah built an altar to the Lord
 - Coming out of the ark, they might have thought "we have to plant and sow and figure out what to do with these animals, where to take them, how to raise them... we have so much work!"
 - But before everything, Noah built an altar to the Lord.
"Why didn't you pray the 150 days in the ark?!"
He prayed before, he prayed during, he prayed after.
 - This is the first time in the Bible we hear of an altar – I'm sure Abel had an altar but this is the first time the word is mentioned
 - Anytime we go somewhere, the first thing we should do is build an altar... pray!
Going on a trip, first thing to do when you get there is pray. Going to school, say a prayer. Getting in your car, say a prayer.
- And took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.
 - This shows us why he had to bring 7 of each clean animal. God knew that Noah out of the abundance of his gratitude and love for God he would make lots of sacrifices to God. Noah took of EVERY clean animal and of EVERY Clean bird and offered burnt offerings
 - Imagine that Noah spent several days offering sacrifices – and God likes this. When we go to pray to God and we don't limit ourselves. Many times we pray while looking at our watch. Or we pray just an hour of the Agpeya and rush through it to be done with it. But the one that prays without considering the time or considering the outside world and just wants to be with God – this is what God loves.
 - It reminds us of the story of Solomon who went to Gibeon to pray and stayed up all night praying and offered 1000 sacrifices! Nowhere in the law does it say to offer 1000 sacrifices. He wasn't there on a feast or a special day. He just wanted to pray. And at the end of the night, Christ appeared to Him.
- And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma
 - Of course this is another human expression and symbolic – God loved the sweet aroma of Noah's faith, his love, his thankfulness

- Then the Lord said in His heart,
 - How do we know what God said in His heart? God revealed this to Moses through the Holy Spirit (think of all the days Moses spent on the mountain with God) – God could tell him “On that day I said in my heart...”
- “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake
 - One person made such a difference with God. One person who loves God and who offers sacrifices and who is so thankful
- Although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth;
 - If man’s heart is evil from his youth, then the solution is the Incarnation
- Nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.
 - If God knew that the plan was the Incarnation, why have the flood in the first place?
 - It was a sign for all generations and all nations. This is what evil brings about. And Christ Himself calls it a sign “For as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” (Matthew 24:37-39)
- “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.”
 - God is saying everything will go back to normal – this is as a new Creation. Let us go back to the seasons as usual

Genesis 9

- So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.”
 - The same commandment given to Adam is given again to Noah and his children
 - Instead of one couple (Adam and Eve), there are now four couples
 - This idea of a new Creation is the Church. The Church is what brought forth new life. The Church is our life. The Church is our ark. This is different from what the Protestants preach “between you and God” – one of the Church Fathers said “You cannot call God your Father without calling the Church your mother.”
 - In the New Testament, the Church, the commandment is still “be fruitful and multiply” – “go therefore to all nations baptizing them.” It does not matter to us how many millions of humans there are – but what matters is that they are raised in a spiritual way and enter the New Testament ark and go to heaven
- And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea
 - Same as what Adam got
- They are given into your hand
 - Genesis 2 and 3 God told Adam “from every tree of the garden, eat” and after Adam left Eden, God told him to eat from the ground
 - Now God is allowing for man to eat meat – as if he is making it easier for them to eat
 - This could be one way that man’s life is limited (though of course after the flood there were many changes)

- Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.
 - We can take a simple explanation of fasting here. In heaven, they don't eat! No bodies! So when we fast it is a way of trying to be like the heavenly. But then we reach the point of needing to eat – getting hungry. So we say “should I eat like Noah or like Adam?” and say “I'll eat like Adam because Adam was in the garden. Before the Fall, before sin, etc. So fasting is trying to eat like those in heaven and if I can't reach that level or I can't do that all day, the next best thing is Adam and Eve before the Fall of Man.
- But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.
 - Even here before Moses this law is given
- Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of man's brother I will require the life of man. “Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed;
 - All of this is before the Law of Moses. So the Law they depend on thus far is the tradition given to them from their father Adam. But now God is starting to give them some more specific laws. And he starts with this law – “whoever shed's man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed” – He is going back to Cain's mistake
- For in the image of God He made man.”
 - This is a confirmation of what was said before and a reminder of what the most important part of Creation – man was made in the image of God. This is the difference between man and animal – both have blood, but only one has the image of God.
- And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.” Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: “And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”
 - New promise from God and it's a good one - Noah and his descendants would probably be terrified that if they made any mistake another flood would come. So God gave them a promise. There won't be another flood like this – doesn't mean there won't be floods or rain. But not like this.
- And God said: “This is a sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.”
 - This is a beautiful meaning and a sign. Everyone has seen a rainbow. Many people say “we've never seen a clear sign from God.” – HOW? You've never seen a thunderstorm with lightning and winds and then it goes away and there's a rainbow? This means that God since the days of Noah – 2500 years before Christ – is the same and His word is unchanging. And He set this covenant and you have witnessed it. Of course with physics we can explain why the rainbow appears and that's fine! But when we see it, we see a sign from God.
- It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud;

