

WEEK 7

BIBLE PROJECT

Genesis 12 - 17

FOREWORD:

How do we understand Adam's place in pre-history? [ADDENDUM]

How do we get what we know of pre-historical paleontology to fit with the biblical idea of an early progenitor of the human race? This may be a **Greek-think question**. Nevertheless, it is raised for us by the biblical insistence that God created humanity in his image, not in continuity with the rest of the animals.

WE NEED TO THINK OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THAT THOUGHT FOR APPLICATIONS AND CONTRASTS TO THE MATERIALIST/NATURALIST VIEW OF CREATION.

How do we relate the current view of historical "facts" with the biblical interpretation?

GAP theory – we know that the Bible omits great sections of details: Jesus the son of David, the son Abraham (Matthew 1.1) Therefore, gap between Gen 1.1 and Gen 1.2???

Investiture theory: Made in the image of God occurs at a particular juncture in the evolutionary process and precipitates what some have called the "Neolithic revolution" so that the creation of man is reality God's investing humanoid animals with the dignity of his own image, the consciousness of self-existence, and the mandates of creation.

This actually fits better with what we now know of the Human Genome project: We now know that all humans currently alive have one common mother and one common father. So far what is known is that they were not alive at the same time. But given the progressive development of knowledge, we will hold our judgment expecting more information to further support the biblical view.

But the truth is that the writer of Genesis is not at all interested in the question of the *quantity* of man's existence, but in its *quality*. That is, not how long man has been around, but whether there is something uniquely human, as contrasted with the rest of the creatures and imbued with dignity and worth, based on the essential *human* qualities.

Only in the modern west has the pursuit of the quantity of time been substituted for an understanding of the quality of human nature. The question raised by the image of God discussion is whether the meaning of being human is something that exists from before or (at least at) his creation or whether his worth is a consequence of man's own self-affirmation. Does humanity have intrinsic value or is the value of human life a function of human determination? Does existence precede essence? Or does essence precede existence. Is our worth given or earned? Does man exist before he has meaning? Or is his existence the consequence of purpose?

The materialist/naturalist view of origins indicates that things exist and develop for no apparent reason and on no demonstrable lines. Thus, for the materialist, there is only description. Things are. What they mean is not connected with their existence. Thus, man

exists before he has value, worth, meaning, purpose. And GOOD and EVIL are matters of “preference.”

The biblical view is that humanity is the consequence of God deliberate plan; that humans individually and together have God-given image/dignity/meaning/purpose/ responsibility. Psalm 139.13 ff. And that meaning is not related to the quantity of time in which humanity has existed but to the quality of “image” created into the human being.

The Divergent Ways: Genesis 4-11

Cain	EVE’S reaction at birth	Seth
“I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD.” Gen 4.1	“God has appointed for me another child instead of Abel”	Gen 4.25
Cain , tiller of soil	Occupation	Abel , shepherd
Fruit of the ground	Offering	Firstling of flock

ATTITUDE
(Contrast suggested by Jude 11)

WAY OF CAIN
1. EVIL (1 John 3.12)
2. Unbelief

WAY OF ABEL
Righteous (1 Jn 3. 12)
Faith (Heb. 11.4)

The Proto-Evangelium Gen 3:15 & 21

Sacrifice Unacceptable

“A more excellent sacrifice”
Heb 11.4

FAITH makes the difference

Worshipper warned, no change, rejected
Persecutor, murderer
Wrong relation to God/brother

Worshipper accepted
Righteous sufferer
First Martyr (Mt 23.35)

SELF-AFFIRMED
EARTH ORIENTED

PILGRIMS IN FAITH

Developed

Godless culture, city of man
Gen 4.16-24

Yahweh worship
Gen 4.26

ILLUSTRATIONS

City dwellers
Rampant wickedness
Under Lamech: bigamy
Bloodshed, boasting, pride

Walk with God-Enoch
Looked for a better city/country
Heb 11.10, 16

Kingdom of the World → ----- ← **CONFLICT** ----- ← Kingdom of God

Satan’s first blow against “the seed of the woman”

Unsuccessful: Kingdom of God survives persecution
God raises up “another seed.”
Compromise; distinction between the two lines breaks down (Gen 6.5)
Kingdom survives apostasy, syncretism, division because of judgment—namely flood.
Kingdom of this world frustrated by ethnic/language barriers

Noah was a failed new beginning—resulting in Canaan

Another new beginning: ABRAHAM.

God's PROJECT RESET

Genesis 12



BIG IDEAS

God has a plan for the rescue of the whole world—He is still working on his PROJECT



GOD ESTABLISHES COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

Covenant Form

Berith is unilateral: God makes the relationship; man fits into it.

Promise – I will bless you

Obligation – so that you will be a blessing

Promise/prophecy – by you all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Other covenants:

- 1 Noah – already mentioned
- 2 Abram
- 3 Israel – Sinai (Mosaic)
- 4 Davidic – basis for kingship
- 5 Jeremiah – “new covenant” because God’s people have broken the first after the exile
- 6 New Covenant in Jesus
 - 1 Cor 11.25—this cup is the New Covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

More specifically:

Preamble

(Title)

Historical Prologue

Stipulations

General Law

Specific Law

Sanctions

blessing

cursing

Witnesses

Document clause

Covenant Ceremony

Covenant Sign

I am the LORD Your God

Who brought you out of Egypt

You will be Loyal – No other gods

No idols, etc

I set before you the way of life

Death and destruction come to disobedient

gods of Suzerain and vassal as called

what to do with text of covenant – Ark of the Covenant

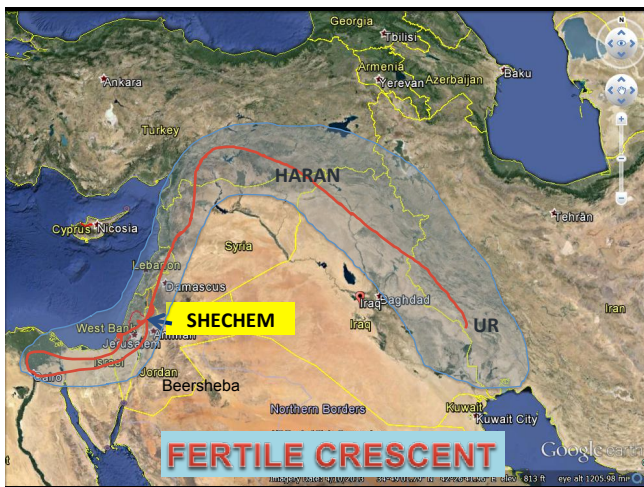
THE COVENANT REQUIRES EXCEPTIONALISM

Distinction obligatory: COME APART FROM
Country
Ethnicity
Family

Lot and Abraham split



GOD commits new future to Abraham



Visual Guide to Bible Events [BGBE]

To a new LAND
To a huge progeny
To a world benefit

God shows his presence and binds himself unlike any other Suzerain.

“Cutting” the Covenant
Smoking Firepot and Blazing Torch: Shekinah

Assignment for week 8—

Read Exodus 1-20.

Be prepared to raise questions on what you have heard/read so far including Job.

Carefully review Genesis 15-33

MARKERS:

Exodus 3:	Burning Bush
Exodus 3:	God's NAME
Exodus 19:	Conditions attached to blessing
Exodus 20:	Ten Commandments
Exodus 21-23	Case law
Exodus 24:	"Cutting" the Covenant
Exodus 32:	Golden Calf
Exodus 33:	Moses sees God's back
Exodus 40:	GOD'S presence constant