

Genesis

Introduction

Having considered various parts of Genesis 1-11 over the years, this is my first attempt to interpret and understand these chapters as a whole. I am sure that I am missing some important elements and hope to recognize them and add them to my endnotes as I continue to study and learn from these beginning and foundational chapters of the book and the rest of the Bible. My translation is quite literal and follows closely the Hebrew text, so that, for the English reader and speaker, it does not flow very smoothly in all cases. The purpose of this literal translation is to force me, if no one else, to think more carefully about what the author is attempting to communicate than a more readable translation would offer. Therefore, I encourage my readers to join me in slowing down their minds as they read my translation and to do a little more work than usual in understanding the original author's intent.

For example, the sequence of events in Hebrew stories is typically told using one letter, the waw (ו, pronounced "vav"), to connect definite and complete clauses that include both a subject and a predicate. It's basic meaning is our English word "and." It also is directly attached to the word that follows it, which is either a verb, such as וַיֹּאמֶר (reading right to left), which means "and he said," referring to the serpent in Genesis 3:1, or a noun, pronoun, etc. (some other kind of word besides a verb), such as וְהָאֲרֶץ, which literally means "and the earth" in Genesis 1:2. However, in this latter situation, I intentionally make it clear that the waw (ו) is attached to something other than a verb by translating the two words with "and, as for..." and then adding a personal pronoun. Therefore, Genesis 2:1 begins, "And, as for the earth, it..."

I have also translated references to God's actions, i.e., the verbs that indicate what God is doing, was doing, or will do, by putting the English words in bold letters, such as, in the first verse of Genesis, "God **created** the heavens and the earth." I do this because I think the author is definitely a theologian of the transcendent author of all reality, God, and that he believes that God is causing every detail of His creation to exist at every moment. Therefore, what God has done, is doing, and will do is ultimately what Genesis (and all other books of the Bible) is about. To put it simply, the Bible provides us human beings with the story that God is telling, from the very beginning of it when He created the universe, through the present realm as He sustains it and orchestrates its human history, and into the eternal realm when He will rule over human beings on a new earth through Jesus the Messiah. In other words, God is obviously the primary person of the story by being its uncreated author, who transcends it and is outside it, while human beings are secondary persons of the story by being its created characters within it.

My Translation and Endnotes

God's Creation of the Cosmos and the Earth To Sustain Human Beings Physically

1:1 In the beginning *Elohim* [God] **created** the heavens and the earth.¹

1:2 And, as for the earth, it was invisible and unformed.² And, as for darkness, it existed in the face of the watery deep.³ And, as for the Spirit of *Elohim*, He was **hovering** in the face of the waters.⁴

1:3 And *Elohim* **said**, "Let there be light," and there was light.⁵

1:4 And *Elohim* **saw** the light, that it was good, and *Elohim* **made a division** between the light and the darkness.⁶

1:5 And *Elohim* **called** the light "day," and, as for the darkness, He **called** it "night."
And there was evening, and there was morning the first day.⁷

1:6 And *Elohim* **said**, "Let there be a sky in the middle of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."⁸

1:7 And *Elohim* **made** the sky, and He **made a division** between the waters which were under the sky and the waters which were above the sky. And it was so.⁹

1:8 And *Elohim* **called** the sky "heavens."
And there was evening, and there was morning a second day.¹⁰

1:9 And *Elohim* **said**, "Let the waters be gathered under the heavens to one place, and let the dry ground be seen." And it was so.¹¹

1:10 And *Elohim* **called** the dry ground "earth," and He **called** the gathering of the waters "oceans." And *Elohim* **saw** that it was good.¹²

1:11 And *Elohim* **said**, "Let the earth sprout grass, plants producing seeds, fruit trees producing fruit of their kind, which have their seed within them, on the earth." And it was so.¹³

1:12 And the earth brought forth grass, plants producing seeds of their kind, and trees producing fruit which has its seeds in it of their kind. And *Elohim* **saw** that it was good.¹⁴

1:13 And there was evening, and there was morning a third day.¹⁵

1:14 And *Elohim* **said**, "Let there be lights in the sky of the heavens in order to make a division between the day and the night, and they will be for signs, for times, and for days and years."¹⁶

1:15 "And let them be for lights in the sky of the heavens, in order to bring light upon the earth." And it was so.¹⁷

1:16 And *Elohim* **made** the two great lights, the great light to dominate the day, and the small light to dominate the night, and the stars.¹⁸

1:17 And *Elohim* **placed** them in the sky of the heavens to light the earth,¹⁹

1:18 to rule the day and the night, and to make a division between the light and the darkness. And *Elohim* **saw** that it was good.²⁰

1:19 And there was evening and there was morning the fourth day.²¹

1:20 And *Elohim* **said**, "Let the waters be full of things that swarm within them, living creatures, and, as for the birds, let them fly above the earth on the face of the sky of the heavens."²²

1:21 And *Elohim* **created** the large sea monsters, all the living, moving creatures, which swarm within the waters according to their kind, and all the winged birds according to their kind. And *Elohim* **saw** that it was good.²³

1:22 And *Elohim* **blessed** them, saying, "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters in the oceans, and let the birds multiply on the earth."²⁴

1:23 And there was evening, and there was morning a fifth day.²⁵

1:24 And *Elohim* **said**, "Let the land bring forth living creatures according to their kind, cattle, moving things, and living things of the land according to their kind." And it was so.²⁶

1:25 And *Elohim* **made** the living things of the earth according to their kind—the cattle according to their kind and every moving thing of the ground according to their kind. And *Elohim* **saw** that it was good.²⁷

1:26 And *Elohim* **said**, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness, and let them be the most important among the fish of the sea, among the birds of the heavens, among the cattle, among all the earth, and among every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”²⁸

1:27 And *Elohim* **created** man in His image. In the image of *Elohim* He **created** him. Male and female He **created** them.²⁹

1:28 And *Elohim* **blessed** them, and *Elohim* **said** to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it, and be more important than the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, and all living, moving things on the earth.”³⁰

1:29 And *Elohim* **said**, “Behold, I have given to you every plant sowing seed, which is on the face of the whole earth, and every tree, on which there is tree fruit sowing seed. It will be food for you.”³¹

1:30 “I have given every green plant as food for every living thing of the earth, for every bird of the heavens, for every moving thing on the earth by which there is a living existence.” And it was so.³²

1:31 And *Elohim* **saw** all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning a sixth day.³³

2:1 And the heavens, and the earth, and all their multitude were really **finished**.³⁴

2:2 And *Elohim* really **finished** on the seventh day His work which He **did**, and He **ceased** on the seventh day from all His work which He **did**.³⁵

2:3 And *Elohim* **blessed** the seventh day, and He **set it apart**, because in it He **ceased** from all His work which *Elohim* had **created** to **do**.³⁶

2:4 These are the bringings forth of the heavens and the earth when they were created.³⁷

God’s Creation of Mankind to Demonstrate Sin and His Mercy in the Midst of His Justice

The First Man and the First Woman in the Garden of Food and Water

In the day when Yahweh *Elohim* **made** the earth and the heavens,³⁸

2:5 as for every bush of the field, they were not yet on the earth, and, as for every plant of the field, they had not yet sprouted, because Yahweh *Elohim* had not caused it to rain on the earth. And, as for man, he was not there to work the ground.³⁹

2:6 And, as for the subterranean stream of fresh water, it flowed up from the earth, and it irrigated all the surface of the ground.⁴⁰

2:7 And Yahweh *Elohim* **formed** the man of dust from the ground, and He breathed in his nose the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.⁴¹

2:8 And Yahweh *Elohim* **planted** a garden in Eden in the east, and He **placed** there the man whom He had **formed**.⁴²

2:9 And Yahweh *Elohim* **caused to grow** from the ground every tree pleasing to look at and good for food. And, as for the tree of life in the middle of the garden, and, as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.⁴³

2:10 And, as for a river, it was flowing out from Eden to irrigate the garden, and from there it divided and became four headwaters.⁴⁴

2:11 The name of the one is Pishon. It is the one going around all the land of Havilah, where there is gold.

2:12 And, as for the gold of that land, it is good. Bdelium and onyx stone are there.

2:13 And, as for the name of the second river, it is Gihon. It is the one going around all the land of Cush.

2:14 And, as for the name of the third river, it is Hiddeqel [Tigris]. It is the one flowing east of Asshur. And, as for the fourth river, it is Perath [Euphrates].

2:15 And Yahweh *Elohim* **took** the man, and He **caused him to settle down** in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.⁴⁵

2:16 And Yahweh *Elohim* **commanded** the man, saying, "From every tree of the garden you may surely eat.

2:17 "But, from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it, because, in the day you eat of it, you will most absolutely die."⁴⁶

2:18 And Yahweh *Elohim* **said**, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make for him a helper like him, who is correspondingly opposite to him."⁴⁷

2:19 And Yahweh *Elohim* **formed** out of the ground every living thing of the field and every bird of the heavens. And He **brought** them to the man to see what he would name them. And whatever the man called the living creature, this was its name.⁴⁸

2:20 And the man gave names to every beast, and to the birds of the heavens, and to every living thing of the field. But, for the man, he did not find a helper like him, who was correspondingly opposite to him.⁴⁹

2:21 And Yahweh *Elohim* **caused a deep sleep to fall** on the man, and he slept. And He **took** one of his ribs, and He **closed** the flesh under it.

2:22 And Yahweh *Elohim* **built** the rib, which he took from the man, into a woman, and He **brought** her to the man.⁵⁰

2:23 And the man said, "This finally is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh."⁵¹

For this she is called Wife, because she was taken from the husband.⁵²

2:24 Therefore, a husband shall abandon his father and his mother, and he shall cling to his wife. And they will become one flesh.⁵³

2:25 And the man and his wife were both naked, and they were not ashamed.⁵⁴

The Serpent's Deception and the Woman's and Man's Disobedience of God

3:1 And, as for the serpent, he was more cunning than every living thing of the field which Yahweh *Elohim* **had made**. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has *Elohim* said that you may not eat from every tree of the garden?"⁵⁵

3:2 And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat,⁵⁶

3:3 "but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, *Elohim* said, 'Do not eat from it, and do not touch it, lest you die.'⁵⁷

3:4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You will not most absolutely die!⁵⁸

3:5 "Because *Elohim* knows that, in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like *Elohim*—knowers of good and evil."⁵⁹

3:6 And the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was attractive to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make someone wise, and she took from its fruit, and she ate, and she gave it also to her husband with her, and he ate.⁶⁰

3:7 And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves, and they made for themselves loincloths.⁶¹

3:8 And they heard the sound of Yahweh *Elohim* **walking** in the garden in the breath of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh *Elohim* in the midst of the trees of the garden.⁶²

God's Righteous Responses to the Serpent, Woman, and Man

3:9 And Yahweh *Elohim* **called** to the man, and He said to him, "Where are you?"⁶³

3:10 And he said, "Your sound I heard in the garden, and I was afraid because I am naked. And I hid myself."⁶⁴

3:11 And He **said**, "Who told you that you are naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?"⁶⁵

3:12 And the man said, "The wife, whom You gave to be with me, she gave to me from the tree, and I ate."⁶⁶

3:13 And Yahweh *Elohim* **said** to the woman, "What is this you did?"⁶⁷

And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."⁶⁸

3:14 And Yahweh *Elohim* **said** to the serpent, "Because you did this, you are more cursed than all the cattle and than all the living things of the field. On your stomach you will get around, and, as for dust, you will eat it all the days of your life."⁶⁹

3:15 "And, as for hatred, I will put it between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. It will bruise you on the head, and, as for you, you will bruise it on the heel."⁷⁰

3:16 To the woman He **said**, "I will greatly increase your anxious toil. And, as for your pregnancy, in pain you will bear children. And to your husband will be your desire. And, as for him, he will rule over you."⁷¹

3:17 And to the man He **said**, "Because you listened to the voice of your wife, and you ate from the tree from which I commanded you, saying, 'Do not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you. In anxious toil you will eat it all the days of your life."⁷²

3:18 "And thorns and thistles it will sprout for you, and you will eat the plants of the field."⁷³

3:19 "By the sweat dripping down your nose, you will eat bread until you return to the ground, because from it you were taken, because you are dust, and to dust you will return."⁷⁴

3:20 And the man called the name of his woman *ḥavvah* [Eve], because she is the mother of all the living."⁷⁵

3:21 And Yahweh *Elohim* **made** for the man and his wife skin tunics, and He **put** them on them."⁷⁶

3:22 And Yahweh *Elohim* **said**, "Behold, the man has become like one who is apart from Us, knowing good and evil. And, now, lest he extend his hand, and he take also from the tree of life, and eats, and he lives continuously..."⁷⁷

3:23 And Yahweh *Elohim* **thrust** him out of the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken."⁷⁸

3:24 And He **drove** the man **out**. And He **stationed** from the east towards the garden of Eden the cherubim and the flaming sword that was turning back and forth, in order to guard the way to the tree of life."⁷⁹

Cain Murders His Brother, Abel

4:1 And, as for the man, he knew *ḥavvah* [Eve], his wife, and she conceived, and she gave birth to Cain [=acquire/build], and she said, "I have acquired/built a man by means of Yahweh."⁸⁰

4:2 And she did it again for the purpose of giving birth to his brother, Abel [=vapor, breath]. And Abel was a shepherd. And, as for Cain, he was a worker of the ground."⁸¹

4:3 And it happened in the course of time, and Cain brought an offering to Yahweh from the fruit of the ground."⁸²

4:4 And, as for Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And Yahweh **looked with favor** on Abel and his offering."⁸³

4:5 And, in regard to Cain and to his offering, He did not **look with favor** on them. And Cain became very angry, and his countenance fell.⁸⁴

4:6 And Yahweh **said** to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen?"⁸⁵

4:7 "Is it not true, that if you do well, it results in a lifting? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door, and its desire is for you. And, as for you, you must rule it."⁸⁶

4:8 And Cain spoke to Abel, his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, and Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and he killed him.⁸⁷

God's Righteous Response to Cain

4:9 And Yahweh **said** to Cain, "Where is Abel, your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"⁸⁸

4:10 And He **said**, "What did you do? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground."⁸⁹

4:11 "And now, you are cursed from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand."⁹⁰

4:12 "When you work the ground, it will not again give its strength to you. A vagrant and a wanderer you will be on the earth."⁹¹

4:13 And Cain said to Yahweh, "My punishment is greater than I can bear."⁹²

4:14 "Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground, and from Your face I will be hidden. And I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me."⁹³

4:15 And Yahweh **said** to him, "Therefore, anyone who kills Cain, he will be avenged sevenfold." And Yahweh **put** a sign on Cain, so that no one finding him would kill him.⁹⁴

Cain Leaves God and Builds a City, Leading to Lamech's Arrogance

4:16 And Cain went out from the presence of Yahweh, and he dwelt in the land of Wandering, east of Eden.⁹⁵

4:17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived, and she gave birth to Enoch. And he built a city, and he called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son.⁹⁶

4:18 And to Enoch was born Irad. And, as for Irad, he gave birth to Mehujael. And, as for Mehujael, he gave birth to Methushael. And, as for Methushael, he gave birth to Lamech.⁹⁷

4:19 And Lamech took for himself two wives. The name of the one was Adah. And, as for the name of the second, it was Zillah.⁹⁸

4:20 And Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and with livestock.⁹⁹

4:21 And, as for the name of his brother, it was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the lyre and the pipe.¹⁰⁰

4:22 And, as for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the one who forges all the implements of bronze and iron. And, as for the sister of Tubal-cain, she was Naamah.¹⁰¹

4:23 And Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to my voice, you wives of Lamech. Hear my speech, because I killed a man for wounding me and a boy for striking me."

4:24 "If Cain will be avenged sevenfold, and [then], as for Lamech, seventy-sevenfold."¹⁰²

Adam and Eve Bear Another Child, Seth, to Replace Abel

4:25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she gave birth to a son. And she called his name Seth, because "*Elohim* **has established** for me another seed in place of Abel, because Cain killed him."¹⁰³

4:26 And to Seth, to him also was birthed a son, and he called his name Enosh. Then, it was begun to call on the name of Yahweh.¹⁰⁴

5:1 This is the account of the bringings forth of man.¹⁰⁵

God Blesses Adam and Eve With Descendants Through Seth, Resulting in Noah

In the day when *Elohim* **created** mankind, in the likeness of *Elohim* He **made** him,
5:2 male and female He **created** them, and He **blessed** them, and He **called** their name mankind in the day when they were created.¹⁰⁶

Adam Through Noah

5:3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and he caused to give birth in his likeness, according to his image, and he called his name Seth.¹⁰⁷

5:4 And the days of Adam occurred, after he caused to give birth Seth, eight hundred years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:5 And all the days of Adam occurred, when he lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.¹⁰⁸

5:6 And Seth lived one hundred and five years, and he caused to give birth Enosh.

5:7 And Seth lived, after he caused to give birth Enosh, eight hundred and seven years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:8 And all the days of Seth occurred, nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.

5:9 And Enosh lived ninety years, and he caused to give birth Kenan.

5:10 And Enosh lived, after he caused to give birth Kenan, eight hundred and fifteen years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:11 And all the days of Enosh occurred, nine hundred and five years, and he died.

5:12 And Kenan lived seventy years, and he caused to give birth Mahalalel.

5:13 And Kenan lived, after he caused to give birth Mahalalel, eight hundred and forty years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:14 And all the days of Kenan occurred, nine hundred and ten years, and he died.

5:15 And Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and he caused to give birth Jared.

5:16 And Mahalalel lived, after he caused to give birth Jared, eight hundred and thirty years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:17 And all the days of Mahalalel occurred, eight hundred and ninety-five years, and he died.

5:18 And Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and he caused to give birth Enoch.

5:19 And Jared lived, after he caused to give birth Enoch, eight hundred years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:20 And all the days of Jared occurred, nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died.

5:21 And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and he caused to give birth Methuselah.

5:22 And Enoch himself walked with *Elohim*, after he caused to give birth Methuselah, three hundred years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:23 And all the days of Enoch occurred, three hundred and sixty-five years.

5:24 And Enoch himself walked with *Elohim*, and he was not, because *Elohim* **took** him.¹⁰⁹

5:25 And Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and he caused to give birth Lamech.

5:26 And Methuselah lived, after he caused to give birth Lamech, seven hundred and eighty-two years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

5:27 And all the days of Methuselah occurred, nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died.

5:28 And Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and he caused to give birth a son.
5:29 And he called his name Noah, saying, "This one will comfort us [allow us to rest] from our work and from the toil of our hands from the ground which Yahweh **cursed**."¹¹⁰
5:30 And Lamech lived, after he caused to give birth Noah, five hundred and ninety-five years, and he caused to give birth sons and daughters.
5:31 And all the days of Lamech occurred, seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.

5:32 And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah caused to give birth Shem, Ham, and Japheth.¹¹¹

Important Facts About Mankind and God's Assessment of Their Moral Condition

6:1 And it occurred that mankind began to multiply on the face of the ground. And, as for daughters, they were birthed to them.¹¹²
6:2 And the sons of *Elohim* saw the daughters of mankind, that they were attractive. And they took wives for themselves from all of them whom they chose.¹¹³

6:3 And Yahweh **said**, "My Spirit will not remain in mankind perpetually, in whom also he is flesh. And his days will be one hundred and twenty years."¹¹⁴

6:4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterwards, when the sons of *Elohim* came to the daughters of mankind, and they gave birth to them. They are the mighty men, who were from the long past, men of reputation.¹¹⁵

6:5 And Yahweh **saw** how great was the evil of mankind on the earth. And, as for every inclination of the thoughts of his heart, they were evil all the days.¹¹⁶
6:6 And Yahweh **reflected** on the fact that He had **made** mankind on the earth, and He **was pained** with respect to his heart.¹¹⁷
6:7 And Yahweh **said**, "I will **wipe out** mankind whom I have **created** from the face of the ground, from mankind as far as animals, as far as creeping things, and as far as birds of the heavens, because I have reflected on the fact that I made them."¹¹⁸
6:8 And, as for Noah, he found grace in the eyes of Yahweh.¹¹⁹

6:9 These are the bringings forth of Noah.¹²⁰

Noah, His Family, the Flood, the Ship, Death, and Life

Noah was a righteous, blameless man among his generations. Noah himself walked with *Elohim*.¹²¹

6:10 And Noah caused to give birth to three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth.¹²²
6:11 And the earth was ruined in the sight of *Elohim*. And the earth was wrong.¹²³

God Commands Noah to Build a Ship

6:12 And *Elohim* **saw** the earth, and, behold, it was ruined, because all flesh had ruined their way on the earth.
6:13 And *Elohim* **said** to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, because the earth is filled with wrong from them. And, behold, I am destroying them with the earth."¹²⁴
6:14 "Make for yourself a ship of *gopher* wood. You shall make the ship with rooms, and you shall cover it inside and outside with tar."¹²⁵
6:15 "And this is how you shall make it. The length of the ship will be three hundred cubits. Its breadth will be fifty cubits. And its height will be thirty cubits.
6:16 "You shall make a roof for the ship, and you shall finish it to a cubit from the top. And, as for the doorway of the ship, you shall set it in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks."¹²⁶

6:17 “And, as for Me, behold, I am **bringing** the flood of water on the earth to **destroy** all flesh in which there is breath of life from under the heavens. Everything that is on the earth will die.¹²⁷

6:18 “And I will **establish** My covenant with you, and you will enter the ship—you, and your sons, and your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.¹²⁸

6:19 “And from every living thing, from all flesh, you shall bring two from each one into the ship, in order to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female.¹²⁹

6:20 “From the birds according to their kind, and from the animals according to their kind. From every creeping thing of the ground according to their kind. Two from each one will come to you in order to keep them alive.¹³⁰

6:21 “And, as for you, take for yourself from all food which is edible, and you shall gather it for yourself. And it shall be for food for you and for them.”¹³¹

6:22 And Noah did according to all that *Elohim* **commanded** him. Thus, he did.¹³²

God Commands Noah, His Family and the Living Creatures to Enter the Ship

7:1 And Yahweh **said** to Noah, “You, enter the ship, and all your household, because I **see** you as righteous in this generation.¹³³

7:2 “From all the clean animals you shall take with you seven by seven, a male and his female, and for the animals that are not clean, it shall be two, a male and his female.¹³⁴

7:3 “Also from the birds of the sky, seven by seven, male and female, to keep alive offspring on the face of all the earth.