- And I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” And God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”
 - God gives the sign to review the promise/covenant
- Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan.
 - The children were all probably born after the flood
 - Noah is giving us Canaan nice and early because we’ll be talking about Canaan for the rest of the Old Testament – telling us that he came from Ham.
- These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated. And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard
 - So now Noah was full of spirituality thus far – before the Flood, during the Flood, immediately after the Flood. But as things begin to settle down, we don’t hear about altars or sacrifices or prayers. And we see that he even descends to drunkenness... it reminds us of David who’s heart was after God and lived in prayer day and night while being chased by Saul, but once he took the throne, he started to get lazy and fell to sin. [The same happens with us. We’re so full of prayer and holiness and God during Pascha week and then Resurrection hits and we’re full of meat and cheese.]
- Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent.
 - Noah who walked with God as a friend, who God revealed His plan to, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, who was the only man on earth that God chose, who lived a life of prayer, who was described as a just man and perfect, a character the likes of whom would not be repeated... and yet he fell in sin.
 - And it was the first time in history that we learn of drunkenness and the effect that alcohol can have. It’s mindboggling that this doesn’t scare people away from alcohol – what alcohol did to a righteous man like Noah.
- And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father’s nakedness.
 - Abouna seems to read here that Canaan was the one who saw his grandfather naked, and went and told his father Ham, who went and told his brothers. And this is why the curse is pronounced on Canaan – because God in His foreknowledge knew the type of people that would come from him. And this is confirmed in the next verse “his younger son” – but Japheth was the youngest... so it refers here to his grandson.
 - They did not lose or release the respect they had for their father – they covered him so he could sleep in peace and wake up and offer repentance on their own. As opposed to Ham who went and told them.
 - Sometimes our fathers (whether biological or spiritual) - we might find that they make a mistake or have a weakness or they do something we don’t like. But we do not lose the respect for them. Instead of bringing it to light and telling everyone. Because Noah, despite his sin, was still valuable and beloved by God.

- See how Shem and Japheth work together for righteousness... many times we come together and work on gossip and stories and backbiting
- So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him.
 - Younger son confirms that it was Canaan the grandson that saw Noah, since Japheth was youngest of the three
- Then he said: "Cursed by Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren."
- And he said: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem; and may Canaan be his servant."
 - Of course you realize that Abraham comes from the line of Shem
- And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.
 - Even after you pass a hard time (like the Flood) there is still life after it. Same with Job.
 - During tribulation, you might think it will never end and it is terrible, but God has a plan for after.
 - Moses after 40 years in the wilderness thought his life was over – but God had 40 more years leading Israel planned for him. Joseph after all the time in slavery and prison – God had so much more planned for him.
 - Don't take your days for granted – but let your days be an introduction to eternal life.

12: Genesis 10-12

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/x7PzEZ45Y1w>

Genesis 10

- Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood.
- The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.
 - Why did he start with Japheth? He was the youngest... so that he could end with Shem and go into the story of Abraham.
 - Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan – (Gawan is like Younan aka Greece). You see Tarshish which is where Jonah wanted to go (Spain)
 - So Japheth is father of the Europeans
- The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.” And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city). Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim). Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. These were the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands and in their nations.
 - Meanings
 - Cush is Ethiopia
 - Mizraim is Egypt (Misr)
 - Put is Lebanon
 - Canaan is Palestine
 - Assyria is south of Iraq and Nineveh is in it
 - What do we benefit from all these names?

- It's a historical record – anyone who wants to know the origin of their people, can come back to this record. It's important to know how different nations are related, where they came from, etc.
- It's showing the result of God's commandment – be fruitful and multiply
- Ham populated Africa and parts of the Middle East
- And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder. The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. Arphaxad begot Salah, and Salah begot Eber. To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east. These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.
 - Eber – this is where “Hebrew” comes from (3aber in Arabic – 3ebraneyan). He's the grandfather of Abraham
 - Shem is most importantly the father of the Hebrews and his descendants were in the Middle East and Asia Minor
- These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

Genesis 11

- Now the whole earth had one language and one speech
 - Those who study languages are able to trace languages back – so for example they say Latin is the father language of French, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese (Romance languages – come from Rome/Latin).
- And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. Then they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.
 - Now they are starting to have ideas for inventions – we had a sort of invention before with the Ark but that was designed and commissioned by God. This came from their own minds.
 - The fact that humans can invent is an indication that they are made in the image of God, the Creator
 - Inventions can be used for good or bad – like the cell phone
- And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens;
 - Pride – why the top of the heavens?
 - Many have understood it as “if God wanted to do another flood, we could escape it and be higher than any mountain.”
 - Or “let us go and see what God sees”
- let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”
 - “build ourselves” – “make a name for ourselves”
 - God is no longer in their mind or in their plans.