7:4 “Because, after seven more days, I will **cause it to rain** on the earth for forty days and forty nights. And I will **wipe out** every living thing that I have **made** from the face of the land.”¹³⁵

7:5 And Noah did according to all that Yahweh **commanded** him.¹³⁶

7:6 And, as for Noah, he was six hundred years old. And, as for the flood, water occurred on the earth.¹³⁷

7:7 And Noah, and his sons, and his wife, and his wives’ sons entered the ship because of the waters of the flood.¹³⁸

7:8 From the clean animals and from the animals that were not clean, and from the birds and everything that creeps on the ground,

7:9 two by two they came to Noah into the ship, male and female, just as *Elohim* **commanded** Noah.

7:10 And it occurred after seven days, and, as for the water of the flood, it was on the earth.¹³⁹

7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, all the headwaters of the great deep were burst open. And, as for the windows of the heavens, they were opened.¹⁴⁰

7:12 And the rain occurred on the earth for forty days and forty nights.¹⁴¹

7:13 On this same day, Noah entered, and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah’s wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ship,

7:14 they, and every beast according to their kind, and all the cattle according to their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind, and every bird according to its kind, every bird, every wing.

7:15 And they entered the ship to Noah, two by two, from all the flesh, in which there is the breath of life.

7:16 And, as for those who entered, male and female from all flesh, they entered according to that which *Elohim* **commanded** him. And Yahweh **closed** behind him.¹⁴²

The Flood

7:17 And the flood occurred for forty days on the earth. And the waters increased, and they lifted the ship. And it was high above the earth.

7:18 And the waters were greater, and they greatly increased on the earth. And the ship proceeded on the face of the waters.

7:19 And the waters were greater more and more on the earth. And all the high mountains, which are under the heavens, were covered.

7:20 Fifteen cubits from the top the waters were greater, and the mountains were covered.¹⁴³

Death

7:21 And all flesh died—the things that teem on the earth, among the birds, and among the cattle, and among the beasts, and among the swarming things of the swarming things on the earth, and all mankind.

7:22 Everything in whose nostrils is the breath of the breath of life, from everything which is on dry land, died.

7:23 And He **wiped out** everything living thing, which was on the face of the ground—from mankind, to animals, to creeping things, to birds of the sky. And they were wiped out from the earth. And only Noah was remaining, and those who were with him in the ship.

7:24 And the waters were greater on the earth for one hundred and fifty days.¹⁴⁴

The Water Recedes

8:1 And *Elohim* **remembered** Noah and all the animals and all the cattle that were with him on the ship. And *Elohim* **caused a wind to pass over** the earth, and the waters subsided.

8:2 And the headwaters of the deep and the windows of the heavens **were closed**. And the rain from the sky **was restrained**.

8:3 And the water receded from the earth, departing and returning. And the water decreased at the end of one hundred and fifty days.¹⁴⁵

8:4 And the ship rested, in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

8:5 And, as for the water, it was departing and decreasing until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.¹⁴⁶

The Raven and the Dove Look for Dry Land

8:6 And it occurred at the end of forty days, and Noah opened the window of the ship which he had made.

8:7 And he sent out a raven, and it went out, going out and returning, until the water dried up from on the earth.

8:8 And he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water had decreased from the face of the land.

8:9 But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot. And she returned to him, to the ship, because the water was on the face of all the earth. And he put out his hand and took her. And he brought her to himself, to the ship.

8:10 And he waited yet another seven days. And he again sent out the dove from the ship.

8:11 And the dove came to him toward the evening. And, behold, a plucked olive leaf was in her mouth. And Noah knew that the water had decreased from the earth.

8:12 And he waited yet another seven days. And he sent out the dove, and she did not again return to him.¹⁴⁷

8:13 And it occurred in the six hundred and first year, at the beginning, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from on the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ship. And he looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dried up.

8:14 And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.¹⁴⁸

God Commands Noah, His Family, and the Living Creatures to Leave the Ship

8:15 And *Elohim* **spoke** to Noah, saying,

8:16 “Go out from the ship, you, and your wife, and your sons, and your sons’ wives with you.

8:17 "All the animals who are with you from all flesh, birds, and cattle, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, bring out with you. And they will swarm on the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply on the earth."¹⁴⁹

8:18 And Noah went out, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him.

8:19 Every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything thing that creeps on the earth, according to their families, they went out from the ship.¹⁵⁰

Noah Worships God with a Burnt Offering

8:20 And Noah built an altar to Yahweh. And he took from every clean animal, and from every clean bird, and he offered burnt offerings on the altar.¹⁵¹

8:21 And Yahweh **smelled** the pacifying aroma. And Yahweh **said** to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of mankind, because the intent of the heart of mankind is evil from his youth, and I will never again strike dead every living thing as I did.

8:22 "While there are all the days of the earth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night will not cease."¹⁵²

God Blesses Noah and His Family with Populating the Earth with Certain Provisions

9:1 And *Elohim* **blessed** Noah and his sons. And He **said** to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth."¹⁵³

9:2 "And, as for the fear of you and the terror of you, they will be on every living thing of the earth and on every bird of the sky. With everything that creeps on the ground and with all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given.

9:3 "Every creeping thing that has life will be for you for food like the green plant. I give it all to you."¹⁵⁴

9:4 "Only flesh with its existence, blood, you shall not eat.

9:5 "And certainly your blood pertaining to your existence I will **seek**. From the hand of every living one I will require it, and from the hand of mankind. From the hand of a man, his brother, I will **seek** the existence of the man.

9:6 "The one who sheds the blood of man, in the place of the man, his blood will be shed, because in the image of *Elohim* He **made** mankind."¹⁵⁵

9:7 "And, as for you, be fruitful and multiply. Swarm on the earth, and multiply on it."¹⁵⁶

God's Covenant with All Living Creatures

9:8 And *Elohim* **spoke** to Noah and to his sons with him, saying,

9:9 "And, as for Me, behold, I am **establishing** My covenant with you and your seed/descendants after you,

9:10 "and every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every animal of the earth with you, from all that comes out of the ship, according to every animal of the earth.

9:11 "And I will **establish** My covenant with you, and all flesh will never again be cut off from the water of a flood. And there never again will be a flood to destroy the earth."¹⁵⁷

9:12 And *Elohim* **said**, "This is the sign of the covenant that I am **making** between me and you and every living creature that is with you to the perpetual generations.

9:13 "My bow I **place** in the cloud, and it will be as a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.

9:14 "And it will be that when I **bring** a cloud over the earth, and the bow is seen in the cloud,

9:15 "and I will **remember** My covenant which is between Me and you and between every living creature in all flesh. And there will never again be water for a flood to destroy all flesh.

9:16 "And the bow will be in the cloud, and I will **see** it to **remember** the perpetual covenant between *Elohim* and every living creature within all flesh which is on the earth."

9:17 And *Elohim* **said** to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have **established** between Me and all flesh which is on the earth."¹⁵⁸

9:18 And the sons of Noah who came out of the ship were Shem and Ham and Japheth. And, as for Ham, he was the father of Canaan.¹⁵⁹

9:19 These three were the sons of Noah, and, as for those from these, all the earth was dispersed.¹⁶⁰

Noah, Drunk with Wine, and His Sons' Responses

9:20 And Noah began to be a man of the ground, and he planted a vineyard.¹⁶¹

9:21 And he drank of the wine, and he became drunk. And he uncovered himself inside his tent.

9:22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father. And he told his two brothers outside.

9:23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and they put it on both their shoulders. And they walked backward, and they covered the nakedness of their father. And, as for their faces, they were backward. And, as for the nakedness of their father, they did not see it.

Noah's Response to His Sons' and Grandson's Responses

9:24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and he knew what his younger son had done to him.¹⁶²

9:25 And he said, "Cursed be Canaan. A servant of servant he will be to his brothers."

9:26 And he said, "Blessed be Yahweh, *Elohim* of Shem, and may Canaan be a servant to him [Him?].

9:27 "And may *Elohim* enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem. And may Canaan be a servant to him."¹⁶³

9:28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

9:29 And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.¹⁶⁴

10:1 And these are the bringings forth of the sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth.¹⁶⁵

Descendants of Noah's Sons—Japheth, Ham, and Shem

And to them sons after the flood were born.¹⁶⁶

Japheth's Descendants

10:2 The sons of Japheth were Gomer and Magog and Magai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras.

10:3 And, as for the sons of Gomer, they were Ashkenaz and Riphath and Togarmah.

10:4 And, as for the sons of Javan, they were Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

10:5 From these the coastlands of the nations were separated, each man for his language, for their families, into their nations.¹⁶⁷

Ham's Descendants

10:6 And, as for the sons of Ham, they were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan.

10:7 And, as for the sons of Cush, they were Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca. And, as for the sons of Raamah, they were Sheba and Dedan.

10:8 And, as for Cush, he gave birth to Nimrod. He began to be a dominant man on the earth.

10:9 He was a dominant hunter before Yahweh. Therefore, it said, "Like Nimrod a dominant hunter before Yahweh."

10:10 The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Akkad and Calneh in the land of Shinar.

10:11 From that land he went forth into Assyria, and he built Nineveh and Rehoboth City and Calah,

10:12 and Resen between Nineveh and Calah. That was a great city.¹⁶⁸

10:13 And, as for Mizraim, he gave birth to Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim

10:14 and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from whom came forth the Philistines) and Caphtorim.

10:15 And, as for Canaan, he gave birth to Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth

10:16 and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite

10:17 and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite

10:18 and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite. And afterwards, the families of the Canaanite were scattered.

10:19 And the border of the Canaanite will be from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza, as you go toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.¹⁶⁹

10:20 These are the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, by their nations.

Shem's Descendants

10:21 And to Shem was born... Also he was the father of all the sons of Eber. He was the older brother of Japheth.¹⁷⁰

10:22 The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram.

10:23 And, as for the sons of Aram, they were Uz and Hul and Gether and Mash.

10:24 And, as for Arpachshad, he gave birth to Shelah. And, as for Shelah, he gave birth to Eber.

10:25 And to Eber, two sons were born. The name of one was Peleg, because, in his days, the earth was divided. And, as for the name of his brother, it was Joktan.

10:26 And, as for Joktan, he gave birth to Almodad and Sheleph and Hazarmaveth and Jerah

10:27 and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah

10:28 and Obal and Abimael and Sheba

10:29 and Ophir and Havilah and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

10:30 And their dwelling was from Mesha, as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east.¹⁷¹

10:31 These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations.

10:32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, by their nations.¹⁷²

Mankind's Attempt to Ignore God (the Tower of Babel) and God's Response

And from these, the nations were separated after the flood on the earth.¹⁷³

Building A City and Tower

11:1 And it occurred that all the earth was the same language and one set of words.

11:2 And it occurred as they journeyed east, and they found a plain in the land of Shinar. And they settled there.

11:3 And they said, a man to his friend, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them with fire." And the brick was for stone for them. And, as for tar, it was for mortar for them.

11:4 And they said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city and a tower. And, as for its top, it will be into the heavens. And let us make for ourselves a name, before we are scattered on the face of the whole earth."¹⁷⁴

God's Response—Mixing Their Language, Scattering Them, Building the City Stops, "Babel"

11:5 And Yahweh **came down** to **see** the city and the tower which the sons of mankind had built.

11:6 And Yahweh **said**, "Behold, they are one people. And, as for the language, it is the same for all of them. And, as for this, it is what they have begun to do. And now, all that they purpose to do will not be impossible for them.

11:7 "Come, let us go down, and let us mix their language, so that a man will not hear the language of his friend."¹⁷⁵

11:8 And Yahweh **scattered** them from there over the face of all the earth, and they stopped building the city.

11:9 Therefore, its name was called Babel, because there Yahweh **mixed** the language of all the earth. And from there Yahweh **scattered** them over the face of all the earth.¹⁷⁶

11:10 These are the bringings forth of Shem.¹⁷⁷

Descendants of Shem Leading to Terah, Abraham, Nahor, and Haran

Shem was one hundred years old, and he caused to give birth Arpachshad two years after the flood.¹⁷⁸

11:11 And Shem lived five hundred years after he caused to give birth Arpachshad. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:12 And, as for Arpachshad, he lived thirty-five years, and he caused to give birth Shelah.

11:13 And Arpachshad lived four hundred and three years after he caused to give birth Shelah. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:14 And, as for Shelah, he lived thirty years, and he caused to give birth Eber.¹⁷⁹

11:15 And Shelah lived four hundred and three years after he caused to give birth Eber. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:16 And, as for Eber, he lived thirty-four years, and he caused to give birth Peleg.

11:17 And Eber lived four hundred and thirty years after he caused to give birth Peleg. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:18 And, as for Peleg, he lived thirty years, and he caused to give birth Reu.

11:19 And Peleg lived two hundred and nine years after he caused to give birth Reu. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:20 And, as for Reu, he lived thirty-two years, and he caused to give birth Serug.

11:21 And Reu lived two hundred and seven years after he caused to give birth Serug. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:22 And, as for Serug, he lived thirty years, and he caused to give birth Nahor.

11:23 And Serug lived two hundred years after he caused to give birth Nahor. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:24 And, as for Nahor, he lived twenty-nine years, and he caused to give birth Terah.

11:25 And Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years after he caused to give birth Terah. And he caused to give birth sons and daughters.

11:26 And, as for Terah, he lived seventy years, and he caused to give birth Abram, Nahor, and Haran.¹⁸⁰

11:27 And these are the bringings forth of Terah.¹⁸¹

Terah caused the births of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. And, as for Haran, he caused the birth of Lot.¹⁸²

11:28 And Haran died in the presence of Terah, his father, in the land of his relatives, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

11:29 And Abram and Nahor took for themselves wives. The name which was Abram's was Sarai. And, as for the name which was Nahor's, it was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah.

11:30 And Sarai was infertile. She had no child.¹⁸³

11:31 And Terah took Abram, his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, the son of his son, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, who was the wife of Abram, his son. And they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans, in order to go to the land of Canaan. And they came to Haran, and they dwelt there.

11:32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years. And Terah died in Haran.

¹ בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ (Septuagint – ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν) – Moses, the author, begins his account of God’s creating the reality which we inhabit by stating simply that it had a beginning determined by God. The obvious question is, then what relationship did and does the creation have to God after He first determined its initial existence? And the inference the reader is supposed to draw is that God continued and continues to determine every element and detail of the “heavens and the earth,” including every human being and his life and choices.

This is a summary statement of Genesis 1:1-2:3 to the effect that, just as God brought the created reality into existence, such that all the elements that are important for the story of mankind, e.g., the earth, the oceans, the sky, the animals and birds, and human beings themselves, have their source and meaning in God, so do these elements owe every detail of their initial and ongoing existence to the transcendent Creator. It is He and only He who has caused everything to be, i.e., He created/made (בְּרָא/ἐποίησεν) it, and He continues to create it. In fact, it is theologically impossible for anything to be a part of the creation during the creation’s ongoing existence and not be created by God. To say that something is in the creation is to say that it is created by the creator and cannot exist no matter what it is—a star, a rock, a tree, a human being, a human beings’ choice—without the creator’s causing it to exist exactly as it does. In this way, verse 1 is a summary statement of the creation account of Genesis 1:1-2:4a.

I think that it is significant that Moses, the author, began this account with the prepositional phrase בְּרֵאשִׁית = “In the beginning” and not the verb בְּרָא = He created. Moses is emphasizing that God’s creative activity is what brought the creation into existence. Nothing or no one else did. The beginning of the creation belonged to God and to another person or thing. Therefore, it was truly “in the beginning” that “God created...”

And it was אֱלֹהִים = *Elohim*, God, and no one else who did the creating. He “created” out of nothing (בְּרָא) that which came into existence through His willing it and anything else to do so. And He had no help or assistance from anyone or anything when He created the creation. In addition, Moses says that it was literally “Gods,” which is the plural *Elohim*. But the Septuagint, rather than translating this word with θεοί = Gods, uses the two words ὁ θεὸς = the God. In other words, the Greek translators were most likely interpreting Moses to be meaning the one, true, and only God by using the plural *Elohim* instead of the singular *El*.

We may be tempted to think that Moses is referring to the Trinity as formulated and believed by most Christians since the Nicene Creed of A.D. 325, but I think that this would be to read into the text what is not there. While arguing for or against the concept of the Trinity would take too long in these notes, it makes much more sense that Moses is being emphatic with the purpose of teaching that it was definitely and only GOD! who has made and continues to make the creation. The Septuagint, therefore, becomes another important clue to interpret the plural *Elohim* as the singular God (ὁ θεός), so that it is God and God alone whom Moses has in mind.

And the creation consists of אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ, i.e., the heavens and the earth. While the guess is that there are at least 200 billion galaxies in our universe, there is only one earth on which we live and carry out our lives and existences as creatures of God and where God intended to create the story that will feature Jesus of Nazareth as the icon of God in human history and the ruler and high priest of sinners who obtain eternal life in the Kingdom of God. As a result, Moses uses a merism and divides (μερίδι) the created reality into two parts (μερίς). One part is the “earth” where the main part of God’s story takes place and where we as the main characters in the story (apart from Jesus’ being the main character of the main characters) takes place. The other part is the “heavens,” i.e., everything else in the creation that God uses as tools and backdrops for the main location, the earth, and the main elements, human beings, of His story.

Thus, as I said, Moses states clearly and unequivocally that the creation and cosmos began to exist (and implies that it continues to exist) by virtue of God’s (and only God’s, and no one else’s activity’s or help’s) bringing it into existence. This creation had its beginning and continues to have its presence because of God alone and His desire and purpose alone for what it started off to be and continues to be until He destroys this cosmos and creates an eternal one according to Revelation 20 & 21.

² וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֵהוֹמָה (Septuagint – ἡ δὲ γῆ ἦν ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος) – Because the author in this first creation account is stating categorically that God has brought all things, especially all things relevant to the story of man, into existence, what makes the most sense as to the author’s intent here in v. 2?

- 1) Is he stating that God created the cosmos in v. 1, and then something happened to it, particularly to the “earth,” such that it was left in a condition of chaos and in need of being reorganized?
- 2) Is he stating that God initially created a cosmos and particularly the “earth” in a condition of chaos, and then He organized it?
- 3) Is he saying that before God actually made the earth, the watery deep, and the waters, they had already acquired an initial existence from some other source (or even self-sourced), and God acted on them afterwards to move them from a state of chaos to one of being organized?
- 4) Is the author saying that, before God brought anything into existence, as expressed in regard to the earth by the words “*tohu vavohu*,” i.e., without form and void or invisible and unformed, the only things that “existed” were

“darkness” (of sorts—see the next note) and God?

This last option makes the most sense in the light of even the rest of the Bible, which describes God as the author and creator of all reality, i.e., of every element (“thing”) and moment of time that constitutes the history of the creation. Thus the author is writing about the “earth” with *disjunctive* syntax instead of *conjunctive* syntax and wants to make the most profound point possible about the creation, that he implied in v. 1. Before there was a creation, there was only God. The “earth” was not there. Indeed, nothing was there, in the sense that nothing God could or did make and bring into existence was there. Again, only God was there.

But it is interesting that the author mentions only “the earth” here and does not include “the heavens,” because was it not, too, “invisible and unformed?” So why mention only “the earth?” Probably because it, along with the human beings on it, and especially the most important human being, Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and high priest of sinners for all eternity, is the center of God’s story that He is going to tell. And, certainly, Moses implies “the heavens” as not existing yet, either, when he refers to only “the earth.”

Thus, the Septuagint states that the earth was invisible and unformed—because it was not created, even though it was God who would eventually bring it into existence, because only He can do so. And thus He did, as described in the rest of the Genesis 1 account. Again, the profound point that the author is making in this whole verse is that nothing existed prior to God’s causing it to exist, so that He created out of absolute nothing (*ex nihilo*) what we now see and experience within the entire created reality.

This is to say that God is truly the author of whatever else exists besides Him—regardless of what it is and when it exists.

עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְחָשֶׁךְ (Septuagint – καὶ σκότος ἐπάνω τῆς ἀβύσσου) – Here we have another *disjunctive* statement, and we can ask the same questions of the “darkness” and the “surface (literally “face”) of the [coming] watery deep” as we did about the earth—

- 1) Is the author stating that God created the cosmos in v. 1, and then something happened to it such that it was left in a condition of deep darkness that needed to be organized into the universe as we now know it?
- 2) Is he stating that God initially created a cosmos in a condition of darkness, and then He organized it?
- 3) Is he saying that before God actually made the earth, the watery deep, and the waters, they had already acquired an initial existence from some other source (or self-sourced), and God acted on them afterwards to move them from a state of chaos to one of being organized?
- 4) Is the author saying, that before God brought anything into existence, as expressed in regard to the “darkness” over the watery deep,” the only things that existed were “darkness” and God, while “darkness” is actually the same as nothingness?

In line with the author’s intent in v. 2, it makes the most sense that #4 is correct, as #4 was correct in the previous note. Therefore, in this Genesis account of the beginning of the creation, just as the earth was originally uncreated, so also the scary stuff of the “watery deep” could be considered to be “dark,” i.e., not yet created and therefore nothing in and of itself, because it was going to be God and God alone who would bring the entire creation into existence, both the stuff which does not make us afraid and the stuff that does—such as the watery deep (at least, for the ancient peoples). As a result, there is nothing ultimately to fear in the creation, if a person truly understands that it will be the transcendent Creator who sovereignly and purposefully brings into existence and controls even the “watery deep,” the placement of the earth, all its elements, and its history to replace the nothingness which “existed” before it and to tell the story which He wants to tell.

Therefore, that which existed before God actually created the creation was only God and “darkness,” i.e., nothingness, which could be identified as the complete lack or void of something or anything which existed or exists *other than or apart from God*.

It is not that the “darkness” actually did “exist,” in the sense that God had brought it into existence and it was now something to see and experience. Instead, we can say that something (even something which did not actually “exist,” including darkness as we experience it) was available for God to speak into actual existence, and these are the things that clearly become important for His story of man and ultimately THE man, Jesus of Nazareth, who as the icon of God becomes the most important creation.

In other words, the “earth,” the “watery deep,” and the “waters” all were going to be important aspects of the creation once God brought them into existence, and therefore they all required God eventually to grant them existence. Yet, before He did, there was **nothing** except for God, the one and only God who was prepared to bring His story of creation into existence and even finish it some day with the eternal Kingdom of God (not that the reader can get all of this out of v. 2, but we learn that this is God’s ultimate purpose through studying the rest of the Bible).

Anchor BD—the deep (תְּהוֹם) was a terrifying primeval ocean [cf. the various uses of תְּהוֹם in the OT, a watery deep which could be the source of a massive amount of water, even to cover Pharaoh and his army for example] in the ANE on which the earth was thought to have been placed afloat [probably highlighting man’s fear and insecurity in this present existence]. In Babylonian mythology, Marduk battles and defeats Tiamat, who is the personification of the “deep.” Then, he splits her body into two parts, with one part making the heavens and sky, with the other part making the earth, thus creating the cosmos and bringing order to it.

⁴ וַיְהִי אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֵם עַל-פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם (Septuagint – καὶ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἐπεφέρετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος) – Here, we have another *disjunctive* syntax, this time regarding God, i.e., the Spirit of God, His activity within and in regard to the creation.

Again, we can ask the same questions as above, and this time about the “waters”—

1) Is the author stating that God created the cosmos in v. 1, and then something happened to it such that it was left in a condition of deep darkness and chaos of waters that needed to be organized into the universe as we now know it?
2) Is he stating that God initially created a cosmos in a condition of darkness and chaotic waters, and then He organized it?

3) Is he saying that before God actually made the earth, the watery deep, and the waters, they had already acquired an initial existence from some other source (or self-sourced), and God acted on them afterwards to move them from a state of chaos to one of being organized?

4) Is the author saying that, before God brought anything into existence, as expressed of the “darkness” over the watery deep” and the “Spirit of God” “hovering” over the “waters,” the only things that existed were “darkness” and God?

The fourth option still makes the most sense in the light of what the author is doing in v. 2—stating that nothing existed before God created the creation.

The author is describing God as the one who is floating/hovering over the [coming] “waters.” Yet, they do not exist either, just as the earth and the watery deep do not exist, but they are coming, and God will be in control of them. He, the “Spirit” of God, anticipates what He is going to do when He begins His creating activity. In other words, this reference to God is anticipatory of His activity within the creation of creating the elements of it. Therefore, when the “waters” do come into existence, it will be only as God desires for them to do so.

The importance of this idea is found in the fact that water is a vital source of existence for man. Without water, there is no food, and there is nothing to drink to keep man alive. As a result, it is God’s creative activity alone which will make it possible for there to be water, either exogenous as in Egypt and Mesopotamia where the rivers are fed from sources outside of these areas, or endogenous as in Israel where the supply of water comes from rain to water the plants and fill the aquifers.

Thus we have in verse 2 statements to the effect that literally nothing existed prior to the beginning of creation except God Himself, who was anticipating and looking forward to what He was going to do. Therefore, when He starts creating as exemplified by the “Let there be...” statements, things come into existence out of absolute nothingness (*ex nihilo*). God does not take pre-existing material and shape it into the “creation.” He starts with nothing and transcendently causes something, and indeed everything, to come into existence.

⁵ וַיֵּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי אוֹר (Septuagint – καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός γενεθήτω φῶς, καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς) – The obvious question about 1:3-2:4a is what does the author mean by using the evenings and mornings of days to refer to the different times which God employed to make the various elements of the creation that he mentions, i.e.,

- 1) light and darkness
- 2) sky, waters, heavens
- 3) waters, heavens, dry ground, earth, grass, plants producing seeds, fruit trees producing fruit and seeds
- 4) lights in the sky of the heavens, even the two great lights of the day and of the night, the stars
- 5) living things in the waters and birds on the face of the sky of the heavens,
- 6) living things of the earth, including human beings, both male and female

At least four options are—

- 1) six (and seven) literal twenty-four hour periods
- 2) six (and seven) periods of time that the author does not indicate as to their actual length
- 3) six (and seven) periods of time that definitely refer to one moment when God brought everything into existence at once
- 4) the six (and seven) days of the Jewish work week, to which God refers in the Mosaic Covenant, as a convenient way to make his point of God’s absolute determinism

While each of the four options is possibly true, there are several reasons why #4 makes the most sense—

1) the creation of certain elements is not in a necessary chronological order; for example, light and darkness on the first day and then the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day, so that we wonder what was the source of light on the first day and how this day turned into night

2) similarly, the plants on the third day in the presence of what light (and darkness) had been created on the first day and must have disappeared during the night?

3) again, the question of the relationship between the light of the first day and the sun, moon, and stars of the fourth day?

4) the juxtaposition of the author’s description in vs. 1-2 and his description of vs. 1:3-2:4a where there is an obvious transition from nothing existing except God to the various important things existing by means of God

We will see that this creation account is just as much about what the author does not say as what he does say. For example, here, in vs. 3-5, God creates both light and darkness as elements within the creation. But, if he has said in v. 2 that nothing exists, not the earth and not the heavens, then what is the source of light in these verses? It is not the sun, because God makes it in v. 16 on the fourth day. In addition, where is the earth that having light and darkness imply, and where is the sun that evening and morning imply? Clearly, the necessity of having them for the sake of the light ad

darkness is not Moses' point. This helps lead us to the conclusion that he is not presenting an explanation of the chronological and sequential activities of God when He brought the creation into being. Instead, he is declaring that God is the divine determiner of every detail of the creation—and that actual light and darkness are vitally important to sustaining the physical existences of human beings, which is one of the important points of this creation account. In other words, if the author's intent in this creation account is to state clearly and unequivocally that God is the source, creator, and maker of every detail within this universe of the creation, *which specifically contains all that human beings need to be sustained physically until they transition into the time of the eternal Kingdom of God*, then the Jewish seven day work week with the seventh day being the one which requires a cessation of work by the Jews is a convenient way to demonstrate his meaning. Thus, the author describes God's work of creating the various kinds of elements of the cosmos which impinge upon man's existence, so that they represent *everything physical and part of man's everyday common experience within the creation*, that led to God's finishing this initial work and moving on to another work, that of bringing about human history and the eternal Kingdom of God.

Here in v. 3, the author says that light, actual physical light and actual physical darkness are the first important elements of man's existence, and which he desires to mention as that which God spoke about, made, and brought into existence—at some point in His actions of creating the current cosmos. Of course, this is quite something when we realize how difficult it is to produce light, even with existing materials within the creation. Now imagine bringing light into existence with nothing but one's mind and imagination. This is what God has done, along with His having brought actual, physical darkness into existence. In other words, "darkness" here is different from v. 2. There it was darkness that equals nothingness, i.e., complete non-existence of anything created by God. Here it is physical darkness which is anything in the material world which lacks light either emanating from it or shining on it. In effect, God controls if and when there is actual physical light and if and when there is actual physical darkness. These elements came into existence exactly as God wanted them to do so.

In addition, clearly Genesis 1 is not an account of the historical or chronological order of the events of the creation, because light on day one is brought into existence so to speak before the sun, the moon, and the stars of day four. Therefore, the author is using the chronological framework of the Jewish work and rest week as described in the Mosaic Covenant to communicate that *Elohim* is the transcendent creator of all reality, regardless of the order in which He brought things into existence, indeed even if there was no order but God merely created everything all at once. Plus, God stopped bringing the initial universe into existence and started telling His story—as in Genesis 2 and on from there.

⁶ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם כִּי-טוֹב וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאָדָם וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ – The first important elements of human, physical existence that Moses mentions that God created have been light and darkness. Now he states that God "saw" the light—not the darkness, but the light, even though the darkness is an actual thing and not just nothingness as it was in v. 2. While darkness is important, for allowing people to sleep, for example, clearly light provides more assistance to human beings for their continuing to exist and live their lives on the earth—through their work during the day. Therefore, this is probably why the author says only that God "saw the light."

And then, the author mentions that God evaluated the light, which is to say that He considered it either a good thing or a bad thing that it existed. And His evaluation was that it was "good." It was the right thing to exist for the sake of man's physical sustainability and existence on the earth.

But, because God will design human beings to need both light and darkness for sustainability purposes, He "made a division" between when and where both light and darkness appear to be a part of the environment of the human beings. In fact, this idea of dividing between two contrasting elements of the creation is an important part of the author's explanation of it, as he says also in vs. 6,7,14, & 18. Indeed, God will divide humanity into two groups, e.g., men and women, the Jews and Gentiles, and believers and unbelievers, and He will divide human destiny into two outcomes, i.e., condemnation and destruction vs. justification/forgiveness and eternal life. And it will be sinful human beings who ignore and/or distort these divinely desired divisions for their own selfish purposes, which, obviously, will reveal itself in the two different outcomes and destinies for people's existences.

⁷ וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאֹרֶךְ יוֹם וּלְחֹשֶׁךְ לַיְלָה וַיְהי-עֶרֶב וַיְהי-בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד – The author now indicates that God "called" or named both the presence and timing of the light and the presence and timing of the darkness. The first He named "day," and the second He named "night." Thus, He states that He exercises authority and even control over these elements. And this was also probably to make the division of these two elements more obvious and even convenient for human beings with respect to their daily routines and the necessary activities which they were going to have to perform in order to survive physically and sustain their earthly existences.

Then, by employing the framework of the Jewish work week of the Mosaic Covenant, the author brings to an end his pointing out that God brought into existence these two important elements of human existence—light and darkness, day and night. He does so by saying that there was "evening" and "morning" this "first day." It is as though he is saying that he is done with making sure his readers know that God is the source and creator of both "light" and "darkness," so that he is ready to move on to the next category of important elements for human, physical existence.

⁸ The next elements that the author mentions are the “sky” and the “waters,” indeed two locations of waters, because the sky separates and divides the two.

⁹ Here, we see that there are waters “under the sky” and waters “above the sky,” meaning that there is water on the physical earth itself and water above it in the clouds of the sky, so that both waters become important for human existence. The lower waters are for immediate drinking, fishing, and sailing, for example, while the upper waters are for raining and snowing that fill the oceans, lakes, rivers, and streams and water the plants that are grown for food. We may be tempted to interpret v. 2 as saying that the earth existed in a chaotic form, but I still think that it makes more sense to see all of v. 2 as declaring that nothing existed before God brought the creation into existence. Therefore, the implied earth here is not to say that v. 2 indicates that God created it then. Instead, it is simply a prop of sorts in Moses’ scheme of describing God’s creation activities that are necessary for man’s physical existence on the earth.

¹⁰ As with light, the author has God name the sky as “heavens” (and that which is “above” the earth, even all the way into the invisible spiritual realm?), because He wants to make an important distinction between that on which human beings live solidly with their feet planted on the ground, the “earth,” and that which is above them where they cannot walk and live—except for a while in modern airplanes. In addition, the author brings to an end his pointing out that God determines these elements of human, physical existence by stating that “there was evening, and there was morning a second day.” So two categories of important things for human beings with four to go. But notice that there is no evaluation of the “sky,” that it was either good or bad. It is just there to separate the waters on the earth and the waters in the clouds.

¹¹ Now Moses moves on to the third category of necessary elements of the creation for human existence, and it starts with the division of water and dry land into mostly oceans and land—with lakes and land right behind, I assume. But this implies an earth, which, again, the author has not mentioned that God created, so that what he is not saying is as important as what he is saying. This is not a chronological account. It is a theological account to declare that God is the divine determiner of all created reality. First, God speaks and says to let the waters and the dry ground have their extents and characteristics on the earth. And because God spoke and declared this to be the case, it happened exactly as He desired and determined.

¹² Again, there is a naming, and this is first of the dry ground as “earth” and second of the “gathering of the waters” as “oceans.” To say that God names them means that He has absolute authority and control over them both, including the extent of each one and the environment of each one, i.e., whether hospitable or not, for example. Once again and for the second time, God “saw that [this whole thing of the third day] was good.” Of course it was, because this was for the physical benefit of the main characters of His story, human beings and their physical sustenance on the earth.

¹³ During this same “day,” God speaks into existence grass, plants, and fruit trees with their seeds. And these clearly, too, are for man’s physical benefit. It is God alone who ultimately provides these, not anything within the creation as if it has ultimate authority or control of food, etc.

¹⁴ They all came about exactly as God wanted to them to do so. His desire and determination are always what prevail. Plus, for the third time in three days, God evaluates His creative product and declares that it is good, i.e., it is good for man’s physical existence and sustenance.

¹⁵ And now the author comes to the conclusion of the third category of physical elements that God makes for man’s benefit on this earth. Another reference to the framework of the Jewish work and rest week.

¹⁶ Speaking of light and sources of light, the author returns to this category of the first day and provides more details. Again, and for the fourth time in the narrative, God speaks into existence certain elements of the creation that are important for human beings to survive. These are sources of light to be “in the sky of the heavens” and “to make a division between the day and the night.” Thus, they are “signs” to indicate God’s existence and having created them, “times” to provide a sense of chronology and sequence, and “for days and years” also to mark the passage of time and moving from one moment and day and year to the next as God moves history from one moment to His goal of the Kingdom of God.

These physical sources of light will determine within the creation when day and when night occur on the earth. Thus, they will indicate when not only days occur, but also seasons and years, the former probably by virtue of how long the days are in relationship to the nights. The longer the days, the warmer they are, and vice versa.

¹⁷ And the author makes explicit that the light of these sources is specifically for the earth that God makes as the physical habitation and dwelling place of human beings in the present realm. And God brings this about. Thus, the author explicitly states that these sources of light are “for” their existence above the earth and “in order to

bring light” (a very important element for physical sustenance!) “upon the earth.” Every aspect of life that requires light for human beings to survive physically starts with these “lights.”

¹⁸ This verse states simply that God made these various sources of light, so that one of them dominates the day (the sun) and one of them dominates the night (the moon), along with there being the stars.

¹⁹ And God situated the sun, the moon, and the stars exactly where He wanted them to be to bring about optimal light and circumstances (heat, for example) for human beings to exist on the earth and to sustain their physical lives.

²⁰ The author implies that the sun “rules” the day, while the moon “rules” the night, so that there is a clear division between the darkness that would exist if there were no sources of light and the light from these sources. Plus, for the fourth time in four days, God evaluates His creative activity and declares it to be good—of course, because it is for the sake of human beings who will be the main characters of His story.

²¹ And the author finishes his description of the fourth category of important elements for the sake of human beings.

²² For the fifth time in the narrative, God speaks certain elements of human interest into the creation—

- 1) living creatures (חַיָּוִיִּם) within the bodies of water, probably specifically the oceans, and
- 2) birds that will fly above the ground and “on the face of the sky of the heavens.”

²³ God creates from His imagination that which He spoke into existence, both large sea life and smaller living and moving creatures (כָּל־חַיָּוִיִּם הַיָּם) in the seas. And His evaluation of what He has done is “good,” i.e., for the sake of human beings and their living on the earth.

²⁴ God speaks to these living created beings and commands them to become more numerous and fill the seas and oceans and sky. His speaking is to indicate that He is in control of their existence and their activities. The birds obviously cannot multiply in the sky, and so God indicates that they will do so “on the earth.” Therefore, the oceans, the sky, and the earth are referenced in these creating activities by God.

²⁵ And the author finishes his description of the fifth category of important elements for the sake of human beings.

²⁶ For the sixth time in the narrative, God now commands by speaking that “living creatures” (חַיָּוִיִּם) should occur on the “land,” the dry land of the earth in contrast to the wet waters of the seas and oceans. Three categories—

- 1) cattle
- 2) moving things
- 3) living things of their kind

And thus, as usual, as God spoke for it to occur, it did occur.

²⁷ This time the author says that God “made” (not “created,” but they mean the same thing) these three categories of living creatures on the land and earth.

And, as before, God saw that what He had done for mankind and his ability to sustain himself physically was actually good and right—of course.

²⁸ אָדָם בָּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדִמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרֵדֵהוּ בְּגֵן הַחַיָּתִים וּבְעֵרְף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְבִהֶמָּה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הַרְמֵשׁ הָרֶמֶשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ
(καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός Ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν, καὶ ἀρχέτωσαν τῶν ἰχθύων τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ τῶν πετεινῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῶν κτηνῶν καὶ πάσης τῆς γῆς καὶ πάντων τῶν ἔρπετων τῶν ἐρπόντων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) –
Here, Moses comments on God’s speaking mankind into existence, the second speaking for the second time (cf. vs. 9-13).

No other element of the creation is identified as being made in God’s image, this by itself indicating that man is the main feature of all that God brings into existence—because he so closely resembles God.

In addition, only in this case does God speak to Himself about what He is creating, making this a special case. He also uses an emphatic term, the 1st person plural pronouns “us” and “our,” further emphasizing and highlighting the personal and intentional nature of this particular part of the creation, i.e., mankind. As in v. 1, the Septuagint translates the plural *Elohim* with “the God” (ὁ θεός), which leads to the reasonable conclusion that Moses is not talking about some kind of trinitarian makeup of God, but to His being the one, true, and only God—even though he does not explicitly refer to the pagan gods of the surrounding cultures of his day.

Plus, the Hebrew רָדָה (and even ἄρχω) generally means to rule over and be superior to other human beings. In this, it is more the idea of being superior and more important. Mankind is more important to God than any other living thing He has made on the earth. In the final analysis, Jesus is a human being, and he dies in order to bring God’s mercy to

אָדָם = adam; perhaps from אֲדָמָה = ground, since God made the first man from the dust of the ground

³⁶ – וַיַּבְרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְקַלְמִלְאָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת – And God made the seventh day a special day for as long as this cosmos exists, because, from a narrative standpoint as Moses is using the seven day work week here, God stopped bringing anything new into existence for the sake of sustaining the physical lives of human beings.

Yet, we find out in Exodus 20 that God requires the seventh day to be a day of no work, i.e., ceasing from work, for the Jews in order to remember Him as the one who causes all things to exist.

Therefore, even for Gentiles, if they want to do no work on the seventh day of their weeks during their lives in order to commemorate the fact that God brought the creation into existence for mankind and provided specifically for their being able to sustain themselves physically, then this is perfectly legitimate, while not being necessary. Indeed, if any human being, at any time, wants to think about God's causing this creation to be what it is for even our human purposes of living our lives, then this is always a good thing to do. To reflect on God's absolute sovereign divine determinism of every detail of the creation is something that human beings should do on occasion (maybe all the time!) as they live out their lives before God.

And we notice that the author makes no statement to the effect, "And there was evening and morning a seventh day," as if the seventh day ended and God moved on to either the first day again or to an eighth day. Why? Probably because the seventh day continues as that "day" when God has finished His initial work of bringing the cosmos into existence—His rest. Now He has moved on to the next phase—the history of mankind featuring Jesus as the Messiah.

³⁷ אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבְרָאָם (Septuagint – αὕτη ἡ βίβλος γενέσεως οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς) – It makes sense that the author, Moses, is concluding his literary description of God's creating the cosmos on behalf of mankind and provides another summary statement to this effect. Therefore, he is saying that the above passage of 1:3 (really) through 2:3, which includes the fact that God finishes His creative activity, has now come to an end, and he is moving on to the second stage of the story that Moses wants to tell, from the actually bringing into existence out of nothing the cosmos to the history of mankind, which we now know culminates in the Kingdom of God with Jesus' ruling over it. As a result, "These" mean the above mentioned creating activities of God. Then these are "the bringings forth of [generations, meaning the generating and producing (plural) of] the heavens and the earth"—here in the same order as 1:1. And these were "when [the heavens and the earth] were created" and brought into existence out of nothing by God Himself and His imagination and speaking of sorts the elements that are necessary for the physical sustaining of human beings.

Therefore, the author is announcing that this is the end of the first major section of the beginning accounts of Genesis. תּוֹלְדוֹת is the plural noun form of the verb יָלַד = he gave birth or produced or brought forth. Thus, the author is saying that "these," the descriptions in Genesis 1:3-2:4a, are the ways which God caused to come into existence everything for man's physical benefit and man himself as the primary characters in His story of the heavens and the earth.

³⁸ בַּיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם (Septuagint – ὅτε ἐγένετο ἡ ἡμέρα ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν) – Now, the author is beginning a new and subsequent description of God's creative activity that will feature the story of sinful human beings, who will find either salvation from His justice in His gracious provision or justice in His righteous judgment. Thus, this explanation will focus on man on the earth and his moral condition in the light of God's commandment (and commandments), which man is/are obligated to obey. This account will extend through 5:1a.