- After the Flood, they started to go back to a life of forgetting God
- But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.
 - Another human expression used for our benefits as humans to understand
- And the Lord said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.
 - Does God hate building? Of course not. But man always has two options
 - To glorify God in all that you do
 - To glorify yourself or to seek out your own glory
 - They have one language and this is leading to one goal which is bad
 - "nothing they propose will be withheld" – the devil will make it easy for them
- Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."
 - God wants us all to be one and in unity but in Him. As Christ says "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us" (John 17:21)
- So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.
 - When we remember this, we remember an opposite event – Pentecost. When all the nations were gathered and the disciples spoke in tongues.
- Therefore its name is called Babel
 - Babel in the Bible is going to be a symbol of evil – Babylon. We'll keep hearing about Babylon until the end of Revelation.
- because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth;
 - Many times people live in the same house but don't know how to communicate with each other. Most of the problems we have in the world come from miscommunication – a husband and wife can't communicate: marital problems; a manager and an employee can't communicate: work problems; a father and his son – father says "when I was your age" and son is thinking "that was 30 years ago! What do I care!" (speaking different languages).
 - Confusing the language or miscommunication can destroy a relationship
 - The same thing can happen in my relationship with God. If I am not listening to the Word of God, I am lost. If I don't know how to pray I am not communicating with God
 - Communication is the basis of love. Communication doesn't have to be with words – when I look you in the eye, I've communicated to you. And you can tell through it if I'm happy or sad or mad or whatever. If I shake your hand, you can know from the shake if I like you or not. So communication doesn't have to be with words, but it is the basis of love. We should focus on "is the meaning he wanted to convey – the same as the meaning I understood?" OR "is the meaning I want to convey – the same as what he understood?"
- and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.
 - God's judgment in the Old Testament is in many ways
 - Adam was judged with death
 - Noah's generation was judged with a flood
 - Babel – scattering over the face of the earth (which leads them to war with one another even until today – it is the result of the evil that they chose)
 - Sodom and Gomorrah – fire and brimstone

- This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.
 - Notice here that the length of man's life is starting to get lower. Noah lived 950. Shem 600. Arphaxad 438. Salah 433. Peleg 239. Reu 239. Serug 230. Nahor 148.
 - Many attribute this to the Flood causing a disturbance in the physical nature of the world as well as man starting to eat meat (these being ways that God carried out the limitation)
- Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah. After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber. After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg. After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters. Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu. After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters. Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug. After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters. Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor. After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah. After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters. Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
 - The whole point of this genealogy is to bring us to Abraham
 - This man Abram is just one of tens or hundreds of thousands – this is just one direct line of Shem – all of these had sons and daughters. And Ham and Japheth also had similar lines. And out of all of these people, the only one who we'll see finds favor with God, is Abram.
- This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans.
 - Haran died early and left Lot as a child – so Abram, who didn't have children, took Lot as his own child and his responsibility.
 - Ur of the Chaldeans is a place in Iraq – it is the origin of the people of Abraham or the people of Israel
- Then 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 the father of Iscah. But Sarai was barren; she had no child. And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there.
 - The first migration that we read about is the migration of Terah's family – he took Abram and his wife and Lot and they left Ur of the Chaldeans heading for Canaan – but they didn't get as far as Canaan. They stopped in Haran and dwelt there.
- So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