Similar to the previous explanation in 1:1-2:3a, *yom* (יֹם) is referring to the period of time when the subsequent creating activities take place, i.e., when God chooses and decides to accomplish something which is in line with His sovereign plans and purposes.

This has to do when God "made the earth and the heavens," stating these two in reverse order from 1:1 and 2:4a, because the focus is definitely going to be on the earth and its human history. Plus, Moses wants to make sure that the reader realizes that this involves the personal God, whose name he now knows is "Yahweh," the God of Israel of both justice and mercy, of death and life, of destruction and preservation—depending upon a sinful human being's spiritual and inner orientation.

³⁹ The author continues his sentence from 2:4b to say that rain-induced food was not yet a part of the created reality on the earth, implying certainly that the heavens and the earth were there. The point is that food for man by means of rain does not come about without both the plants and the sprouting of the plants from rain to produce the food and man who "works the ground" to guide the plants in their production of food in the light of the rain.

In other words, the author is describing the situation before Noah and the flood, in that, as he will say in v. 6, there was a subterranean spring of fresh water that flowed up from the earth to water the land of the garden and to provide the necessary moisture for growing plants. I would assume that additional springs and rivers existed in other areas of the earth.

Again, as in the Genesis 1 account, water is very important for sustaining physical life for human beings.

The statement about there not yet being a "bush of the field" probably refers to bushes that were available for food (and even shade?) by means of rainfall. The same with the sprouting of plants. The sprouting was not yet taking place through rain—but by means of the subterranean spring of fresh water.

⁴⁰ The author's point so far is that the earth exists, but it is without rain-induced food from plants, which could be used for sustaining man physically. Plus, there was no man yet to cultivate the non-rain-induced food from plants, nor eventually the rain-induced food from plants when they will be affected by rain. And, instead of rain, there is a subterranean spring of fresh water that will provide the necessary moisture for the garden into which God will place and locate Adam and Eve initially in this narrative.

⁴¹ Here is an explicit description of God's creating the first human being, Adam. In the light of the creation account of Genesis 1:1-2:4a, where the author claimed that God brings into existence and determines every detail of the cosmos that is the reality that is not God Himself, He likewise shaped the first man from dirt that was part of the ground of the earth, as opposed to bringing him into existence strictly out of nothing. He took existing created material, the "dust from the ground," and He formed his body. Then, God breathed air into the body, and the result was that the body became a "living creature" (*nephesh hayah*). The *hayah* refers to that which human beings experience with their minds, hearts, emotions, bodies, and wills, which is that which they cannot experience when they die and their minds and bodies stop functioning. This is an actual living creature, so that *nephesh* does not refer to a part of human being, i.e., his "soul," but to his existence, either as a living creature or as a dead (the opposite) creature. Both are creations of God, but the former experiences that which God causes to be life—whether in this realm or in the eternal realm (I assume). This is the same for animals as the author indicated in 1:20.

אָדָם, אָדָם = adam; perhaps from אֲדָמָה = ground, since God made the first man from the dust of the ground

⁴² The garden is in the "east," meaning that the man has come from the "west." The garden is lush, and food is in abundance there. The land west of the garden is mostly (?) barren, and, at least at this point in the story, food is completely unavailable there. Thus, God caused a garden to exist "in the east," and the garden somehow got its name of "Eden." The Septuagint translates the word "garden" as "paradise" (παράδεισος). It is into this garden that God literally places the man whom He has formed and shaped in the previous verse.

⁴³ This verse is definitely about trees in the garden—that they were both pleasing to look at, i.e., aesthetically beautiful, and good for food. In other words, each tree had both characteristics, including the most important tree (or trees?) of the narrative, which the author describes here simply with the syntax, "And, as for the tree of life in the middle of the garden, and, as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." But there is no explicit verb, so that, I assume, the Hebrew allows for injecting the proper verb, something like, "and it was (they were) there."

The phrase "in the middle of the garden" is used also in 3:3 to describe the location of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thus making it possible syntactically that this is the same tree as the tree of life, which becomes the tree that God uses to test Adam and Eve and their moral and spiritual condition.

On the one hand, if there is only one tree, then the tree of life is a test, and it becomes also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Do Adam and Eve fundamentally understand and believe God for His goodness and gift of eternal life? If so, they will obey the command not to eat of the tree. And as long as they do so, they will have life, meaning that they will demonstrate an inwardness (in the midst of their inherent sinfulness, I think), which is the necessary condition that God has placed upon all sinful human beings in order to obtain eternal life.

But if they transgress the commandment not to eat of it, then they will reveal their inherent evil, which, in and of itself and by itself, deserves eternal condemnation and destruction. And God will have a choice to make in regard to them.

Will He rescue them from their sin and its consequence of eternal death, or will He execute His justice on them?

And there are two possibilities for Adam and Eve's inward condition when they transgress the commandment. The first is that they do so with hearts that are completely oriented away from God, so that they are only evil and only sinful. Or they violate God's commandment as sinners whose hearts are oriented towards God, so that they are evil, sinful, and justified (as the Bible goes on to explain of sinful human beings). It seems that the story and the rest of the Bible bear out the fact that Adam's heart was oriented away from God while Eve's was oriented towards God. I think that this is what the apostle Paul is saying in 1 Timothy 2:9ff.

1 Timothy 2:14 And Adam was not deceived. But while the wife was being deceived, he came into transgression. **2:15** And he will be saved through childbearing.

On the other hand, if there are two trees, then the tree of life exists to indicate that Adam and Eve have access to eternal life through their understanding that God grants it to those who fundamentally obey Him from a heart which is oriented towards Him, this latter being the necessary condition for obtaining God's eternal mercy and life. For a while it will appear as though they do understand this. However, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil exists to reveal whether or not Adam and Eve truly desire God's mercy and eternal life. If they do not eat of it, then they fundamentally desire life. If they do eat of it (out of rebellion against God as will be the case with Adam (cf. 1 Timothy 2:14-15)), then they demonstrate their sinfulness and the consequent penalty of being subject to both sin and death. Then, after they eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they will not be allowed to eat of the tree of life (even if it is the same tree) unless God changes their inwardness/hearts and they become authentic "believers" in God. Or, as I have suggested above, Adam will need a changed inwardness, while Eve will not.

⁴⁴ The garden is an area within the larger region called Eden. A river flows in Eden and outside the garden (from subterranean fresh water springs mentioned in v. 6) and then enters the garden in order to supply it with water. Then the river divides into four as it exits the garden (“from there”) and supplies at least three other regions as described in vs. 11-14—Havilah, where there are precious metals and stones, Cush (Ethiopia?), and Asshur (Assyria? And southern Iraq also?). What is striking is that there is no mention of where the fourth river, Perath, flows. It is not clear exactly what role verses 10-14 play in this account except to ensure that the garden of Eden has enough water for the plants and food for Adam and Eve as well as to indicate that the regions supplied with water from the four rivers exist and are well supplied also. Perhaps these verses are simply lending more historical and geographical credibility and context to the story by mentioning the rivers and three of their regions, with which Moses’ Ancient Near Eastern readers (and certainly not his modern readers) would have been familiar.

⁴⁵ As above in 2:5, the presence of the trees and the water was not sufficient, at least theologically according to the way God wanted to story to proceed, for the proper production of food for the man. The man was an integral part of the process, so that his responsibility was to “work” or serve the garden and to “keep” or guard it. Thus, his contribution as a laborer and tender of God’s production, the garden, was important to both his moral obedience to God and his own survival.

⁴⁶ This tree is labeled “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” probably not because this really is its name, but because there is going to be something about it (not eating of it or eating of it) that will reveal to both God and the man what is the moral condition of the man. If he eats of it, they both will know that he is sinful and rebellious against God. If he does not eat of it, they will both know that he is at least inclined inwardly towards desiring to be obedient to God—and is succeeding so far.

We are welcomed by God to enjoy physical sustenance on this earth as He has provided it through the various means, but our existence ultimately is a test of our moral condition and whether we want life and will choose it or are willing to settle for death, i.e., eternal death, and will choose it.

[Joshua 24:15](#) “If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve Yahweh, **choose** for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh.”

Therefore, there are at least three options for understanding God’s prohibiting Adam from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—

1) The tree has the magical ability to cause a human being to know his moral condition, and by violating God’s commandment not to eat of it, a person now knows that he is sinful and evil, thus deserving God’s condemnation and consequent death.

2) The tree, as separate and different from the tree of life, will test Adam as to whether or not he will obey God. As long as he does not eat from it, he has access to the tree of life and can eat of it, symbolizing that he is worthy of eternal life. If he disobeys God and eats from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, then God will prohibit him from eating from the tree of life, because now he has become worthy of eternal death and can escape it only if God chooses to be merciful to him.

3) The tree is the same as the tree of life, and eating or not eating from it is a test and becomes symbolic of whether or not Adam is willing to obey God and thereby gain eternal life. If he obeys God and does not eat from it, he is assured of eternal life, because, even in his natural condition of being sinful, he is oriented enough towards God inwardly that he fundamentally desires His mercy and eternal life, so that he will receive them. But, once he eats of the tree, he will be liable to eternal death and will be aware of this fact and of his sinfulness at a level that is not currently existing within him. The result also will be that God will make sure that he cannot eat from it again as symbolic of His preventing Adam from thinking that he can disobey God with impunity.

The Septuagint uses the phrase “you yourself will die by the death.” But this is not a threat of death after a “fall.” Adam and Eve will watch the animals die, which will be an important picture for them of what awaits them—because God had already incorporated death into the creation just as He had already placed sinfulness in the man. But human beings have eternity in their hearts according to Ecclesiastes, so that Adam and Eve have the possibility that they will die a second death, i.e., die the death which is being mentioned here, which is eternal, which is why I have translated **תָּמִיתָ** with “you will most absolutely die.” To die physically for Adam and Eve is simply “to die.” To die and be destroyed for all eternity is “to die most absolutely.”

If they eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which, I think, is the same as the tree of life as mentioned in 2:9, they (or just Adam if he remains an abject rebel against God) will eventually experience the second death. God will not rescue them from it, because they will have demonstrated that they are committed to choosing what is immoral and sinful—*unless later God chooses to redeem them through the Messiah by having given them true inwardness and belief along the way in their earthly existences*. In line with Paul’s comments in 1 Timothy 2, it may very well be that only Adam would receive eternal condemnation and destruction if he chose to eat of this tree, because only he may have been created foundationally committed to sinning against God.

Thus, God created two people who are fundamentally rebels against Him in their natural humanity in order to produce a story of redemption, salvation, and mercy where His characteristics of mercy and justice would be featured. Nevertheless, it seems that one of them, Eve, becomes (or even started as) a saved person by virtue of her heart which

is oriented towards God, i.e., she becomes the mother of all the “living” (spiritually alive people who acquire eternal life). Therefore, God’s statement to the effect that Adam will “most absolutely die” may really apply to only Adam (even though the Septuagint translates it with a plural verb), because he has been created from the start a rebel against God with a heart that is truly oriented away from Him. This is why he seems not to hesitate at all when Eve gives him from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is as though he has been waiting for a good opportunity to violate the prohibition against eating of it and immediately takes advantage of the opportunity, perhaps even thinking that he can always blame Eve.

Another way to say this is, when they eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, in direct violation of God’s commandment, they reveal to God and to themselves their sinfulness and being subject to His condemnation and destruction, i.e., death, if they do not ever acquire a heart that is oriented towards God. Thus, the prohibition against eating of this tree becomes a test of their moral and spiritual condition, and they both fail at some level—Adam at a conscious level as he willfully rebels against God and Eve at a sub-conscious level as she reveals how a sinful but believing person can easily become deceived by Satan and his lies in the world.

Thus, God establishes the test before He creates Eve, so that Adam is fully aware of it without any distractions other than working and keeping the garden.

⁴⁷ The helper (עֲזָרָה) (βοηθός) will meet the problem of Adam’s aloneness. This is how she is “correspondingly opposite to him.” This helper was not to be a go-fer as if she was going to be inferior. For example, Yahweh is the “helper” of Israel, who aids them in their problem and/or their task (cf. Exodus 18:4; Deut. 33:7, etc.). So this word hardly has the connotation of being inferior.

Adam has a task, a mission, and a calling—presently, to work and keep the garden of food and water, while obeying God. So the wife exists to help him in these, but without being inferior. She helps him so that he does not face the task of obeying God alone, which could feel really daunting. It is probably true that single people feel this responsibility more acutely than married people, but our sin really clouds the issue even within marriage because we can get very distracted from our obedience to God while we are simply dealing with the effects of our sin in our relationship with our spouse (and with God!). We can become so self-absorbed within our marriage that we are very limited in our truly caring and loving one another. Yet, these effects should drive and motivate us to stop and think about what is really going on in order for the husband to take the responsibility of leading in the task of obeying God, while the wife leans in towards her husband and helps him and herself obey God. This then allows for a biblical mutual endeavor on the part of both the husband and the wife to be human beings, who together submit to God and His moral commandments in the midst of whatever role within human history God has given them.

⁴⁸ It may not really matter, but it is possible that God has already brought the animals and birds into existence, so that the point is that Adam has the opportunity to experience interaction with the animals as a means to indicate to himself that they cannot “help” him the way someone like himself and corresponding to himself can.

In 1:20,24,30 God calls the animals of the earth “living creatures,” i.e., *nephesh hayah*, which Moses also called the first man, Adam, after God had made him in 2:7. Here in 2:19, he uses the same phrase for both the land animals and the birds.

⁴⁹ The exercise of naming the animals by Adam was probably to make it clear that the “helper” who met his need of aloneness in his responsibility in the garden and on the earth had not yet been made. And the reason was that the animals were not persons like him, made in the image of God with both rationality and morality as foundational to his thinking and acting—as stated in 1:26. Another human person is what is going to be necessary. While it is said that a dog is man’s best friend, he is not his best “helper” in the manner which God intends women by design to be for men.

⁵⁰ What is the significance of God’s taking a rib from Adam and building another human from it? Obviously, this is in contrast to His making Adam from the dust and the earth. He makes the woman from the man, from Adam specifically. My conclusion is that this is to add that much more credence that the woman will be a “helper,” who is “correspondingly opposite to him.” She could help him if God made her from the dirt of the ground as He did Adam. But His creating her from the man points that much more to her being his helper.

In addition, Moses, the author, calls this person a “woman,” i.e., an אִשָּׁה = *ishshah*. While this label is in contrast to אָדָם = ‘adam, which seems more to mean “man,” it still may refer to her being his wife, so that this really is the meaning.

⁵¹ Adam then recognizes that the “woman,” i.e., his wife, has come directly from him, from his body, so that he comprehends that she is truly a “helper” and one who is “correspondingly opposite to him”—unlike any other female version of a male animal, bird, or sea creature. Thus, God has done something truly unique with her that Adam celebrates and that all husbands should celebrate when they find their wife among the rest of the female human beings. Therefore, it is not that every wife needs to come from the rib of her husband, but that this first woman did so as to emphasize wives’ unique roles as human “helpers” for their human husbands—as further indicated by the author’s

editorial comment in v. 24. Husbands and wives truly work together to obey God in their mutual role in human history.

⁵² “Woman” and “man” as translations are misleading here. Better to translate “wife” and “husband.” She shall be called “my wife,” because she was taken out of her “husband.” This particular woman has a special relationship to Adam, so that if there were other women around, which there are not, they would not be special to him, because they are not taken from him.

Plus, this is not myth to be universalized, but an actual event where Adam and Eve are actually unique in their relationship to one another because of how she came into existence. No other woman comes into existence like this. Yet, v. 24 provides a statement to the effect that every husband should celebrate his wife as his divinely given helper and every wife should celebrate her husband as the one whom she is helping.

The apostle Paul uses the fact that the woman actually came from her husband here in Genesis 2 to argue in 1 Corinthians 11:1-12 that every woman should apply whatever social signs that exist in her culture to herself to indicate that she is willing to be her husband’s “helper” and follow him, while he leads her well in obeying and serving God on the path which He has given them before they enter the Kingdom of God at their deaths or when Jesus returns—
1 Corinthians 11:7 On the one hand, a husband-man is not obligated to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God. On the other hand, the wife-woman is the glory of the husband-man, **11:8** because husband-man was not from the wife-woman, but the wife-woman was from husband-man. **11:9** In addition, the husband-man was not created on account of the wife-woman, but the wife-woman was created on account of the husband-man. **11:10** Therefore, the wife is obligated to have something that demonstrates her authority on her head on account of the *angeloi*. **11:11** Nevertheless, neither is a wife independent of her husband, nor is a husband independent of his wife in the Lord, **11:12** because just as the wife was from the man, thus also the husband exists with a view to his wife. And all things are from God.

In 1 Timothy 1:11, Paul also uses the order in which God made Adam and Eve to argue that husbands should lead their wives well while their wives should not seek to dominate their husbands, which is also in accord with what God will say to Eve in Genesis 3:16—

1 Timothy 1:11 Let a wife learn in calmness in all submissiveness. **2:12** But I do not allow a wife to teach and dominate her husband, but to exist in calmness. **2:13** For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

⁵³ The implication of v. 23 is that other husbands and wives become as one flesh, similar to Eve’s being taken from Adam’s body, his rib, and built into his wife by God. They should not be most intimately connected to their parents—emotionally, psychologically, intellectually, or spiritually. They should view each other as of “one flesh” and from the same “body” so to speak, so that their partnership in believing and obeying God is as if they are acting as one body and in total conjunction with one another.

Ephesians 5:28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself.

Even Paul above is saying that a husband should love his wife as his own body, i.e., as if they were one body. On what basis? On the basis of Eve’s actually coming from the body, i.e., the rib, of Adam. As a result, they truly act in conjunction with one another in their obedience towards God and their crafting a mutual existence for themselves in the present realm according to God’s moral commandments and their own vocation from Him, as they await their ultimate goal of the eternal Kingdom of God.

Matthew 22:30 “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.”

Obviously, it becomes difficult for sinful husbands and sinful wives to achieve this goal of true oneness in their marriage and before God, especially if God does not change their hearts and cause them to be fundamentally oriented and committed to following God. And even then, it is difficult because of our own continued and inherent sin that is part of our natural humanity as created by God. Our sinfulness injects all sorts of obstacles to our obeying God the way He wants us to do so. Plus, not everyone feels inclined to find a spouse in order to marry her/him.

⁵⁴ I assume that both Adam and his wife sensed, to some degree, that they were inherently evil and sinful, because this is simply the way God had made them. However, they were not yet aware of and conscious of any explicit guilt from any outward and explicit act of violating God’s commandments. This means that they were not fully cognizant of their sinfulness and moral depravity and what Moses means by their not being ashamed of their nakedness. The greater recognition of their sinfulness will happen only with their explicit and outward eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

⁵⁵ Waw disjunctive with the serpent and then waw conjunctive with “and he said” –

On the one hand, I do not think that this is an actual snake or serpent. The word נָחָשׁ (*naḥash*) is more likely a title given to Satan in ancient days.

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Thus, the “serpent of old, who is Satan, who is the devil,” are all appropriate titles for this created adversary of God. On the other hand, God easily could have Satan appear as a serpent for the purposes of this story, including God’s cursing him by having him move on his stomach all his days and eat dust, so that all this imagery becomes a metaphor

for Satan's snake-like deception that results in his groveling actions and unsatisfying existence. As a result, it is not that Satan is an animal *per se*, but that there is another being besides Adam, Eve, and the animals, etc. in the garden. And this is an intelligent being, who can carry on a conversation with the woman, and, who deceitfully convinces her to violate God's commandment not to eat of the tree in the middle of the garden.

Why does Satan choose to speak to and to deceive the woman, rather than speaking to and directly encouraging Adam to disobey God?

It would seem Satan's question is straightforward and not itself deceptive. Basically he is asking exactly what God has commanded the man and woman. Is it not to eat from every tree? Indeed, this is true.

However, if the Hebrew עֵץ means "any," which apparently it can, then Satan could be intentionally be speaking in hyperbole to make the woman think in terms of extremes in order to deceive her and persuade her to act in an extreme manner, i.e., by disobeying God's command.

It also makes more sense to translate אִשָּׁה as "woman" instead of "wife."

⁵⁶ Waw conjunctive after the middle one in v. 1 –

The woman's response sounds as though she has understood Satan to have been referring to "any tree of the garden," but maybe she is just being thorough.

By the way, is she aware of this creature's deceptive nature, or is she complete naïve about him? My guess is the latter. Satan has not yet revealed his own rebellion against God, but now he is the process of doing so.

The phrase אֶת־עֵץ־הַחַיָּה (Ἀπὸ καρποῦ ξύλου τοῦ παραδείσου) shows "tree" as singular, but it must have a plural meaning for Eve who is talking about all the trees besides the one in the middle of the garden.

⁵⁷ Are there two trees, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Probably not, because there is only one which is "in the middle of the garden," as Moses has already stated in 2:9—that the tree of life is in the middle of the garden, while she now indicates that this is the same tree as that of the knowledge of good and evil, of which she should not eat. So the tree of life is there as a test for the human beings, Adam and Eve. The test will be, is mankind good or evil? And there will be failure of the test by both Adam and Eve, even though for different reasons. It seems that Adam is currently a full-blown rebel against God, while Eve is a rebel whose heart is actually oriented towards Him—as the story and 1 Timothy 2:9ff. bear out.

1 Timothy 2:14 And Adam was not deceived. But while the wife was being deceived, he came into transgression. **2:15** And he will be saved through childbearing.

Is the woman wrong by stating that God has commanded them not to "touch" the tree, or it will result in death?