Genesis 12

- Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will

bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

- The Lord said to Abram – we haven’t heard this phrase in a while. Since Noah – hundreds of years before! Why did we stop hearing it? Did God stop speaking to man? No... man stopped listening. Until Abram came. And Abram listened.
- The first characteristic of a man of God, or a man of faith – he listens to God.
 - God speaks through your conscience – do you listen to your conscience?
 - God speaks through the people around you – do you listen to a good word from someone around you?
 - God speaks through the situations in your life
 - God speaks to us constantly – but we may not be listening.
 - “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. IF anyone hears my voice...” – this “IF” could take years – no one is focusing on God.
- The beginning of your relationship with God is when you open the Bible and read His word and say “this word is for me. God is speaking to me here.” – when you say “Lord, speak. Your servant hears.” As Samuel said. When you tell God “tell me what to do! I want to hear your voice! I want to do your will!” – This is the beginning of your relationship with God: when you focus on God and shut your eyes to what is outside.
- There are three degrees of separation
 - “Get out of your country” – Separate yourself from your land
 - “From your family” – Separate yourself from the people around you
 - “From your father’s house” – Separate yourself even from your family
- Why did God ask Abram to leave and separate from EVERYTHING he knows, and not even tell him why?
- How did Abram know that it was God’s voice speaking to him? Faith
 - Faith is when you don’t know, but you follow anyway. You don’t know what will happen, but you have trust in God that He will take care of you.
 - People who keep asking God “why?” and “when” and “how” – their faith is weak
 - People who cannot make any move unless they know for sure and expect God to answer all their questions – their faith is weak
 - God’s way is to give the invitation and whoever trusts in Him, and trusts that God will take care of him and provide for him and only have good intentions for him, will follow.
 - It’s the same way Christ called the apostles – he went to Matthew the tax collector and said “follow Me.” He didn’t say “I will make you great”, He didn’t say how He would be able to pay him, He didn’t say that He would take care of him. All He said was “follow Me.” And Matthew – because he had faith – followed Christ and never looked back and now he is great among the apostles. Same thing with Peter – Christ did the miracle with the fish in Luke 5 and then told Peter “come with Me. I will make you fishers of men.” – Peter didn’t ask “what will I get paid” he didn’t ask “what about my wife or my mother in law.” He had faith and he followed. And look at him now.

- “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” (Hebrews 11:8)
- “I will make you a great nation”
 - This doesn’t just mean the nation of Israel – but it refers to a spiritual nation – those who have faith are of the nation of Abraham, the man of faith.
 - Remember the parable of the rich man and Lazarus – Christ mentions Lazarus’ spot in heaven is in the bosom of Abraham
- “I will bless you”
- “I will make your name great”
 - Abraham’s name is great now – “Abraham your beloved” as we say in Tasbeha and the Agpeya
 - Abraham could have lived like the people around him... not following God, but their names are not known.
- “And you shall be a blessing.”
 - Not just I will make something of you, but the more you follow Me, you, YOURSELF will be a blessing to those around you
 - It’s like when a bishop visits us and we say that he has blessed us – because he is walking in the way of God, when he visits us, we are blessed. Same as Abraham
- “I will bless those who bless you”
 - See how big this is - those who say a good word to Abraham or about Abraham, even THEY will get a blessing
 - Those who follow Abraham – even THEY will be blessed
- “And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
 - Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.
 - You don’t have to be Jewish to be a son of Abraham... this is why we call him “Father Abraham” – because we are his sons by being of faith
- Blessing
 - Anyone who follows God gets all these same blessings – I will bless you, you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”
 - What is blessing?
 - It does not mean you will have no worries on earth, or you won’t have tribulation. God has never made such a promise to anyone in the OT or NT. Even to His closest disciples He told them “in the world you will have tribulation.”
 - It means that you will go to heaven and you will be a source of good to those around you
 - The idea of intercession is related to blessing – the saints followed God and had blessing. I will bless those who bless you – in this way, when we venerate the

saints, we receive blessing

- So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him
 - “As the Lord had spoken to him” – we will see this a lot with Abraham. Everything God told Abraham, he did it.

13: Genesis 12

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/X9MJTtD3rO4>

Genesis 12

- So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him
 - “As the Lord had spoken to him” – we will see this a lot with Abraham. Everything God told Abraham, he did it.
- And Lot went with him
 - Lot represents a sort of half-way point between Abraham who was a man of faith, and the rest of Abraham’s family (i.e. the ones that didn’t even come)
 - Lot shows us that by Abraham’s faith, Lot receives blessing and Lot is influenced. So Lot had some of the faith of Abraham – but we will see that Lot stops halfway and separates from Abraham. Because he only had a part of the faith of Abraham – not as much as Abraham.
 - Lot did not hear God’s voice like Abraham, but Abraham would tell him “God said xyz” and Lot would say “ok let’s do it!” – but he himself, did not really hear God
 - He was righteous by acquaintance, but not righteous in the true sense
- And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan.
 - Haran was the place they stopped on the way to Canaan
 - Abram’s father (Terah) was the one who said they should stop there – but that was not what God wanted. And they were stuck there for almost 15 years until Abram’s father died. But God gave him the calling again.
 - This is why in the Gospel we read “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:26)
 - It does not mean an actual hatred of family members, but rather to love God more than men. If God says something and someone says something else – we do what God wants
 - If you compare Ur with Canaan, it’s as if someone left a rich populous country and went to a poor land in the desert in the middle of nowhere. Hearing God say “go to Canaan” he might think that God is taking him to a place better than where he is... and then he reaches Canaan and sees what it is, what would he think? He might think “doesn’t God want what’s best for me? Doesn’t he want me to live in higher standards?” God wants us to live in higher standards in our spiritual life. Many

people think that once they increase in their relationship with God, they will get everything they want in the world – more money, nicer house, etc.