Probably not, to the extent that she may only be saying that she knows that they should stay away from it and, certainly, not eat it!

Does Eve understand what the death is that she will die, i.e., eternal death, if she violates God's commandment? I would assume so, even though her desire to define morality for herself will overcome her fear of this death—by being seduced and deceived by Satan, which will become a common occurrence for both unbelievers and believers during the course of human history. Their need for self-definition of moral issues will overwhelm their need for knowing and obeying God. This is the essence of the sin, pride, and arrogance of human beings.

⁵⁸ Waw conjunctive from v. 2 –

I have translated the Hebrew exactly as in 2:19, with the words "most absolutely die," which I have suggested above originally referred to eternal death vs. eternal life.

Satan is attempting to present the woman with a direct contradiction of what God has said, as if God were lying. He is saying that, certainly, God will not be displeased if they eat of the tree in the middle of the garden, even if they do in violation of His commandment. Satan is stating that God will NOT condemn them to eternal death if they disobey Him. Instead, He will reward them. This is true deception that will lead to not only disappointment, but also to destruction—exactly what Satan is achieving in our own day for people who are allowing themselves to be influenced by him.

How is it that Satan thinks that he can get away with this lie? Maybe he is not sure he can, but he is only hopeful. And his hope is fulfilled, perhaps to his own surprise and delight.

⁵⁹ Satan's reason is not that eating the tree causes them to have their eyes opened and therefore to die, as if there is some sort of magical effect of the tree. But they will have had their eyes opened to who they really are, so that they will have made a determination for themselves that is entirely appropriate for becoming grown-up and mature human beings. This, according to Satan, is what God wants for them, to leave their infant state and become adults.

Therefore, by appealing to their pride and sense of personal self and importance, he is urging the woman, and Adam too, to become adults and not children, so that they decide for themselves what they should do, which, according to him, is really what God intended with His prohibition—to test them as to whether or not they want to grow up and are willing to become mature human beings and independent of Him!

If they do, their defining morality for themselves, which they are determining for themselves, will please God, because they will stop being so childish and infantile and will finally become true adults and grown-ups. God wants them to know good and evil *from their own standpoint in the same way that He knows good and evil from His own standpoint.*

Thus “knowers of good and evil” are determiners of good and evil for themselves—like God, which, according to Satan, is a good thing!

⁶⁰ 5 waw conjunctives from v. 4 –

This is one long sentence with a series of waw conjunctives—and this happened and this happened and this happened...—with the result that both the woman and her husband ate from the fruit of the tree, which was contrary to God’s commandment to them.

As a result of her conversation with Satan and his deceiving her, she came to three conclusions—

1) This tree in the middle of the garden was just like the other trees from which they were permitted to eat in that it was “good for food.” It could sustain them physically, which was a good thing given that it prolonged life and put off eventual physical death as far away in time as possible.

2) The tree was a good looking tree, so that there was certainly nothing about it from an aesthetic standpoint that would turn a person away and prevent him/her from eating of its fruit. Thus, if something looks (feels!) good, and there is nothing “poisonous” so to speak about it, then it should perfectly acceptable and even desirable to take advantage of its presence and use it for what it can do for someone in whatever ability it has to sustain and even enhance a person’s physical (and emotional!) life.

3) Eating of the tree would be a choice that a person could and even should make that allows him to become mature and become wiser in that it allows him to choose for himself and make him an independent human being, who is his own person—even, and perhaps most importantly, independent from God, who, likewise, makes His own choices independently which can be said to be wise and mature decisions. Thus, independence from God and from other human beings is a key element for what it means to be the best human being that a person can be.

When the woman saw that, *from her standpoint*, the tree looked good to eat (and it probably did look good, like every other tree that God had provided for food), she should have immediately thought, “But God has said that, *from His standpoint*, the tree is not good to eat. Indeed, He prohibits it. So no way that I can make it look good to eat *from my standpoint* and have this be right.” In other words, she should listen to the voice of God, which is what, for example, Deuteronomy keeps encouraging the Israelites to do.

But she convinced herself, in line with Satan’s strong suggestions, that she should eat of the tree. And so she did. Then, she gave some of its fruit to “her husband,” who was “with her” in the garden, and immediately “he ate” of it, too.

This is what we do as sinners—look at some action or pursuit that God considers evil as though it is good, because we are looking at it strictly *from our point of view*, based usually on our sensual and physical desires, and not *from God’s point of view and His desires* as currently the only morally perfect person (except Jesus of course). We do not check in with Him for His assessment of reality and good and right decisions that we should make in obedience to Him.

The end result will be that the woman was tricked by Satan into thinking that the tree looks good and even wisdom producing (*from her standpoint to become an independent and mature human being*), while the man was not tricked, resulting in their being treated differently by God (cf. 1 Timothy 2:9ff.). She does not demonstrate the same rebellious heart as Adam. She thought she was pleasing God and growing up in an appropriate manner by defining morality for herself, while Adam knew precisely that he was not. There was no deception on his part, just abject moral rebellion.

⁶¹ 4 waw conjunctives from v. 6 –

By directly violating God’s commandment, they both have become mentally, psychologically, and emotionally aware of their nakedness, producing a sense of guilt that can be assuaged and made less intense by covering up their nakedness. They have come to realize in a more profound way that they are both evil and sinful in relationship to God when, before they had directly violated God’s moral commandment, this was not as obvious to them. Their eyes have now been opened to the fact that true rebellion against God is part of their natural humanity as rational and moral beings.

This seems to become a universal psychological characteristic of all human beings after Adam and Eve—the connection between the feeling of nakedness and the feeling of being evil and sinful. It is not that clothes are immoral, but they can be used to distract us from the more important issue of our immoral condition.

The fact that the man and woman were not conscious of their nakedness in this way is not an indication that they were morally perfect or innocent. They were simply like other sinners (whether complete unbelievers, like Adam, or believers, like Eve) who are not fully aware of all the ramifications of their sin but become more aware as life progresses and as God desires them to know and become aware in His story overall and His story for each individual human being. Some people become more aware and sensitive to their sin, to the point probably that they become authentic believers in God and seek His eternal mercy when God changes their hearts, while others remain quite insensitive to their sin and remain committed to disobeying God in whatever area of life suits them.

⁶² 2 waw conjunctives from v. 7 –

As the story continues, the man and his wife sense God’s presence in the garden. He is there in “the breath [wind] of the day” (אֵלֶּיךָ רֵיחַ יוֹם), which the Septuagint translates with τὸ δειλινόν = in the evening. Therefore, it is an expression of time, not manner of walking, i.e., “as the breath of the day” came up and as the day proceeds towards evening. It is as the time moves along that the man and the woman become increasingly aware of their guilt before God, so that they

will have to deal with it, whether they want to or not.

And they hide from Him. Why? Because they realize that they have disobeyed His commandment, and this may very well produce a response from Him that they do not want to experience—perhaps anger, disappointment, and even punishment, as He said it would, i.e. death, even eternal death.

Their sense of guilt in the midst of their sin and disobedience naturally leaves them uncomfortable before God, whom they recognize has the right to judge them for the moral quality of their choices and actions.

Ironically, Adam and his wife use the very means which God has given them for physical sustenance as their place of hiding from God. Maybe, and most likely, there is nothing to this other than the trees were the only place available for them to hide, and, therefore, the author includes this detail as one that naturally follows from their being in a garden.

They are using physical means to hide from the presence of the spiritual God, which is as silly as it gets for human beings who seek to ignore and reject God. They are using the creation to hide from the Creator, which, of course, is impossible.

⁶³ Waw conjunctive from v. 8 –

We notice that God addresses only and first the man and simply asks, “Where are you?” Does this mean that God really does not know where he is? Not at all. He is posing the question to the man to give him an opportunity to come clean on what he has done and, I assume, to repent of his sin—if he is so inclined, which he, unfortunately, will not be. At least, not initially.

But it was the woman, Adam’s wife, who ate first. Yet, God wants to deal with Adam as the first one whom He created and to whom He had originally given the commandment not to eat of the tree.

⁶⁴ Waw conjunctive from v. 9 –

Adam has become truly consciously aware of his sinfulness and its consequences of judgment before God. This is what he means by his being afraid because of his nakedness, i.e., because of his sinfulness, when now he is no longer totally naked, having sewed fig leaves together and covered themselves with them. It was his nakedness in psychological conjunction with his sinfulness that has made him afraid of God and His judgment, even though, from a human standpoint, he is no longer totally naked.

This is to say that our clothing, while not immoral, certainly does not solve the problem of our sinfulness. Only God can do so with His mercy and forgiveness—through the experiences and the role in human history of Jesus as the Messiah. He becomes the basis for forgiveness of our sin from God. Therefore, whenever we see people clothed, we can immediately think, “Ah, a sinner in need of God’s mercy, and I wonder if they are genuinely seeking it from Him with changed inwardness, rather than trying to hide their sin from even Him by ignoring and rejecting Him and distorting His truth.” This would be in the midst of the manifold ways that human beings use the creation and specifically their mental and intellectual gymnastics to hide from the truth of God.

⁶⁵ Waw conjunctive from v. 10 –

Is God implying that merely someone’s telling Adam that he is naked would produce the level of guilt that he is feeling for his sin and sinfulness? Probably not. He is simply asking how it is that Adam came by this increased awareness of his sin? And the second question indicates that God knows that Adam’s sense of his nakedness and guilt could and should very easily arise by choosing to disobey Him, indeed, by eating of the tree of which He had commanded him not to eat. Consequently, He asks Adam to assess reality accurately by asking him directly if he really has broken the commandment and disobeyed Him.

This is to say that our actions have profound moral and psychological effects. We cannot keep from experiencing guilt merely by trying to suppress it through whatever psychological tricks and mental gymnastics we use to do so. God will not allow us to ignore the very feelings of guilt, and He certainly will not allow us to avoid the various consequences of our sinful actions—including the eternal one of destruction that results from His judgment, anger, and condemnation. As a result, their nakedness was not the problem, but their sense that their very being and actions were sinful and immoral was the problem. It was their feelings and the psychological effects of their sin, leading to their wanting to hide and cover up, i.e., to decrease, even eliminate, their sense of guilt before God—as if this is even possible, which it is not. The only proper way to deal with it is if God works inwardly in human beings to make them sufficiently aware of their immorality and guilt in a healthy way, so that they genuinely repent before Him and receive His eternal mercy and promise of life through salvation from His condemnation.

⁶⁶ Waw conjunctive from v. 11 –

Adam does not immediately take responsibility for his actions, but instead he blames his wife. Indeed, it may be the case that Adam never accepts responsibility for his actions because he remains a consummate and complete rebel against God. The Bible simply is not clear on whether or not Adam ever becomes a true believer in God like Eve. Yet, he implies to God that it was a bad idea to give her to him, even after he had celebrated at the end of chapter 2 that she was unique and special, because God had made her from material comprising him—in contrast to how God had made both male and female animals, birds, and sea creatures from the dirt of the ground.

The chain of blame starts with God, “You gave me this wife,” proceeds to the woman, “She gave to me from the tree,” and finally ends with him, “and I ate.” The real problem is God, which is why some people probably justify in their

minds and hearts that it is ok to ignore Him or distort His truth—thus producing for themselves a greater truth than God has provided. This is the essence of pride and sin, never letting anyone tell us what to do or what is right vs. wrong, good vs. evil, so that, in line with Satan’s encouragement to the woman, we grow ourselves up and define reality, life, and morality for ourselves. Any other way, even God’s way through the Bible, we can easily and rightly identify as oppressive and to be rejected. We should never let anyone, even God, become our master and superior to us in any aspect of human existence. All supremacists, by definition, are evil and to be ignored—even God, Jesus, the Bible, and those who might possibly have a correct understanding of the Bible.

We also notice that Adam does not mention the serpent, maybe because he was not aware of his wife’s conversation with him? Doubtful, but plausible—if the garden was large enough that Adam was off somewhere else tending it.

⁶⁷ Waw conjunctive from v. 12 –

Again, God poses a direct question to one of them, giving them, I assume, the opportunity to come clean completely and even repent of their sin. But the woman does not do so either, even though it seems she is more inwardly inclined to repent.

⁶⁸ Waw conjunctive from v. 13 –

As soon as God addresses her (after she has heard Him speak with Adam about having eaten from the tree “which [He] commanded [them] not to eat,” she knows that she has blown it and is wrong about the choice that she made, regardless of how convinced she was at the time that it was the right decision to make.

Nevertheless, the woman is honest and correct, but really only partially. Satan has deceived her, but, like Adam, she is not willing to take complete responsibility for her actions. Yes, Satan deceived her, but she knew the commandment, and she knew the consequences, i.e., eternal death—if God does not provide mercy and forgiveness, which, so far, He has not made it clear that He would.

In addition, I do not think that she did not eat of the tree out of abject rebellion against God, while probably Adam did. She is a sinner, but her inwardness is more desirous of mercy and obeying God than Adam’s is. Thus, her not taking responsibility completely for her actions is no different from a complete unbeliever’s doing the same. Yet, we would expect her eventually to repent of her violating God’s commandment—even if Adam does not. This would be where an individual human being should truly be independent of other human beings, so that, if one person is the only one on the whole earth, who repents of his/her sin, then this person should be the most independent (in relationship to other human beings) person in the world. Yes, no one, other than Jesus of Nazareth, should be this person’s master or supremacist, defining morality and goodness for them. The person should be willing to be the most single individual and separate from the crowd as any person can be.

⁶⁹ Waw conjunctive from v. 13 –

We notice that God offers Satan no question as He did with Adam and Eve. Instead, He immediately begins pronouncing judgment towards him. He knows that Satan is permanently oriented away from Him and is destined for eternal destruction (as Revelation 20 indicates).

To be cursed more than the “cattle” and “living things of the field” does not mean that the serpent, Satan, is an animal. He, as a far more intelligent and potentially creative creature, is simply going to experience much more subjugation under mankind than the animals, when he had hoped that he would attain mastery over them (and over God) by deceiving them and pulling them into a position of being under his influence forever within the creation. However, he has forgotten that God ultimately is in control of people’s spiritual and moral condition and orientation, so that, if God chooses, He can and will rescue even those who come under Satan’s influence, or at least some of them—which is the plan.

In addition, God is making Satan crawl on his stomach, which is a picture of complete humiliation, defeat, and subjugation under an authority. As a result, this imagery is symbolic of complete and utter humiliation and defeat. We can compare Egyptian depictions of Pharaoh’s pushing down to the ground his enemies with his feet in complete humiliation and defeat before him as he sits on his throne of ruling over them. So Satan has tried to defeat God and rule Him to an extent by gaining control over His human creatures, but God is saying that He is going to crush him eventually, which is part of the story of Revelation 20ff.

Plus, just as we say, “Eat my dust,” God is saying basically the same thing to Satan. God has made the dust on which people walk and in which they sow their seeds and grow their food. Dust is the lowest of lowest servants of human beings, and Satan will be the lowest of lowest slaves of God and mankind, by his ultimately experiencing eternal destruction and death. He will be as dead as dust, too. Indeed, even more, he will disappear from existence when God destroys the present realm and him as described in Revelation 20.

⁷⁰ The children of the devil, sinful human beings as descendants of the woman, who remain committed to rebelling against God, and the other children of the woman, sinful human beings whom God changes into authentic believers and obedient to Him in the midst of their continued sinfulness, will always be at odds with one another, but the other children of the woman will ultimately win the war, defeating Satan and his followers among humanity with their faith. [1 John 3:10](#) By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

And John says in 1 John 5:4b-5 And this is the victory that conquers this present realm—our belief. 5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world [and Satan who greatly influences the world], but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Thus, Moses implies that the woman was already inclined towards God and an authentic believer in Him. This also means that, according to the definitions in this verse, Cain was a child of the devil, and Abel was a child of the woman—as described by John in 1 John 3:4-15.

There is also Romans 16:20, “The God of shalom will quickly/soon crush Satan under your feet.” It is not that Jesus alone defeats Satan, but that we, the “children of the woman,” who are authentic believers in God, defeat him by being those of genuine belief in Jesus. Therefore, the seed of the woman are the children of God with authentic inwardness, giving the woman an incredibly status-filled position in the history of human beings. The seed of Satan are his children from the same woman who remain abject rebels against God and hostile to His people, both believing Jews and believing Gentiles.

Ultimately, through the work of all believing human beings, especially the one who will rule the eternal Kingdom of God, Jesus of Nazareth, God crushes the head and annihilates Satan, while he, during the present realm until the millennial kingdom, definitely causes harm and suffering for believers, which is greatest theologically with the death of Jesus on the cross. However, during the “great nation” of Israel after Jesus returns, Satan will be imprisoned and unable to cause harm and suffering towards believers.

By the way, this “seed” of the woman will be through Seth (and not through Cain), Noah, Shem, and Abraham, as the author will demonstrate in the stories and narrative to follow.

⁷¹ No waw, just נֹאֲמָהּ –

As Eve brings more children into the world, she brings more rebels into the world, which means there will be greater sorrow for her (and for others) because of the increase of evil and sin in the world—even among the believers. God is not cursing the woman, and neither is He directly cursing her descendants, but He is simply making a prediction. The woman’s children will include the seed of the serpent, unbelievers, and her own seed, believers. But both will contribute to an increase in evil and sin in the world. This will be her “anxious toil” as she navigates the vicissitudes, the unpredictable and unavoidable twists and turns, of life caused by her offsprings’ sins.

In Genesis 4, this is greatly proved out when her son Cain murders her other son Abel, which must have caused practically unimaginable heartache and grief for both Adam and Eve, but maybe more for Eve because of her greater awareness of this reality by virtue of her being a person of authentic faith. Thus, she ached for both Cain and Abel, for Cain and his sin and impending destruction as a committed follower of Satan and for Abel because of his death and her loss of him as her son.

In addition, God predicts that the woman, herself being sinful, will naturally want to control and master her husband (as will other sinful women in their relationships with their husbands). But his superior strength will naturally result in the opposite, even in his mistreating her (as will other sinful husbands in regard to their wives). He will “rule” over her in a tyrannical manner because of his sinfulness instead of treating her as a spiritual, moral, psychological, intellectual, and theological equal—equally receiving Life in the eternal Kingdom of God as he will (if he has authentic faith).

We probably can extrapolate beyond the marriage relationship and predict that competition for power, authority, and controlling others will pervade all cultures and human history because of the presence of the levels of sin in all human beings—as we have seen and continue to see clearly. Thus, the importance of limited governments that permit the genuine freedom of their subjects. Otherwise, governments easily become tyrannical and oppressive, robbing people of freedom and personal dignity and respect.

Genesis 4:7 says the same thing about Cain’s sin, which he must conquer and rule if he is going to escape its enslavement, and clutches that are tyrannically destroying him by virtue of his unbelief.

Nevertheless, the situation is not hopeless for the woman, because Life, indeed eternal life, will be the final outcome for her and her children of true faith.

⁷² God curses the ground, and now he is clearly punishing Adam, because he “listened to the voice of [his] wife” and not the voice of God, eating of the tree which God had commanded not to eat. The problem was not fundamentally that he listened to Eve, but that he did not listen fundamentally and completely to God and obey Him! He rebelliously chose to listen to Eve instead of to God. He could have said no, but he chose to say yes.

We notice, too, that God does not directly curse Adam, but He curses the tool which Adam will use for producing food for himself—the ground. God is making the sustaining of life (and, by extrapolation, the enjoyment of life) difficult and even disappointing for the man in contrast to what he had in the garden of Eden and as a result of directly violating the commandment not to eat of the “tree” in the “middle of the garden.”

God uses the same word נֹאֲמָהּ = anxious toil for Adam’s experience of deriving his food from the ground west of the garden as He did for the woman’s experience in the midst of her sinful descendants. Hard work, anxiety, disappointment, heartache, grief, and sorrow will be their experience—because they chose not to obey God.

Certainly, Christians can experience less heartache than non-Christians, because their pursuit of biblical morality is less stress inducing than pursuing explicit sin and provides them with hope in the midst of difficult work circumstances. However, this realm is filled with plenty of hazards that can easily impinge on anyone’s human existence.

Thus, Adam will return to the area west of the garden, which was previously barren and now will be simply difficult to

till and use for growing food. The garden has been very fertile and food-producing for Adam and his wife. In contrast, Adam will find obtaining food and sustaining life in the midst of other sinners quite difficult in comparison.

We can imagine that existence in the garden, even for sinners such as Adam and his wife, and their descendants, would have been easier had they all chosen to obey God's simple command not to eat of the particular tree. Similarly, if sinful human beings choose NOT to define morality for themselves but listen to and pursue a life of morality according to God's commandments, then existence and its enjoyment will be easier—even if it is not perfect. Otherwise, they will experience famine, war, and worse diseases than they would have, which has definitely been the case throughout history.

⁷³ Food will be available, but at a price. Thorns and thistles, making it difficult to obtain food, will grow up in the midst of the plants that produce food. And then imagine the additional degree of difficulty that toiling with other sinners and encountering their sinfulness, especially that of unbelievers, will introduce to Adam's life experience as a farmer. Eating "the plants of the field" implies sowing, reaping, and threshing that were not necessary in the garden. The man will have to put more time and effort into staying alive physically than he had to in the garden.

⁷⁴ Indeed, the man will sweat in his toil of producing food. It will be hard labor for him and his descendants. And is God saying that there will be no mercy for Adam, while there is mercy for the woman? Maybe. In other words, Adam may incur God's eternal condemnation and return to being dust permanently. But it seems more likely that the statement of his death and going back to the dust of the earth is not a curse as a result of his violating the commandment not to eat of the tree. It is a statement of fact about what it means to be a rebel against God. It will also be the case for the woman that she will die, even though she is a believer—unlike Adam currently. In other words, Adam and his wife, because of God's creating them as sinners who deserve at least physical death, were always destined to die physically because of their inherent sinfulness. But Adam (and his wife, because she will have to leave the garden and bear children who will break her heart) will die after a more difficult life than he could have had if he had obeyed God and not eaten of the tree in the middle of the garden. If he had stayed in the garden, then food would have been readily available to him. Thus, God is saying simply that Adam's existence towards his physical demise, which was certain anyway, will be a more difficult one of labor and toil as he seeks to sustain himself physically. Originally, Adam had to deal with only his sinfulness (and that of his descendants). Now, he has to deal with his sinfulness and the hardship of tilling and working the ground that is generally resistant to his efforts. The earth has turned against him to a degree that was not the case when he was in the garden.

⁷⁵ waw conjunctive from v. 14 –

The Septuagint uses the word ζωή = life for Eve's name. Probably, the reference is not to the obvious physical and biological existence that is traced back to Eve. It is more profound than this, that some of her descendants will be on the right side of things, i.e., on the side of Life, which is eternal Life. She is the mother of all who will be given eternal life through God's grace and changed inwardness.

Therefore, most likely, Adam understood Eve's greatness at this time and the eternal outcome of her "seed," which is interesting if Adam were to remain a complete rebel against God. His current rebellion does not prevent him from understanding Eve's role in human history—which demonstrates the rational capability of people who at the moment are fully committed to disobeying God in their natural human sinfulness. Thus, it is not out of the question that a sinful person, who is even committed to rejecting God, can grasp the truth about Him and the nature of reality at one level without embracing it and acting on it at a more important level, which would reveal that they have authentic belief if they did.

In Adam's case, it would appear that Genesis 5:3 is indicating that Adam eventually becomes an authentically changed person and a genuine believer in God like Eve, thus acting on the basis of his understanding Eve here for who she is as the mother of all those who receive eternal life by becoming a believer like her.

⁷⁶ 2 waw conjunctives from v. 20 –

God lovingly cares for both Adam and Eve in an external manner, that also affects their inner, emotional well-being of dealing with the guilt that is present in the midst of their nakedness. It allows them to handle their guilt more easily. After they have faced their guilt by sewing fig leaves together and making coverings for themselves, God provides them with His own crafted coverings that they can feel and look at every moment to remind themselves that God has been gracious to them—so far.

In this way, God acts in a kind and empathetic way towards both Adam and Eve in spite of their disobeying Him by breaking the commandment which He had given them. As Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, God sends rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous, on both sinful believers and sinful unbelievers. Thus, God provides life, i.e., physical life, for sinners even when they do not deserve it. He is most patient and kind to us when, as the flood will demonstrate in a few chapters, we deserve death and destruction because of our sin.

⁷⁷ Waw conjunctive from v. 21 and a waw disjunctive –

The man, generically speaking and therefore both Adam and Eve, has become consciously cognizant of the existence of

evil within him, just as God has known and does know this about him. Plus, the man has defined good and evil for himself just as God does, but apart from checking in with God and finding out from Him what the correct definition of morality and obedience is. And just as eating of the tree in the middle of the garden represented (and demonstrated) man's inner rebellion against God that was already existent in him, it also represents God's granting life to him. Therefore, Adam especially may very likely continue to define good and evil for himself while choosing to embrace life by eating from the tree of life, but in rebellion against God and apart from God—if God does not change his inwardness and cause him to become an authentic believer in Him. Nevertheless, it does seem in Genesis 5:3 that the one person Adam eventually does become a man of authentic belief.

But there are three options for understanding God's statements here –

1) Now that Adam has demonstrated his rebellion against God, God would not want him to live eternally in this condition as demonstrated by his reaching out and eating of the tree of life. Therefore, God will cut Adam off from this tree. Does Adam ever obtain eternal salvation and life? The Bible seems to say yes in Genesis 5:3.

2) Now that Adam has demonstrated his rebellion in an outward way, God does not want to grant him eternal life now as would be demonstrated in an outward way if he were to reach out and eat of the tree of life. Therefore, God will cut Adam off from this tree that represents eternal life. Does Adam ever obtain eternal salvation and life? The Bible seems to say yes in Genesis 5:3.

3) Now that Adam has demonstrated his rebellion against God, He would not want him to continue rebelling against Him as if there are no consequences to doing so—such as what God said in 2:17, that he was going “to die with respect to death” (according to the Septuagint). God is serious about sin and its consequences, including the eternal consequence of destruction in response to persisting in fundamentally rebelling against God, so that He follows through on what He threatened Adam in 2:17.

I am inclined to think that #3 is correct, that God does not want Adam (and Eve) to “live continuously” with access to the tree of life after willfully breaking the commandment which He gave him. The issue here, as further demonstrated by vs. 23-24 that Adam has to leave the garden, is God's showing that Adam (and any sinful human being) is cut off from eternal life while continuing to rebel against God—unless He eventually grants the sinner mercy and grace.

⁷⁸ Waw conjunctive from v. 22 –

Clearly, working the ground is different from working the garden. Instead of food coming easily and spontaneously from the trees to both Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, Adam will have to work in a harsh environment in order to sustain his life—and then die, returning to the dust from which he came. I think that the story indicates that he was going to die anyway, because of his inherent sinfulness which God had built into him when He made him from the dust of the ground, but now his life will be hard and arduous before he dies.

Perhaps, also, the ground to the west of the garden was less fertile to begin with, and this is the ground from which Adam was made. Therefore, God could be saying that Adam will have to till the very ground, the infertile ground, from which he was made (and, by extrapolation, the woman, too, even though she came directly from Adam and therefore indirectly from the ground). This is also to say that God can create a living, organic being, even a human being, from material that is less than desirable for other uses, including producing food—because He is the transcendent author of all reality!

It is also to say that God can make a human being's existence relatively easy or relatively difficult.

⁷⁹ 2 waw conjunctives from v. 23 –

Moses is not describing a situation where Adam will have to forego a certain chemical in his diet, which would normally cause him to live forever, but this is symbolic of ongoing life's not yet being available to Adam, as if he can flaunt his disobedience of having eaten of the tree of life and still eat of this same tree. Plus, Adam cannot get back to the area where it was originally easy to obtain food and now will be difficult to do the same.

So Eve followed Adam out of the garden because she was his helper, but it is Adam who is being addressed here as the one who is cut off from ongoing life, while Eve is the mother of all those who gain eternal life because of her inherent faith, even though she was deceived (cf. 3:15,20 and 1 Timothy 2:9ff.).

Plus, there are the cherubim who are most likely angels of sorts and who are guarding the way to the garden and the tree of life.

Genesis 2 & 3 clearly indicate that the beginning of human beings on this earth was not very promising. If the first two people of the human race, a husband and a wife in a wonderful environment of readily acquired food, succumb so easily and quickly to Satan's ploy, lies, and deception so as to reveal their own sin and unwillingness to obey God, while also becoming convinced that sin will enhance their lives in spite of God's threat to the contrary, then what hope was there and is there for their descendants who will be just like them morally. And, of course, their immediate descendants, Cain and Abel, or at least Cain, demonstrated this. Then Lamech. Then the people at the time of Noah. Then Noah's son, Ham and his son Canaan. And on and on up to our day and beyond until Jesus returns and restores the Kingdom of Israel on the land of Israel with the first stage of the Kingdom of God.

⁸⁰ Waw disjunctive and 3 waw conjunctives –

In the Hebrew culture of the Old Testament, for a man to “know” his wife is to engage in sexual intercourse with her, which obviously can result in the woman's getting pregnant, as Eve does here, and then having a child.

We also notice that Eve (not Adam?) named her child according to what she considered the process, that she “acquired” or “built” Cain, which itself means “acquire” or “build,” by means of God (קַיִן בְּנוֹתָ) (διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ) and His design of Adam and her within the created reality. In this way, she acknowledges God as the very source, even miraculous source, of her ability to have children, which seems to be coming from her proper belief in God.

Therefore, she immediately becomes a good example of attributing to God, the creator, all that any of us might accomplish that results in the start of and the continuing of life and existence in the present realm—as those of us with authentic belief look forward to God’s ultimate promise of eternal life in the Kingdom of God under Jesus’ rule.

⁸¹ 2 waw conjunctives from v. 1 and a waw disjunctive –

Why did Adam and Eve give the name of Abel to this second son, since it means “breath” or “vapor”? We are not told. Perhaps, it was merely experiencing his warm breath when he was born that motivated Eve to go in this direction with her name for him.

Is there any theological or moral significance to the vocations of the two men, that Abel is a “shepherd,” while Cain is a “worker of the ground”? Probably not, only that these are both necessary activities for human beings to take advantage of the elements of the creation of Genesis 1 in order to survive physically and sustain physical existence for themselves and others.

Is there any significance to Cain’s following in the footsteps of his father, Adam, and working the ground that is different from Abel’s work? Again, probably not. Just two men trying to survive in a harsh and sinful world.

⁸² 2 waw conjunctives –

Where did Cain get the idea to bring an offering from his work to God as a means to demonstrate his acknowledgement and even worship of God? From God, from Adam, from Eve, from his brother Abel? The author does not say, and we would think that he would indicate that it was God if it really was God (or anyone else), which lends itself to the strongest possibility that it came from Cain himself. Therefore, Cain, the one who ends up becoming so envious and angry because of God’s lack of approval of his offering, that he murders his brother to assuage his envy and anger, is the inventor of religious ritual as a means to worship God—in contrast to simply being a sinful person whose heart is oriented towards God and who pursues good, moral behavior towards his fellow human beings while appealing to God for His mercy and acknowledging Him in his mind and heart as His transcendent, righteous, and morally perfect creator. The rest of the Bible makes it clear that, while God Himself will command some sinful human beings, the Jews, to engage in religious rituals as a means to worship Him in the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants, His concern really is not for their religious actions per se, but for the inner, spiritual and moral condition with which they obey Him with their religious rituals and moral choices. This is most clearly indicated when the NT teaches that Gentiles have no theological or moral obligation to any religious rituals in their midst of their belief in Jesus as the Messiah.

⁸³ Waw disjunctive and waw conjunctive –

If Cain invented religious ritual as a form of worship of God, then his brother Abel borrowed and copied him by using the available elements to him, i.e., the sheep.

Is there a theological and moral significance to Abel’s offering being the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions? According to Hebrews 11:4, yes, in that Abel offered “a better sacrifice,” one from the “firstlings” and the “fat portions” of the sheep. This revealed Abel’s heart of belief, that it was genuinely oriented towards God and humble and repentant, while Cain brought anything he could find of his “fruit of the ground.” But, the rest of the Bible makes it clear that religious ritual is not what pleases God ultimately. Instead, it is the heart of repentance, humility, and a desire to bring one’s best to God, especially the best of a person’s moral behavior, not his religious ritual.

Plus, the author of Hebrews indicates that all human beings, starting with Abel (and, by extrapolation, Adam and Eve) have had the same moral makeup of being sinners whose hearts are either turned away from and God and remain as such throughout their lives or changed at some point in their lives and turned towards God by the inner work of His Spirit. This has been the case whether people were before the flood of Noah or after it.

[Hebrews 11:4](#) By means of belief, Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

[Luke 1:25](#) “This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked *with favor* upon *me* (ἐπεῖδεν), to take away my disgrace among men.”

Therefore, God looked with favor on Abel, the person, as well as on his offering, which implies that it is Abel and his appropriate inwardness which makes his offering favorable. In addition, theologically, it is God who makes Abel favorable by granting him appropriate inwardness through the work of His Spirit—which becomes the key to pleasing God for all other sinful human beings during the course of this present realm.

⁸⁴ 2 waw disjunctives and 2 waw conjunctives –

God was not impressed or pleased with Cain’s offering. How did he find out about God’s disapproval of him? We are not told.

But Cain’s response was intense anger and deep disappointment—based in envy. Clearly, he expected God to be pleased with his religious activity, even if he did not bring the best of the products of his work to Him.

Therefore, here we see what happens inside a human being when God rejects a sinful human being’s worship, because

this worship is founded on a heart that is NOT oriented towards God, but towards the person himself. And why the intense anger that even will culminate in the murder of his own brother? I think that the answer is, pride and envy. We human beings have this deep, deep need for God's and other people's approval *for what we accomplish in and of ourselves*.

⁸⁵ Waw conjunctive -

First, God asks Cain to articulate exactly what is going on inside him, such that he has become so angry and disappointed. I assume that there is some important significance to God's explicitly asking him, and that it is because our becoming as self-aware as possible of our inner, moral condition, including our pride and need for others' approval for our activities and behavior, including acquiring God's approval, is the first step to repentance and humility and solving the problem of being prideful and arrogant. Certainly, repentance and humility are both parts of the necessary condition, which God has placed on sinful human beings, in order to escape His wrath and condemnation and to acquire eternal life instead.

⁸⁶ God is making a clear theological statement to Cain regarding his spiritual condition and his choices and actions that would follow. If he orients his heart towards God, becoming humble and not arrogant, and repentant of his sin and sinfulness, so that he "does well" by bringing a better sacrifice to God, one that demonstrates that he acknowledges God's provision and being the creator by its being of better things than just the "fruit of the ground," then this will "lift" his countenance and give him the satisfaction of knowing that God is pleased with him.

But if Cain does the opposite, which he has already done and revealed the fact that his heart is not oriented towards God, that he is a proud and arrogant man who thinks that he can appease God and make himself worthy of his favor and blessing simply by his outward, religious actions, then, like a lion ready to eat its prey, his own inherent evil is present within him and, like Eve's desire to control her husband, as God stated in 3:16, will do everything it can to control him and continue to lead him away from worshiping God properly and from doing what is good and right. However, Cain must "rule over it," if he is ever going to achieve God's acceptance, approval, forgiveness, and blessing of life. This, apparently, is what Abel had already done as a man of genuine belief.

The Septuagint has translated this verse, "Is it not true, that if you bring an offering correctly and you did not divide it correctly, you have sinned? Be at peace. Its return is for you, and you will rule over it."

It is as though the Hebrew text had used וַיָּשׁוּבָה = "return" instead of וַיִּשְׁכַּח = "desire."

⁸⁷ 4 waw conjunctives from v. 6 –

Obviously, Cain, with his hard and stubborn heart that was oriented away from God, did not listen to a word that God said. He was unwilling to deal with his sin and change into a righteous man who properly believed God and obeyed Him for the sake of "lifting" his countenance and becoming satisfied, content, and even joyful in his relationship with God. He chose to remain miserably susceptible to anger and disappointment because of his envy as long as he tried to please God and could not.

Thus, he "spoke to Abel, his brother," The Septuagint adds that he said, "Let us go out into the field (πεδίον – a word that is not used in the NT), making it apparent that, perhaps getting the two of them away from their homes, Cain fully intended to murder Abel. And he did. He "rose up against" his brother, "and he killed him."

That is a lot of anger that has arisen from devising a plan with a religious ritual to obtain God's approval, acceptance, and even blessing, I assume, of successful crops and plenty of food for physical sustenance, and then having the plan fail utterly, while his brother stole the plan from him and used it successfully.

Such is the natural response of inherently sinful people, who prominently occupy the story of the rest of the Bible (almost as much as the moral, righteous, gracious, and merciful God and His sovereign plan to rescue sinful human beings from His wrath, condemnation, and destruction occupies it) and who are unwilling to pursue their relationship with God and their moral behavior according to truth. They invent a lie or lies and firmly believe that they are on the right side of biblical morality and authority, when they are pursuing evil and are unwilling to admit it. They "kill" others by somehow getting rid of them, either ostracizing them or even killing them. And, yet, God is willing to forgive them, if they humble themselves and repent by orienting their hearts towards Him, which becomes the main element of the biblical story and features Jesus of Nazareth with his life, death, resurrection, ascension, return and rule of Israel and the earth.

⁸⁸ 2 waw conjunctives from v. 8 –

Here, as in 3:9, God poses a simple question to a human being, "Where is Abel, your brother?" And this is obviously when God already knows the answer, especially because He is bringing every detail of the creation into existence, as the author claimed in Genesis 1. Therefore, the question is not for God's sake. It is for Cain's sake, to make him think about what he has done for the ultimate purpose, if he is willing to follow through completely and consider the question and the answer to the point of humbling himself before God, of repenting of all his sins.

Cain's response reveals that he has no intention of taking the bait from God and doing with His question what he really ought to do. He denies even knowing where Abel is (and, therefore, his murdering him in the field). And he even poses a question to God that is rude and disrespectful. No, he is not his brothers' "keeper," but common courtesy and decency should lead us all to care for others and to know what is going on with them, especially if God is asking as to their

whereabouts and their condition. The least Cain could do is to say that he will help Him find him and check up on him. But he dismisses God's question with a rude response, which is the natural response of evil and selfish human beings, who are unwilling to give God the time of day and to learn what is true about Him and about them. Cain is demonstrating no fear of God whatsoever, which itself is a frightening place to be, if he only faced into this truth. The word translated "keeper" implies guarding and protecting something. Cain is asking if he should be guarding and protecting his brother from suffering and harm? And the answer of course is, Yes!! But here he has actually done the opposite and murdered him in cold blood. Again, this reveals the condition of sinful human beings—apart from the work of the grace of God within them. In this story, Cain is the very antithesis of goodness.

⁸⁹ Waw conjunctive from v. 9 –

Again, God asks Cain a simple question that is also probably intended to encourage him to think more deeply and theologically about what he has done to his brother—and repent!

God also adds a metaphorical explanation of what Cain has done. His own brother's blood is having witness born to it by the personified ground that received it when Cain killed him. The ground is calling for justice in the light of Cain's immoral and destructive act. The implied statement is that it will get justice—unless God is merciful, which is always the case in these situations.

⁹⁰ Waw disjunctive within these statements by God –

God is saying to Cain that his former vocation will no longer work for him to sustain himself physically on the land. It is cursed with respect to him in the sense that it will not produce enough food for him to stay alive.

⁹¹ Here is what God means in the previous verse, that no matter how much time and effort Cain puts into working the ground, "it will not give its strength to" him, i.e., it will not provide the proper amount of energy for him to stay alive. Instead, he will be "a vagrant and a wanderer," which means that he will have to be on the move constantly and forage and hunt for food. It will not be where he is absolutely confident he can find it, e.g., in a field where he has grown the obvious plants that provide nourishing food. He will have to go and search for it in different places all the time.

The Septuagint translates the Hebrew words נָנֵךְ וְנָנֵךְ with στένων καὶ τρέμων, which mean "trembling and quivering," as if the translators interpret God to be saying that, from this point on, Cain is going to be nothing but insecure and afraid. The Hebrew words can mean the same thing, but the fact that the ground will not produce food for Cain leads to its making more sense that God is indicating that he will have to search for food by wandering the earth, i.e., he will be a "vagrant and wanderer."

Nevertheless, God is making Cain both a nomad of sorts and a fearful man in the light of how difficult it is going to be for him to acquire strength from the ground by means of food. It is as though Cain, while refusing to provide food from the ground for his brother and to protect his brother, but instead he murdered him, is losing his ability to provide for himself (certainly, from the ground) and to protect himself completely, because he is a murderer.

⁹² Waw conjunctive from v. 10 –

Cain is feeling the deleterious and detrimental effects of God's justice, and he declares that His justice is too harsh! Really? When he just murdered his brother and took the life of an innocent man? What did he expect? A slap on the wrist? Or, as he intimated in his answer, "I do not know...", that he get away with murder entirely?

Thus, we sinful human beings lose or suppress our appropriate sense of proper, proportional retributive justice, even to the extent that we ignore the thoughts in our minds that God has planted, in that we are completely aware of His future judgment and our deserving eternal death for our sins—according to Paul in Romans 1. Indeed, Cain deserves death, even eternal death, now! He, like all other sinful human beings, is obviously not thinking clearly. We really do imagine that we can get away with being and doing evil. But this story and interaction between God and Cain should disabuse us and persuade us of our mistaken thoughts and the errors we invent where we honestly believe that we can ignore God—even in the midst of our minds' telling us otherwise.

The Septuagint has καὶ εἶπεν Καὶν πρὸς τὸν κύριον μείζων ἢ αἰτία μου τοῦ ἀφεθῆναι με (my circumstances are greater than my being ? (abandoned, tolerated, sent away etc.)).

⁹³ Cain is in despair that being a farmer will no longer work for him when it comes to his staying alive. He states this also in terms of being "hidden" from God's face, that God will no longer provide him with the blessing of food from the ground, which was at least easier than having to search for it.

This is to say that food, and relatively easily obtained food, is to have God's face turned toward us and to receive His blessing us with it.

In addition, Cain is worried about someone's killing him in the same manner that he killed his brother. He probably fears that others, indeed others who are related to him through Adam and Eve, i.e., his brothers and sisters even, will want to execute him according to their own proper sense of social justice, that itself comes from God and His being a God of divine justice. Because Cain murdered Abel, he deserves to die, and they will want to seek revenge on behalf of Abel and thereby kill Cain.

⁹⁴ 2 waw conjunctives from v. 13 –

The syntax of God's statement to Cain is **כִּי-כָל-הַרֹצֵחַ אֶת-חָיִן שֶׁבַע-עָתִידִים יָקָם** = literally, "Therefore, everyone who kills Cain sevenfold he will be avenged (qal imperfect passive 3ms)." It seems natural to interpret the subject of **יָקָם** as **כָּל-הַרֹצֵחַ** = anyone who kills Cain. This is to say that **כָּל** here does not mean "all" as if God is referring to a group, but it means "anyone" with God's referring to the one person who kills (רֹצֵחַ) Cain. As a result, this person "will be avenged," i.e., has vengeance taken on him by God, and it will be a vengeance that is seven times (a lot!) worse than the punishment which God put in place for Cain for murdering his brother, which was being cursed from the ground and becoming a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.