- So they came to the land of Canaan. Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were in the land.
 - He also found that there were already people living there and kingdoms and nations living there? Abram might think “what am I gonna do about these people? I don’t even have a son or an heir” – but Abram didn’t think any of that. He moved according to the way that he knew: “The Lord said – so Abraham did as the Lord had said”
- Then the Lord appeared to Abram
 - This is the first time we see this word – The Lord **appeared** to Abram. This means Abram saw Him. The Lord **said** – Abram heard. Now the Lord **appeared** and Abram saw.
 - The Lord appearing is the next level above or past the Lord speaking. Seeing God is higher than hearing God. This is why in the Litany of the Gospel we say “blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear” – why don’t they just say ears/hear? We are going to listen to the gospel. Because the more someone hears God and listens and walks in God’s way, they will start to see God
 - When you see “appeared” – you should immediately recognize this as the Lord Jesus Christ; the Word of God; God the Son. Because God the Son is the One who appears in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Any prophet or apostle who has seen God has seen Him as Christ. “He who has seen Me has seen the Father; I am in the Father, and the Father in Me” (John 14:9)
- And said, “To your descendants I will give this land.”
 - Only after Abram followed God’s commandment until the very end, did he see God
 - If we follow God’s commandment until the end of our life, we will see God with our eyes
- And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.
 - Where did Abram get this idea of building an altar? Remember that Noah built an altar immediately after leaving the ark – and Abram is the tenth generation grandson of Noah – so this idea of an altar must have been passed down from generation to generation.
 - Altar
 - An altar is used to give thanks to God – every time God gives you something good, don’t forget to come to the Church and worship before the altar and offer thanksgiving.
 - An altar is also used as a place to make your request to God
 - The altar becomes a witness between man and God. And we will see it in Isaac, Jacob and Moses and David, etc.
 - Our Liturgy (work of the people) revolves around the altar – giving thanks to God, and requesting from God
 - Abram built altars before making for himself a habitation... the Church should come before your home. Your prayer should come before your work. Your spiritual life should come before anything else. What is due to God is before what is due to you or those around you
 - Abram does not really build himself a habitation, but is always on the move

- And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel
 - Why did he move again? This was probably from God
 - The place was **later** called “Bethel” (house of God) – we’ll keep seeing this place throughout the Old Testament people keep going and coming from it, and it kind of reminds us of the Church (house of God) and how we might sin but then come back and sin and come back.
- And he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.
 - So what does it mean that Abraham called on the name of the Lord? What was he saying? What is the name of the Lord? Abraham doesn’t know a name for God, but he has heard his voice and seen him. In the New Testament we know His name “our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ”
 - And we won’t see a name for God with Abraham, or with Isaac. And when Jacob wrestles with God, he will ask him “what is Your name?” And God says “why is it that you ask about My name?” and doesn’t give a name. So He’s always just called “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob” – and then Moses has to go to Egypt and tell them God sent him and they ask “which god?” (because they are polytheistic) – so he tells God “all of their gods have names – I need to tell them Your name” and God says “tell them YHWH sent you” – YHWH (four consonants that cannot be pronounced in any language) and that mean “I AM” – the Being – the One who Is. “I AM” And God’s name becomes YHWH or “I AM” all the way until we find out His name is Emmanuel – God with us.
 - “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32), (Acts 2:21), (Romans 10:13)
- So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.
 - So Abram (according to what God told him) kept on moving
- Now there was a famine in the land
 - Imagine God told him “blessing I will bless you” and all these nice things, and Abram listened and left his land, and his family, and his father’s house and was obedient and built all these altars and finally gets to this land and what happens? A famine.
- And Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land
 - And here we see one of Abram’s weaknesses
 - It’s so important to learn from the weaknesses of the saints, just as we learn from their virtue. Sometimes when we focus on their virtues, we may not be able to relate “how can I relate to a saint” – but when we remember their weaknesses, we feel they are so close to us
 - His weakness was a fear of famine, or worrying about what would happen if the famine reached him. And this weakness comes when one’s eye is looking at the world too much.
 - He didn’t see the famine and ask God “is this famine coming for me or not?” Maybe God would have told him “no the famine is for the Canaanites to repent – it won’t touch you” – but in this case, Abram was scared. We don’t hear that in this situation Abram prayed or talked to God or thought in a spiritual way. “There was a famine in the land, and Abram went down” – it is written geographically, of course, but the word “went down” indicates to us a spiritual decrease

- “for the famine was severe in the land”
 - It is as if Moses wanted to explain to us – that we should understand it was really hard on Abraham
- Tests of Faith
 - This is the first test of faith for Abraham
 - He’s building altars, obeying God, and then he’s hit with a famine. To put it in other terms... he’s attending liturgies and Sunday School and Bible Study and Praises and Vespers and suddenly, he’s hit with a famine. When hit with a famine, do we attach ourselves to God? Or to men?
 - A young woman who isn’t married finds herself needing love – is she to attach to worldly desires, go out and try to marry just anyone, etc. Or attach to the altar and let God choose for her?
 - Someone is getting older and feels that no one asks about him – does he search among the people for someone to ask about him, or attach to the altar and let God ask about him?
- And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance. Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and they will kill me, but let you live. Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you.”
 - Sin begets sin. Sin leads to sin. When he was close to entering Egypt, he found out the Egyptians were brutal and might see that Sarai is beautiful, take her and kill him. If you knew that, would you continue your journey? Or turn around?
 - Abram is starting to think in the wrong way – not praying
 - Abram starting with “Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance” – he’s almost trying to appease her with these first words. Like when a man wants something from his wife so he gives her a few good words first. And she thinks it’s so nice – but really what he’s saying is not nice.
 - And Abram tells her “listen... these guys are pretty terrible. They might kill me and take you.” And you can imagine Sarai asking “okay should we go back?” and Abram says “nah let them take you as long as they let me live” – WHAT?! Abram!!!
 - This is not the personality of Abram! Lying, fear, worrying, earthly thinking
 - “Please say you are my sister”
 - Sarai was related to Abram – like the daughter of his father but not of his mother. A half-sibling. So you can imagine him convincing her like “we won’t *really* be lying” or calling it a “white lie” or a half-lie. But in the end, the cause is fear and because it is fear, it is a lie and a sin
 - “that it may be well with me for your sake”
 - As if “if I live I might be able to get you back”
 - “that I may live because of you”
 - Where is God in this? Abram’s thinking is completely off here
- So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful.
 - He who is scared of ghosts will always see them – Abram through fear gave himself in to the devil, and now the devil is taking advantage

- Many times we make all the wrong decisions and take all the wrong paths and then say “why is God doing this to me” – you did it to yourself!
- The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh.
 - And the situation blew up – not just Egyptians it went all the way up to Pharaoh. As if God is trying to REALLY teach Abram a lesson.
- And the woman was taken to Pharaoh’s house.
 - I wonder what Abram felt that day. A man without children, and his wife taken from him. And taken to Pharaoh’s house – who can speak up against Pharaoh? And he is probably too embarrassed to even talk to God. He knows that it’s his fault.
 - And what would he do? He can’t go back to Canaan without Sarai – God’s promise was for him to have descendants – how can he have descendants without Sarai? So everything God said came to a pause – not because God paused it, but because Abram paused it.
 - The devil plays games with us when we fall into a big sin or a big mistake or make a bad decision, the devil will whisper in our ear “can you really stand in front of God right now?” when in reality that is the time you most need to stand in front of God. To go and tell God “I am terrible” “I made a mistake” “Fix it for me” “I’m sorry”
- He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.
 - What profit is the sheep, oxen, donkeys, servants and camels without Sarai? What’s the point of them if you’ve lost your wife, your children of promise, your land of Canaan, your altar?
 - “What profit is it to a man if he gains the world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26)
 - The people here are not sinning knowingly – they think she is his sister. And they are even giving him so many gifts. They did all of this in peace.
- But the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife.
 - Who deserved this plague? Pharaoh? Or Abram?
 - God in this moment cannot leave Abram to be lost nor Sarai to be hurt – why? Because they are His children.
 - And we see this in our life – in the times when we have done everything wrong, and we aren’t praying or fasting, we are surprised to find that God is there ready to take care of everything for us
- And Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? Why did you say, ‘She is my sister’? I might have taken her as my wife.
 - Pharaoh’s words to Abram were probably the most effective – because who is Pharaoh? He did not hear God’s voice, he did not see God, he did not know God – and yet he was rebuking Abraham.
 - Many times, we are rebuked or even feel rebuked, but people who do not know God – like Jonah when he told the mariners “I am running away from the God of heaven and earth and the sea and all therein” and they were like “seriously? Why would you do that?”
 - A wake-up call

- In the beginning of the chapter, God told Abram he will be a blessing to the other people – and at the end of the chapter, Abram is the source of a curse for Pharaoh. And you can imagine what's going on through Abram's head – "if I had only gotten permission from God, the whole land of Egypt would have been blessed by my present."
- Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way."
 - Another message for Abram – Go back to Canaan! Go back to the way of the Lord.
 - Many times these messages may come to us from those we least expect them.
- So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