Will this be a disproportionate punishment on the one who kills Cain, while his punishment was proportionate? No, because Cain deserves death, not just a slap on the wrist in the form of not being able to obtain food easily from the ground and being a vagrant on the earth. Therefore, God is saying that anyone who kills Cain in order to take revenge on him for murdering his brother will himself become a murderer, because God is putting a clear sign on Cain to the effect that people need to keep their hands off him—or else their punishment on the earth will be much, much greater than the one He gave Cain. Yet, they will not be punished with death, which is what they will deserve also as did Cain. In other words, God promises Cain that He has issued a threat to the rest of the sinful humans, that their punishment will be much, much greater on the earth than his if anyone takes vengeance on him and kills him—that the killer of Cain "will be avenged (**יָקָם**) sevenfold" by God. Therefore, Cain should be able to live the rest of his life without being afraid of anyone killing him—as long as they take seriously the sign that God has placed on him. But, again, this is not because Cain deserves God's protection, but only because He is showing him mercy during his life in the present realm. Will Cain obtain God's mercy in the eternal realm? It seems by the comments about him in the rest of the Bible that he will not.

Probably the only indication to others of God's threat to punish them more severely during the lives on their earth if they kill Cain is the sign that He puts on him. It is reasonable to think that this sign was obvious enough to people that it clearly made it known to them that they should keep their hands off Cain, that God was protecting him with the sign (and with the promise to punish others more severely).

But does Cain believe and trust God for His promise and for the effectiveness of the sign? It would appear not in that he leaves God's presence in v. 16 and builds a city with other sinful human beings in v. 17 to protect himself.

Leviticus 19:18 'You shall not take vengeance (**לֹא-תִקַּח**), nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am Yahweh.'

Nahum 1:2 A jealous and avenging God (**אֱלֹהֵי קִנְיָא וְנִקְמָה**) is Yahweh; Yahweh is avenging (**נִקְמָה**) and wrathful.

Yahweh takes vengeance (**נִקְמָה**) on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies.

⁹⁵ 2 waw conjunctives from v. 15 –

Not entirely trusting God for His promise and the sign that He has placed on him to protect him from those who might want to take revenge on him for murdering Abel, Cain leaves "the presence" of God and moved east, which, I assume, means that he leaves the place where both his father, Adam, and his brother, Abel, had settled west of the garden after God had forced Adam out of it.

Then, Cain chooses to find his home in a land called "Wandering." Probably, this area was named such because of Cain's punishment and his presence in it. This was his punishment from God for putting the death of his brother. In addition, the author indicates that it is "east of Eden," and, therefore, that much farther from the west of Eden and the garden where he had originally lived. It was as though he was trying to get away from everyone and everything that had been familiar (and, in his mind, dangerous) before.

But the main point by the author is that Cain continues in his rebellious stance towards God and seeks to leave and get away from Him as much and as far as possible—which, of course, is impossible since God is constantly present and creating every human being and his existence. Yet, this is what we all do given our sinful condition of fundamentally being unwilling to submit ourselves to God.

Cain goes away from God instead of towards God. To go away is to miss the point of our human existence, that we should constantly be approaching God for His eternal mercy. This would be to go towards God in the only appropriate way.

⁹⁶ 5 waw conjunctives from v. 16 –

The second mention of sexual intercourse by human beings is in regard to Cain, the murderer. Interesting. And his wife conceives, as Eve had done, and she has a son, as Eve had done. And this son's name is Enoch, meaning Dedicated or Follower (I think).

And Cain (not Enoch) built a city. This may seem inconsistent with the fact that God punished him by making him a wanderer, and not a city-dweller. But it is consistent with his ongoing inherent and committed sinfulness, which naturally leads him not to trust God for his protection from other human beings who may want to avenge his murder of his brother, Abel.

Rather than being content with wandering for his food, he gathers other people together in a city to support each other and to protect each other—which, perhaps, then becomes sinful human beings' main reason to congregate in cities, to

protect each other from each other, and to hide from the presence of God, all while they want to define morality and human existence for themselves (as Eve chose to do!!). Therefore, the city becomes a combining of everything Adam, Eve, and Cain chose to do out of pride, deception, envy, and anger—even though somebody has to work outside the city in the fields and grow food.

⁹⁷ Waw conjunctive and 3 waw disjunctives from v. 17 –

Not knowing exactly the culture in which this account was written and the language in that culture as well as we know our own language in our culture, I am reluctant to assume that the verbs וַיֵּלֶד and וַיִּלְדָּ mean that there are no generations between the subjects and objects of these verbs. Perhaps, there are several generations between Enoch and Irad, and between Irad and Mehujael, etc., especially since the basic meaning of the verb is to give birth. Therefore, the word may mean “was an ancestor,” e.g., that Irad was an ancestor of Mehujael, etc.

As a result, these men are prominent for a good reason, but the author does not provide us with the reason—until Lamech, his wives, and their two sons are named in vs. 19-22. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that the author wanted to relate the story of Lamech’s speech to his wives in vs. 23 & 24 in order to provide evidence of man’s sinfulness and selfishness in his relationship to God, before he goes back to Adam and Eve and tells of the birth of their son, Seth, in vs. 25 & 26.

⁹⁸ Waw conjunctive and a waw disjunctive from v. 17 (?) –

For the first time, polygamy enters the story, but without any comment of its moral propriety by the author. Yet, it seems out of place in the light of the editorial comment in 2:24 regarding a husband and wife, which implied one husband and one wife.

Seems unusual that the author names Lamech’s two wives, Adah and Zillah, when Cain’s wife was not named. But the author needed to get to Lamech because of his and his wives’ three sons, two from Adah and one from Zillah, interestingly enough. God could have had one of the wives give birth to all three sons, who then became prominent as these men did.

⁹⁹ Waw conjunctive from v. 19 –

Here, the verb וַיֵּלֶד clearly refers to the next generation.

And the point is that Jabal was the patriarch so to speak of tent dwellers and people who kept livestock, instead, I assume, of planting and growing food. While Cain had built a city, Jabal and his descendants were more nomadic, as Cain was originally intended to be—except he did not trust God to protect him.

But tent dwellers, people who do not stay in one place very long and are rather nomadic, like city dwellers, thus developed before all of humanity were wiped out by the flood later in Noah’s day, and then must have been reinvented by Noah and his family, so that nomadic life and city life have always been true for many in this world—pre-flood and post-flood.

¹⁰⁰ Waw disjunctive –

Here, the author wants the reader to know that music and its use among human beings started with Lamech’s son through Adah, Jubal. And both stringed instruments, the lyre, and wind instruments, the pipe, were invented by him and used by his descendants. These people with their skills died when the flood of Noah occurred, but then his family must have reinvented and developed them similarly. Musical ability has always been true for many in the world—pre-flood and post-flood.

¹⁰¹ 2 waw disjunctives –

God had Lamech’s second wife, Zillah, also give birth to an inventive son. He was Tubal-cain, and he invented bronze and iron tools. Again, this was before the flood of Noah, so that his family reinvented these skills after the rest of humanity was destroyed by God.

The point of mentioning Tubal-cain’s sister, Naamah, is not clear, but her name shows up four more times in the Old Testament. In fact, Rehoboam’s mother was Naamah of the people of Ammon.

In addition, Naamah is the tenth descendant of Cain mentioned, as the author will also mention ten descendants of Adam in chapter 5 and ten of Shem in chapter 11.

¹⁰² Waw conjunctive in v. 23 from v. 20 –

The syntax of Lamech’s statement about being avenged is, וְשִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעִים יִקָּם כַּיֵּן לְאָדָם = literally, “If sevenfold will be avenged (qal imperfect passive 3ms) Cain, and, as for Lamech, seventy-sevenfold.” Here, the subject of יִקָּם is Cain, that Lamech is referring to Cain’s being avenged by God if someone kills him for murdering his brother—a merciful protection by God in the present realm, even though Cain deserves death, including eternal death. Presumably, Lamech intends to comfort his wives that they need not fear someone’s avenging the death of the man and the boy whom he has killed. They wounded and struck him respectively, so that they both deserved to die. But Lamech also seems to be bragging of sorts, that he acted justly on his own behalf, and his wives need to share in how great a man he is for defending himself and his honor the way he did.

We do not know what precipitated the man's wounding Lamech. Indeed, maybe he unjustly provoked the man out of his own selfish sinfulness, so that the man was actually defending himself against Lamech. And why did the boy strike him? Again, we are not told, but we have to wonder if Lamech in some sense deserved these two actions on the part of these two people whom he killed. This, then, would be similar to what sinful human beings have done down through the ages. They have rationalized their behavior without humbly and honestly acknowledging their own selfishness and narcissism.

As a result, Lamech is partly encouraging his wives to "hear [his] speech" because he wants them to share in his manliness.

Then, Lamech refers to his somewhat distant ancestor, Cain, and God's providing protection and the threat of avenging sevenfold anyone's killing him for taking revenge on Cain for murdering his brother. This means that the story of Cain persisted for several, if not many, generations and probably became the basis for other sinful human beings' assessing and defining their relationship with God—albeit wrongly because they chose to misunderstand God and themselves. But Lamech seems to think that God should and will avenge him much, much more than He was willing to do so for Cain. Why? I assume that it is out of his own arrogance and pride. He honestly believes both Cain and he deserve God's protection for putting to death those who have offended them, and that he deserves it even more than Cain. This clearly reveals that Lamech does not understand God and is speaking from a position of inherent sin and evil with a twisted understanding of himself and wrongdoing, which becomes the immoral condition of human beings throughout the rest of their history. They are unwilling to understand God as morally perfect, just, and merciful, and themselves as morally imperfect, unjust, and lacking in forgiveness, so that they conclude that they deserve His blessings and grace—like the Pharisees and Bible teachers of Jesus' day. But they are relating to God merely out of their natural sinful humanity—as Adam and Eve did.

The main point is that we human beings misunderstand God and ourselves and end up concluding that we deserve God's love, favor, and good gifts from Him while not facing honestly, accurately, and completely into our own sinfulness, arrogance, and pursuit of satisfying our own selfish desires that lead us to ignore and reject Gods' moral commandments.

¹⁰³ 3 waw conjunctives from v. 23 –

The author goes back to many generations before Lamech and to Adam, who did not let the murder of his son, Abel, by his other son, Cain, stop him from wanting to have more children. As a result, Eve gave birth to another son.

She ended up naming him, Seth, which is שֵׁט in Hebrew, and this because God had "established" another descendant for him in place of Abel. The Hebrew word for "established" is יָסַד. Thus, God "established" the man "Established" in place of Abel.

And, as painful as it has been to admit since it happened, Eve explicitly says that her son "Cain killed" Abel. The reality of human, sinful nature and human history that results from sin is hard to look at, but Eve did so in regard to her own children.

¹⁰⁴ As the story goes and there being only Adam and Cain without Abel, mankind is solely rebellious against God. When Seth and Enosh come along, a different kind of men arise, those who are willing to worship God appropriately as Abel had been—with authentic humility and repentance. Now, there are two distinct kinds of sinful men on the earth, those who remain committed to disobeying God and those whose fundamental desire is to obey Him.

¹⁰⁵ As in 2:4a, the author is providing a summary statement of his work up to this point. He is announcing that this is the end of the section major section of the beginning accounts of Genesis.

This is the account of the details (to the extent that he has wanted to provide the details) of God's bringing into existence "man," which is to say, mankind, who are sinful human beings, starting with Adam and finishing in this account with Enosh. The various points that the author has made, with this second major section beginning in 2:4b, are—

- 1) God is the divine determiner of the creation, having brought it into existence out of nothingness before it – Genesis 1:1-3
- 2) God is the divine determiner of everything necessary for human beings to exist and survive physically on this earth – Genesis 1:3-31
- 3) God is the divine determiner of every element and detail of human history, including human beings and their choices – Genesis 1
- 4) God has made sinful human beings to be like him, i.e., in His image, so that they have rational and moral capability, unlike animals, birds, and fish – Genesis 1:27
- 5) God has made two kinds of sinful human beings according to their gender, male and female, men and women – Genesis 1:27
- 6) God has intended men and women to propagate human beings while being the most important beings on the earth and while consuming food that God has provided specifically for them (and for the animals, birds, and fishes) – Genesis 1:28-30
- 7) God has blessed the "seventh day" as the period of time when He no longer brought into existence new elements of the creation to achieve His goals with the creation – Genesis 2:1-3

- 8) God initially provided subterranean sources of water before He created man to work the ground, the plants for his food, and eventually the flood in Noah's day – Genesis 2:4-6
- 9) God made Adam from the ground and placed him in a garden where trees provided him with food – Genesis 2:7-9
- 10) God associated four rivers with the garden – Genesis 2:10-14
- 11) God commanded Adam not to eat of the tree in the middle of the garden or he would incur eternal death – Genesis 2:15-17
- 12) God unsuccessfully sought to find a helper for the man correspondingly opposite to him among the animals – Genesis 2:18-20
- 13) God made a woman from one of Adam's ribs, and he recognized her as an appropriate helper – Genesis 2:21-23
- 14) This woman was called "Wife," and husbands and wives are intended to become their own families separate from their parents – Genesis 2:23-24
- 15) Adam and his wife were not yet self-conscious of their inherent sinfulness – Genesis 2:25
- 16) God's additional created person, the serpent [Satan], deceived the woman into thinking that breaking God's commandment was good for her own maturation process and achieving adulthood, and Adam immediately followed her lead – Genesis 3:1-6
- 17) Afterwards, Adam and his wife became very self-conscious of their inherent sinfulness and hid from God when they detected His presence – Genesis 3:7-8
- 18) God questioned the man and the woman regarding their disobedience, so that the man blamed the woman and the woman blamed the serpent – Genesis 3:9-13
- 19) God relegated the serpent to an extreme subservient role and to destruction by human beings – Genesis 3:14-15
- 20) God relegated the woman to heartache and sorrow that will come from her descendants and to being ruled tyrannically by her husband in the midst of her own desire to control him – Genesis 3:16
- 21) God relegated Adam to more difficult labor when working the ground in order to acquire food until he died – Genesis 3:17-19
- 22) Adam named his wife Eve; God made them skin tunics to help them with their self-consciousness about their sinfulness; and God forced Adam and Eve out of the garden to the west so that he would not have access to the forbidden tree now that they had revealed their sinfulness so explicitly – Genesis 3:20-24
- 23) Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain, a farmer, and Abel, a sheep herder – Genesis 4:1-2
- 24) After Cain invented a religious ritual to worship God, both he and then Abel performed their own, but God accepted only Abel's, so that Cain became envious and very angry of not deserving God's approval – Genesis 4:3-5
- 25) God encouraged Cain to get control of his sin or it would consume him – Genesis 4:6-7
- 26) Cain did not get control of his sin, and he remained so angry at God's rejection that he murdered his brother Abel – Genesis 4:8
- 27) Cain refused to own up to his sin, and God punished him by preventing his farming efforts from succeeding at all and by making him a vagrant on the earth – 4:9-12
- 28) When Cain complained that his punishment was too great and that someone would kill him and take revenge for his murdering his brother, God put a sign on him and threatened a sevenfold punishment on anyone who killed him – Genesis 4:13-15
- 29) But Cain turned even further away from God, wandered east of the garden, had a son Enoch by his wife, and built a city to protect himself – Genesis 4:16-17
- 30) After several generations, Lamech killed a man and a boy and wrongly claimed that he deserved even greater protection from God than Cain – Genesis 4:18-24
- 31) Adam and Eve had another son, whom Eve named Seth ("Established"), who replaced Abel, and Seth had a son Enosh – 4:25-26
- 32) With the births of Seth and Enosh, fortunately there were some sinful human beings who worshiped God properly in the midst of those like Lamech who did not – Genesis 4:26

¹⁰⁶ Similar to 2:4b, "In the day when Yahweh Elohim made the earth and the heavens," the author is beginning another account of the beginning of mankind in the cosmos on this earth. This time, from 5:1b-6:9, it is specifically about Noah and the history of mankind, made in the likeness of God, i.e., moral and rational persons, made as two genders, i.e., male and female, and even named by God literally "adam," i.e., mankind. And this was all "in the day when God created mankind," which, as in 2:4b, refers simply to the chronological event when God brought human beings into existence for the purpose that He has intended for them.

Four important aspects of human beings are mentioned in vs. 1 & 2,

- 1) God made them in His own "likeness" (דְּמוּתוֹ)—moral and rational so that biblical goodness and truth will make sense.
- 2) God created two genders, male and female (זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה)—for the wives to be helpers to their husbands as they both pursue their moral and vocational responsibilities to God and given them by God.
Genesis 1:27 And Elohim created man in His image. In the image of Elohim He created him. Male and female He created them.
- 3) God "blessed them" (וַיְבָרֶכֶם), meaning a) either that He provided them with the opportunity to sustain

themselves physically and to produce more human beings, b) or that He would rescue some of them from His eternal condemnation and grant these ones eternal life and moral perfection. I am inclined to think that, like 1:28 and 9:1, a) is correct in this context of the descriptions of the next generations' coming into existence through their births. It is more coherent. See also 9:1.

Genesis 1:28 And *Elohim* **blessed** them, and *Elohim* **said** to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it, and dominate the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, and all living, moving things on the earth."

Genesis 9:1 And *Elohim* **blessed** Noah and his sons. And He **said** to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth."

4) God named human beings "mankind" (אָדָם = adam; perhaps from אֲדָמָה = ground, since God made the first man from the dust of the ground).

¹⁰⁷ The author mentioned in 4:25-26 at the end of the last account of "the earth and the heavens" starting in 2:4b that Adam and Eve had this other son, Seth, who also had a son, Enosh.

Now, the author begins with the birth of Seth and assures the reader that the progeny and descendant of the first man, Adam, was like him in the same manner that Adam was like God and made "according to his image," i.e., moral and rational—yet, we can assume, sinful as Adam and Eve were as an important part of God's story which He is telling to reveal and demonstrate both His justice and His mercy.

The two phrases, "in his likeness" and "according to his image" mean the same thing and are for emphatic purposes. Seth really was a moral and rational being like Adam.

Eventually, the story needs to arrive at the point when the important person, Noah, appears, and thus it heads in that direction with various generations in between Adam and Noah. This is the purpose of chapter 5.

Even though Adam's name is the same word as "mankind" in 5:2, it makes sense to translate it as "Adam" in this verse.

¹⁰⁸ This pattern of the father, his son, the time periods of the father, and then his death is generally followed throughout chapter 5, except for Enoch and Lamech with Noah, and finally Noah in 5:32.

¹⁰⁹ Later, the author will mention that Noah also "walked with God," and he was rescued from the flood and found life, at least continued life in the present realm, by obeying God and building the ark. Here is Noah's predecessor to life, Enoch, who also "walked with God" (וַיֵּלֶךְ עִנֹּחַ אִתְּיָהוָה), so that he never died (unlike Noah, who obviously did – 9:29). In this way, Enoch becomes an emphatic example of how life (vs. death) is achieved. It is by being a sinful human being who obeys God's moral commandments and, thereby, "walks with" Him and conducts his life in a manner that God requires in order to obtain salvation from eternal death into eternal life.

God makes Enoch an emphatic example of this principle by simply taking him and removing him from existence on the earth. He "was not, because God took him" off and from the earth. Where does God take Enoch? We are not told, but I think that we can assume it is to another location within the created reality in which he continues to live, because he did not die. It will become clear from the rest of the Bible that physical death initially results in passing out of existence until the first and second resurrections of Revelation 20, when a person will either regain life, indeed eternal life, when Jesus returns or condemnation and permanent non-existence as a result of the Great White Throne Judgment.

¹¹⁰ Noah is נֹחַ, while "comfort" is נַחֵם. What exactly does Lamech know about Noah? Two options –

1) Noah will "walk with God" and find salvation from the death of the flood and life after it, demonstrating for other sinful human's comfort sake, that this is how eternal life is obtained by sinful human beings, through appropriate obedience to God in the midst of having to work so hard at sustaining themselves in the present realm because of God's cursing their work in 3:17-19 when Adam disobeyed Him.

2) Noah will restart the human race after the flood so that his descendants, indeed, one in particular (the Messiah), will bring the ultimate comfort of eternal salvation and life in the Kingdom of God for those who work so hard at sustaining themselves because of God's cursing their work in 3:17-19 when Adam disobeyed Him.

In the context of chapters 6-9, the first option makes more sense, that somehow Lamech found out (from God, I assume) that Noah was going to play a special role in the history of mankind by rescuing his family and himself from the flood, thus demonstrating that proper obedience to God results in salvation from "death" and the outcome of "life" after a catastrophe takes place, i.e., the judgment and condemnation of sinful human beings for their rebellion against God. This should be comforting to sinners who are looking for God's ultimate salvation of eternal life.

Genesis 3:17 And to the man He said, "Because you listened to the voice of your wife, and you ate from the tree from which I commanded you, saying, 'Do not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you. In anxious toil you will eat it all the days of your life."

¹¹¹ The author breaks the pattern by immediately mentioning Noah's three sons, because they will survive the flood and provide the restart to the human race on earth, so that one of them, Shem, will become particularly important to the eternal salvation and life of human beings.

According to Genesis 7:7, it will be another one hundred years when Noah and his family will enter the ship to escape

death from the flood and acquire life after it.

¹¹² Here the focus is on women and the daughters of “mankind,” that not only were sons “birthed to them,” but so were also daughters, who could be helpers to the men and continue the adding of human beings to the earth. This all occurred as “mankind began to multiply on the face of the ground,” as there were more and more sinful human beings on the earth and who were sustaining themselves with food from the ground—as God had designed in Genesis 1. In other words, in the normal and natural course of events, people were having children, and the population of the earth was growing.