14: Genesis 12, 13, 14

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/9IcZWBNrxtE>

Genesis 13

- Then Abram went up from Egypt
 - Remember it said “Abram went down to Egypt” now “went up from Egypt”
- He and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South
 - You can imagine Abraham walking back to Egypt in all thanksgiving, thinking he would never leave God again
- Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.
 - Many people think that being rich is evil or a sin... and justify it by saying Christ's words that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. But here is a man who is **very** And yet, he had the best relationship with God on earth.
 - Richness is not the problem, but rather the relationship with money and richness is – if money is your god, or money is controlling your life, that is not right
 - Abram had so much in riches that he did not count it or care for it, but rather cared for his relationship with God
- And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the Lord.
 - Abram is returning back to where he started – as if starting over. Again, calling on the name of the Lord.
 - It is a renewing or a recharging – reminds us of Christ who told the apostles He would meet them in Galilee (which was far, but the first place they met Him)
 - Bethel was the place where Abram saw God, so he is returning back as in repentance
 - He went back to this place not because of its land or location but because it is the place of the altar
 - Abram called on the name of the Lord – he returned to prayer
- Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents.
 - Remember that Abram was to be a blessing to all of those around him
 - Lot did not realize that his good fortune and riches and success – were a result of being with Abraham who was with God. He thought it was his own success.
- Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.
 - That's weird... land back then did not have the crowdedness that it has today (cars and buildings, etc – but this is a desert)
 - The land was not able to support them because of how rich they were!

- Those in poverty can usually support one another, but those living in richness usually can't stand each other
- This is all from the devil who wants one or both of them to fall
- And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock.
 - Devil doesn't start with the big guys – Abram and Lot. They are family. But he starts with the servants – the herdsmen. And when the herdsmen fight, they each go to their leader (Abraham and Lot) and start putting words in their ears
- The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.
 - Why is this sentence here?
 - The Canaanites and Perizzites are the people who don't know God.
 - It is as if to tell us... where would they go? Where would Lot go? To the people who don't know God? They would destroy you! The only reason they haven't destroyed you yet is because of Abram! And who will be there if they leave the land? The Canaanites and Perizzites would be ready to take the land.
- So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren.
 - Abram's reaction is that of love – he doesn't try to justify his herdsmen or blame Lot's herdsmen or talk about the situation. He didn't try to take credit for Lot's riches, or for raising Lot. He didn't take offense. His main concern is to keep the peace and love with his nephew who is like his son.
 - This is one of the characteristics of a man of God
 - "For we are brethren" – Abraham's humility. Lot should have humbled himself and said "brethren? No you are my father; you are my master; you are in charge; I follow you"
- Is not the whole land before you?
 - Abraham doesn't care which part of the land – all he cares about is God. His desire is God.
- Please separate from me.
 - This is a hard word for Abraham to say – he has no children. Lot is like his son. But he wants to make it easy for Lot
- If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."
 - For a shepherd, choosing is so easy – either rain or green land is good. Desert is bad.
- And Lot lifted his eyes
 - What a disaster. Lot lifted his eyes and looked at the earth and looked at the ground.
 - It is the same temptation Satan used on Christ "look at all this I will give it to you if you worship me" but Christ looked up to heaven and said "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve"
 - Lot, instead of looking at Abraham and seeing Christ through him, looked at the ground and at the earth
- and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar.
 - Comparing to the Garden of Eden!!!
- Then Lot chose for himself

- God's children do not choose for themselves – but they let God choose for them
- Abram put the decision in God's hands
- all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.
 - The devil successfully split up a righteous family – but it's not Abram's fault, it's Lot's
 - Lot acted in this scenario like the Prodigal Son – took what was his father's, went to live in worldly pleasures, loses it all, and is accepted by his father again
- Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.
 - Lot should have asked about the place he was moving to... he asked about the waters and the herbs and the trees but not the people. He didn't care.
- And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him:
 - God came to comfort him ("I am your friend and I won't leave you") and to commend him and to reward him
- "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are – northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.
 - You can imagine that Abram is so sad from Lot leaving, and his head is down. But God tells him "lift your eyes"
 - Abram looks around north, south, east and west and sees... sand, dust, desert. And God tells him "count the dust" and he can't count the dust and God says "so will your descendants be."
 - And Abram, of course, doesn't even have one grain of sand so far. No children. And of course he will only live to see a few of his children – but we know that anyone who has faith in God is a son of Abraham.
- Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you." And Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the Lord.
 - Abram had faith – God said go walk in the land and Abram did it
 - Lot was thinking of building a barn and some machines for shepherding and whatever else... Abram was thinking of building an altar.

Genesis 14

- And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).
 - This is a world war! 5 kings against 4 kings
 - So the world is in war and Lot, who chose green grass and water, finds himself in the middle of a war. Abraham who chose God, finds himself sitting in the desert with his family and his wealth in peace
 - The world is full of wars and violence and noise, but there is one living from morning until evening in prayer at the altar. This is the Kingdom of God.

- All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.
 - Chedorlaomer was king of Elam and he took 4 kings with him against 4 other kings (two of which were Sodom and Gomorrah)
- In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness. Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazazon Tamar. And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains.
 - Sodom and Gomorrah lost the war to the other side
- Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.
 - Lot, when he lived with Abram he had food to feed a city – and now as soon as he left, he has lost everything he had
- Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram.
 - If it was one of us, we would probably say “I told you so” to Lot or “it's Lot's fault! I told him!” or maybe even “what would I do in front of kingdoms and nations?”
 - But Abram did not think – no, he prayed
- Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.
 - Think of how many people were in Abraham's household? Just the trained servants were 318 and remember none of those are Abraham's sons
 - Those who are paying attention might say that a few thousand years later, we have 318 bishops who rose up against the heresy of Arianism but of course this is just a coincidence
- He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.
 - Abram did all this for Lot, but of course everyone from Sodom was set free because of Abram
 - Abram's attack here was definitely a miracle and was successful through God
- And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.

- So the 4 kings who lost to 5 kings were avenged by Abram and his soldiers – so it must be from God
- This whole situation was a message for Lot
- Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he gave him a tithe of all.
 - This king was not part of the war at all! He came out of nowhere and he’s mentioned for a few verses and then never again mentioned until 800 years later when David writes in the Psalms a prophecy about Christ “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek” and then again not mentioned another 800 years until St Paul writes about the relationship between Christ and Melchizedek.
 - So who is this mysterious king? And when he met with Abram, he did some strange things...
 - Abram is the one supposed to be blessing people... but Melchizedek came and blessed Abram
 - And it is known that celebrations involve slaughtering an animal and eating it, or offering it to God... but Melchizedek came and took bread and wine and broke the bread and ate
 - And Abram offered a tithe to Melchizedek
 - And Melchizedek is called priest of the Most-High God... but the priesthood is not established until Aaron, the grandson of Levi, the grandson of Abraham, whom Melchizedek blessed
 - Melchizedek does not have a known father or mother or genealogy or beginning or end of life...
 - Melchizedek was a king AND a priest... and his name means “King of Righteousness” and his title (King of Salem) meaning “King of Peace”
 - This mysterious character is a type of Christ
 - Blessing of Melchizedek
 - The role of the priest is to speak the word of God to the people (OT and NT)
 - “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth” – blessed is Abraham from the mouth of God Most High
 - The priest in the NT is the presence of Christ on earth. Many who reject priesthood, think that priesthood is a mediator between God and man, but the Scripture is clear that the Mediator is Christ (who is both God, and Man). But our priests are the presence of Christ and are just doing the things Christ did (i.e. sacraments).
 - Tithe
 - First time we hear of tithes
 - Tithes are not commanded until hundreds of years later in the Law of Moses... this must be an oral tradition
 - Tithes are the bare minimum – this is why in the New Testament Christ never mentions tithes. But he talks about giving all that you have
 - “Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.” (Hebrews 7)

- King of Sodom and King of Salem went out at the same time to Abraham. Melchizedek to tell Abraham “blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And king of Sodom to say “Give me the persons and take the goods for yourself.”
- Whenever we hear the voice of the devil telling us “you are good – you serve well” And filling us with pride, we will hear the voice of Christ in the other ear saying “humble yourself before the Lord”

15: Genesis 14-15

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/VripF1UBvYQ>

Genesis 14

- Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.”
 - This is what the devil does. Offers goods and money for souls.
- But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich’— except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”
 - Abram does not want King of Sodom to ever even think that he made Abram rich
 - Abram still wants to take care of his neighbors and allies who went out with him – to take their due.

Genesis 15

16: Genesis 15-16

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/S-mwSW2zAdo>

Genesis 15

17: Genesis 16, 17, 18

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/l1Hql6OiFHM>

Genesis 16

18: Genesis 18, 19

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/ycdXACxPIhc>

Genesis 18

19: Genesis 19, 20

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/u8S1Y0Dvk6U>

Genesis 19

20: Genesis 21, 22

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/CNG1VbFOYQs>

Genesis 21

21: Genesis 22, 23, 24

https://www.youtube.com/embed/_xlTcm0gz4w

Genesis 22

22: Genesis 24, 25

https://www.youtube.com/embed/_xlTcm0gz4w

Genesis 24