¹¹³ Two reasonable options for the “sons of Elohim”—

1) Descendants of Seth who are authentic believers in Elohim/God

2) Men in general as creations by Elohim and thereby His “sons” so to speak

The context lends itself to #2 mostly, that the author’s point is that men and women came together as husbands and wives as God had designed the two genders to produce more human beings, both men and women, sons and daughters.

An additional bonus for men was that the women whom they chose as their wives were “attractive” (רָצוּן) (καλαί), meaning that physically, psychologically, intellectually, and spiritually these women could and did make good wives for the men—in spite of God’s words to Eve in Genesis 3 that she (and they) would want to control their husbands, a natural consequence of sin. Consequently, God did not bring men and women together as husbands and wives simply by virtue of their sexual drives, which is the case for animals. He provided a definite aesthetic element of genuine beauty and art (a decorative element in their relationships with one another).

And this was true for “all of them whom [the men] chose,” including Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Hopefully, likewise, the men were interested in making good husbands for their wives—in contrast to what God had said to Eve in Genesis 3, that Adam would rule her in an autocratic manner.

Thus, the author continues setting the stage for the story of Noah and the flood.

¹¹⁴ I think that all that God is saying is that sinful human beings will not stay alive forever on this earth, but that they will die after a certain length of time, approximately 120 years for people during this time period. Their death will be as a result of God’s “Spirit,” His activity within the creation that causes people (and other organic beings) to be and remain alive. If He takes His “Spirit” from them, then they no longer have His life-preserving activity within them. Their bodies simply shut down, and they die.

Plus, it seems that God is saying that long life will not remain a characteristic of human beings. Eventually, the length of people’s lifespan will decrease, as shown in chapter 11.

¹¹⁵ The author makes it clear that some of the people born to men and women were great in “reputation” (שֵׁם = name).

This is important to the story, because these men are great in their status and perhaps power, authority, and wealth, but they are not great in their relationships with God, which is much more important in the long run. To be obscure and a person of authentic belief results in eternal life. To be well-known in human history but lacking biblical belief results in eternal death. Sinful human beings typically long to be of the latter kind and ignore the importance of the former kind. [Numbers 13:32-33](#) So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size. There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

¹¹⁶ God’s assessment of the moral condition of human beings in Noah’s day was that they are evil and rebellious. It would be easy to think that these people are more evil and more wicked in their behavior than all others who have lived on the earth, which is why God decides to destroy them with the flood. However, the apostle Paul says the same thing of sinful human beings in general in Romans 1, that they are all unwilling to seek and obey God, their creator, even though they know in their minds and hearts that they are accountable to Him and should submit to His moral commandments, or they will incur His judgment, condemnation, and destruction.

Therefore, human beings remain the same even after the flood. It does not change their sinful condition. Indeed, nothing external will change people’s moral condition. Only God can do so by means of the internal work of His Spirit, His invisible activity within the creation, when He changes their hearts.

And we can conclude that this story in Genesis 6-9 of Noah, his fellow sinful human beings whom God destroys by His justice, and the flood is intended to motivate future sinners to take God’s justice and their sin seriously and to appeal to Him for mercy in order to avoid His justice and eternal death.

It also teaches us that we all deserve to die at every moment of our existences as human beings because of our inherent and continuous sinfulness. Each moment of life in the present realm and certainly in the coming eternal realm is/will be a gift of God’s grace, so that we should enjoy every possible moment of life even in this realm that is contaminated with so much sin and evil.

¹¹⁷ In the light of God's divine determinism of every detail of the creation, including the sinfulness and evil of human beings, this seems like a strange statement. How can God be "pained with respect to" (אֵלֹהִים נִכְרַח; the Septuagint says only διενόηθη = he became mindful, i.e., he set his mind to act on the basis of this information) the heart of man, which is evil and inclined in every thought towards disobeying God, when He has intentionally created them this way? The reasonable answer to this question is that God has chosen to relate to human beings, who have the ability to think rationally and act morally, as real persons who are not only accountable to Him, but also will incur a just response from God, whether reward for good behavior or punishment for evil behavior—or forgiveness and mercy if He so chooses. The apostle Paul describes our relationship to God in this way in Romans 2.

I also interpret the last statement in this verse to refer to the effect of man's sinful heart on God, not the subjective grief in God's heart that is caused by man's sin. This is a comment on an issue that will remain at the center of God's story throughout the history of the present realm. The issue is the "heart" of man, whether it is oriented towards God with genuine belief or towards himself with genuine unbelief with respect to God. What is a person's fundamental desire—to obey God or to define morality independently and rebelliously for himself?

Yet, God does get angry in the stories and descriptions in the Bible. Therefore, it is not surprising that "pain" is an appropriate divine response to evil and sin just as "anger" is.

¹¹⁸ Again, this response by God makes sense if we take think of Him as the author of this story of human history on the earth where He assesses the moral condition and actions of human beings so as recompense them with what they deserve, or He will graciously grant them forgiveness and life in the Kingdom of God instead.

Plus, the way that God has created all human beings, except Jesus as the Messiah and icon of God, is such that we all deserve death at every moment in accord with God's justice. Here, though, God states that He will "wipe out" not only all human beings other than Noah and his family, but also all other living creatures. It will be as though He is starting over on this earth in regard to sinful human beings, which is analogous to His starting over in the millennial kingdom after Jesus returns and on the new and eternal earth of Revelation 21-22. Therefore, God's starting over is not surprising and perfectly in line with His justice and mercy. God even starts over so to speak with sinful human beings when He circumcises their hearts and causes them to become authentic believers and obedient to Him this side of their death or Jesus' return.

God is therefore saying that all of Cain's descendants starting in chapter 4 and all the other descendants of Seth of chapter 5 are going to die. The only family left after the flood will be Noah's, who himself is a descendant of Seth and Enoch and named by his father in 5:29, Lamech, as one who brings comfort and rest.

¹¹⁹ There was one man whose "heart" was not unwilling to move him to submit to God and His moral commandments. This was Noah. He "found grace in the eyes of God," meaning that God had independently and sovereignly chosen to be gracious to him so that he was living his life according to what God required for human beings to be saved from His justice, condemnation, and death—with a changed heart by the Spirit of God, with authentic belief in God and the truth that he knew at the time, and with pursuing obedience to God because of his fundamental desire to submit to Him and be a biblically good person.

Does this also mean that Noah was the only sinful human being on the earth who had a righteously oriented heart and was genuinely obedient to God. Perhaps, but this is not necessary in the light that God can make the story of any human being as He desires, even for those of genuine belief to go through suffering and death in the present realm on their way to acquire eternal life at the first resurrection of Revelation 20 and to enter the Kingdom of God.

Thus, in this story of Noah and the flood, God is demonstrating His justice towards many who are sinful and evil, resulting in their deaths, and He is willing to rescue one man (and his family) by His mercy and forgiveness because of his belief and obedience. In other words, if there is only one person on the earth, who meets the condition of a changed heart and authentic belief and obedience, He will save him from condemnation and destruction, while performing His justice on as many as there may be who are rebelling against Him.

¹²⁰ If the pattern is the same as in Genesis 1 into 2:4a, then this statement ends the previous account of 5:1b-6:9 that focuses on Noah in the midst of the rest of sinful humanity. The author is saying that this is the end of the third major section of the beginning accounts of Genesis.

Genesis 2:4a These are the bringings forth (אֵלֶּה תְּלִדֹת) of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Genesis 5:1a This is the account of the bringings forth of man.

Genesis 10:1a And these are the bringings forth of the sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹²¹ And now the main experience of Noah's existence, the flood, begins to take place and will end in 10:1a. It starts with an assessment of Noah's spiritual and moral condition, which is the same as in v. 8 but with a fuller explanation. Noah was "righteous," meaning that he was being and doing the right thing in his relationship with God. He authentically believed Him and obeyed Him to the best of his ability by the grace of God. This meant, too, that he was qualified to obtain eternal salvation from God's justice and life in the eternal Kingdom of God—as stated in Hebrews 11:4.

He was also "blameless," which does not refer to moral perfection, but to God's not condemning by charging him with full and total rebellion against Him. And this was "among his generations," i.e., in the midst of the lives of his sons and

their children. Noah persevered in his genuine faith, belief, and obedience while his children, their children, and he were alive—throughout the experience of the flood and the ship which he built.

And, thirdly, Noah was like Enoch of 5:21-24. He “himself walked with” God, so that He could have taken him from the earth without dying as He had done so with Enoch.

In this way, the story of God’s executing justice on mankind with the flood begins—with a description of Noah’s favorable situation in his relationship with God, because this is that to which all sinful human beings should aspire in order to avoid God’s condemnation and death.

¹²² Repeating what he had said in 5:32, the author reminds his readers that Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. He “caused to give birth to” them, meaning, as it has before, that his wife and he together produced these three additional human beings. And these three men will then become important to the whole rest of the story of mankind, as implied by the end of this account in 10:1a.

¹²³ As in the previous statement, the author repeats an idea that he has already presented. Here, it is that human beings are sinful to the extent that their moral condition is “ruined in the sight of” God and “wrong.” They cannot deserve life from Him. Instead, they deserve death, both death in this world and eternal death with respect to the eternal Kingdom of God.

Again, this is true of every period of time in human history, even during the restored Kingdom of Israel after Jesus’ return, that the earth is basically “ruined” by sinful human beings in comparison to how it will actually be better during the “great nation” of Israel and certainly during the new, eternal earth of Revelation 21-22.

¹²⁴ Notice that, in this story, the author records only God’s speaking until the incident with Ham and Canaan after Noah gets drunk and passes out naked in his tent. Then, finally, Noah speaks.

God’s appropriate response to man’s sin is to cause his existence to end, because life is a gift from God in conjunction with good, moral behavior, while death is the correct recompense for evil and immoral behavior.

¹²⁵

עֵצֵי-גִפְרִית, literally “trees of *gopher*,” but it is unknown exactly what the *gopher* tree was.

¹²⁶ Thus, God instructs Noah in how he can save himself from the flood, by building a ship that weathers the storm so to speak. This is the condition which God places on Noah to obtain life after the flood, if he is willing to obey God and follow through on fulfilling this condition.

Similarly, God instructs sinful human beings throughout the rest of history and by means of the Bible in how they can weather the storm of His justice and destruction, either for the Jews on the land of Israel under the Mosaic Covenant, or for Jews and Gentiles on the earth under the New Covenant—both which require a circumcised and changed heart.

¹²⁷ Here God explicitly states how He is going to destroy life on the earth—by means of a “flood of water” (מַיִם רַבִּים) (אֶת-הַמַּבּוּל) (τὸν κατακλυσμὸν ὕδωρ), which will originate both from above the earth and from within the earth as stated in 7:11. Therefore, there will be what we call “rain” from the sky above and great gushes of water from below the surface of the earth.

Genesis 7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, all the headwaters of the great deep were burst open. And, as for the windows of the heavens, they were opened.

Again, implied is that God is starting over with life on earth, including human beings, even though they will not be different morally. They will still be inherently sinful and in need of changed inwardness to qualify for eternal salvation and life.

Is it so outlandish to believe that, with Noah, his family, and the animals in the ship that He destroyed all other living beings on the earth and started over with these on the ship? Yes, if we do not take into account exactly who God is, the eternal, uncreated, and transcendent creator of at least 200 billion galaxies in the present universe. Thus, this story becomes just as important in leading and motivating us to believe God for exactly who He is as any other story or information in the Bible and from the natural world.

Our belief in God from what we learn in the Bible is paramount and supreme in comparison to anything else we think, believe, and do as sinful human beings existing during the course of our lives in the present realm. If we do nothing else as human beings, we must learn, believe, and act on what we can know about God—for the sake of obtaining His eternal mercy and life in the Kingdom of God with Jesus as our ruler and high priest. This is why status within human society and approval from our fellow human beings are nothing in comparison to our biblical knowledge, authentic belief, and pursuit of biblical goodness and morality in the midst of all the hustle and bustle of life on this earth.

¹²⁸ But God is establishing a “covenant” with Noah to the effect that he will survive the flood in the ship. God will not bring about the flood until the ship is built and Noah, his family, and the living beings whom he gathers onto the ship enter into it and are safe and secure from the rain and the flood. Thus, God will not destroy the other lives until He has made provision through Noah’s work for the rescue from death for Noah, his family, and the other living creatures.

Similarly, God does not destroy the other lives eternally until He has made provision through Jesus of Nazareth for the rescue from destruction for authentic believers.

Interesting that Noah had only one wife, and it appears that his sons were monogamous also.

¹²⁹ God's clear purpose for the existence of the ship is "to keep [the living creatures] alive with" Noah and his family. This is to say that LIFE in the face of death and instead of death is what God provides when He rescues human beings and other creatures that breathe from their no longer breathing and therefore dying. Life instead of death is the whole point of human history that is centered in the existence of Jesus of Nazareth, as the one who intercedes for sinful human beings and brings mercy and life from God to them.

Genesis 2:7 And Yahweh *Elohim* **formed** the man of dust from the ground, and He breathed in his nose the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Genesis 6:17 "And, as for Me, behold, I am **bringing** the flood of water on the earth to **destroy** all flesh in which there is breath of life from under the heavens. Everything that is on the earth will die.

Genesis 7:15 And they entered into the ship to Noah, two by two, from all the flesh, in which there is the breath of life.

Genesis 7:22 Everything in whose nostrils is the breath of the breath of life, from everything which is on dry land, died.

¹³⁰ God repeats the purpose for the ship—"to keep [the living creatures] alive" during the flood which will kill everyone and everything else that breathes. It is in order for Noah and the other living beings to stay alive.

¹³¹ Interesting that God mentions explicitly "food" (לֶחֶם-מִן־הָאָרֶץ) (ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν βρωμάτων) as something which Noah and his family should take with them on the ship. Would he have not thought to do this himself? Of course. So why does God specify it? I think that it is in light of the Genesis 1 and the clear purpose of His bringing about the earth and mankind—that physical sustenance is an important part of the package of the creation. Without food, people (and other living beings) die. And life is to be desired above death. And to seek life is desired above ignoring or neglecting food as that which will cause a person to survive the other elements of human existence that could possibly keep him from living, i.e., exposure to the weather, mistreatment by other human beings, disease, war, etc. And, in this case, the other element will be "rain" and a flood that will destroy all other human beings on the earth.

Breathing and eating are key to physical life in the present realm.

Again, the purpose of this story of Noah, the ship, and the flood is to emphasize the importance and value of LIFE vs. death for human beings and other creatures that need air, breathing, and food in order to continue their existence on this earth as all this points ultimately to eternal LIFE in contrast to God's condemnation and destruction at the final judgment—regardless of how difficult and lonely this existence on this earth might be, as it certainly was for Noah, the only man whom we know from the account was an authentic believer in God and took the time to build a ship, while everybody else went about their normal lives on earth.

¹³² Being far different from Adam and Cain and their disobedience, Noah was a truly "righteous" man and set out to obey God exactly as He had commanded (שָׁמַע). He "did" (עָשָׂה) what God said.

And to be precise, all this is what God "commanded" Noah, so that He expected him to obey everything that He told him to do—just as God will expect the Jews to obey the Mosaic Covenant and Christians to obey the information regarding Jesus as the Messiah exactly as this information is presented to them, albeit with changed hearts as the inward condition for obeying it properly. This characteristic becomes the key to a person's relationship with God and that which only God can bring about, as the rest of the Bible makes clear.

¹³³ At the appropriate time, God commands Noah and his family to leave the dry land, which still exists, and to enter the ship, which He also had commanded him to build.

And the reason which God gives for why they should embark on the ship is "because" He "sees" Noah as a "righteous" man in that particular generation of human beings, i.e., doing the right thing both in his inwardness, his heart, and with his outwardness, his actions.

¹³⁴ Why is there a distinction between "clean" and supposedly "unclean" animals? And why is it appropriate to save more of the "clean," along with the birds in the next verse?

This distinction definitely becomes important within the Mosaic Covenant in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. But it seems that, somehow, it already is for Noah, perhaps because of Cain's invention in Genesis 4 of the religious ritual of bringing a sacrifice and offering to God and God's then perpetuating this manner of approaching Him for human beings afterwards. Therefore, Noah must know exactly what God is talking about when He mentions the two kinds of animals and even understands why there should be the additional clean animals in comparison to the unclean animals.

¹³⁵ Thus, God gives Noah a seven days head start on acquiring and bringing on the ship all the animals and birds that He has commanded in order to save all of them.

The reason He gives is because He is going to destroy all animal and bird life that has existed on "the face of the land." And, as stated in this verse, the method of destruction will be "forty days and forty nights" of "rain." But the word for

“rain” (בִּזְזִי) (ὕετος), must mean more than drops of water falling from the sky. It includes the large springs of water that will come from beneath the surface of the ground.

¹³⁶ The author has already indicated that Noah is a “righteous” man as assessed by God. Therefore, it is no surprise that Noah obeyed both God’s commandments and built and entered the ship, as the author had indicated in regard to the first commandment in 6:22. Again, Noah is far different from Adam and Cain.

Thus, the whole idea of listening to and responding in obedience to God is a key element of this story. And this must pertain to what all sinful human beings should pursue if they want life, indeed eternal life, instead of death, if they want God’s mercy instead of His justice and condemnation. For us, diving into the Bible and learning everything we can from it in order to respond to the information in obedience to God is part of the condition that He places on us to qualify for His mercy and gift of eternal life.

¹³⁷ Again, as the author will indicate more explicitly in 7:11, the sources of this “flood” are twofold, the sky above as conventional rain and the earth underneath as large sources of water that gush up onto the surface of the earth.

¹³⁸ The author states explicitly that Noah and his family did exactly what they needed to do, in accordance with God’s commands, to save themselves from the flood and consequent death. They definitely “entered the ship,” and they did so “because of the waters of the flood.” The flood had not yet taken place to the extent that it would kill Noah and his family. But it was coming, and nothing was going to stop it. And the fact that Noah knew this, he acted to rescue himself from it, which is the same thing we all must do who know that the final judgment is coming. And we must act with authentic belief and obedience to save ourselves through God’s grace and provision of Jesus as our intercessor. Thus, knowledge of the danger of the future must motivate us to do now what is necessary to save ourselves from it.

¹³⁹ Thus, God remained faithful to His promise that the flood of water was coming on the earth in seven days, just as God will remain faithful and bring about the “great nation” of Israel and the judgment of human beings afterwards as described in Revelation 20.

¹⁴⁰ Here is the most explicit description of the two sources of water for the flood on the earth—

1) “all the headwaters of the great deep” (כָּל־מַעְיֵינֵי הַתְּהוֹם הַגָּדוֹל) (πάσαι αἱ πηγαὶ τῆς ἀβύσσου)

2) “the windows of the heavens” (וְהַצִּנּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם) (οἱ καταρράκται τοῦ οὐρανοῦ)

The author also provides the day, the month, and the year of Noah’s life to make it clear that this really was an historical event, just as everything God brings about within the created reality and on the earth is an historical event for His eternal purposes that are centered in Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

What kind of “month” were these to which the author is referring? Probably the Jewish month, since he is Jewish, i.e., Moses. But it is possible that Noah and the people before the flood used a different calendar.

¹⁴¹ As a result of the previous verse, “rain” (בִּזְזִי) (ὕετος) here means both the water arising out of the ground and the water coming down from the sky. These two sources poured out their water on the surface of the earth for a straight forty days and nights, because this is what the transcendent creator caused to happen.

¹⁴² This is the paragraph of entering the ship, which the author mentions four times. And it involves all those in which “there is breath” and who is alive, in order to stay alive. Life is the point in contrast to death.

These verses of 13-16 are a good summary of Noah’s obedience to God’s commands, both for him to enter the ship with his family and for the animals and birds, i.e., “all the flesh, in which there is breath of life,” to be brought with him onto the ship.

In addition, there is the remarkable act on the part of God, that He, and not Noah and his sons, “closed” the door to the ship “behind him.”

Genesis 6:16 “You shall make a roof for the ship, and you shall finish it to a cubit from the top. And, as for the doorway of the ship, you shall set it in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.”

God, then, becomes the main agent of keeping Noah safe from the flood, because the ship without a door closed would fill up with water and sink. God makes sure that this does not happen, just as He makes sure that sinful human beings do not incur His wrath and destruction by His changing their hearts and faithfully making sure that they remain oriented towards Him for the rest of their lives as the condition for their entering the Kingdom of God and receiving His eternal mercy.

¹⁴³ “Fifteen cubits” = approx. 22 feet. After forty days of flooding from the gushing springs and the falling rain, the water increased and increased according to vs. 17-19, so that the whole earth was covered to the point that the highest mountain at the time was 22 feet under water.

Thus, with vs. 17-20 and an extensive and dramatic description, the author emphasizes just how high (and destructive by implication) the flood was. It truly covered the earth and made it impossible for any living creature to survive apart

from those in Noah's ship.

¹⁴⁴ This is the paragraph of death. God set out to kill everything that used breathing to live, and He accomplished His goal.

But Noah and all the living creatures on the ship survived and lived, including his family. They were “remaining” (וַיִּשְׁתָּבִי) (κατελείφθη).

What happened to all the dead bodies? We are not told. The population of both human beings and other living creatures was very small in comparison to today. Therefore, the disposal of their dead bodies was not a significant problem for God, just as it will not be for all those whom He destroys as a result of the Great White Throne Judgment. He could have simply made their bodies disappear from existence as He will also do in the future.

Is this 150 days after the rain and springs filled the earth above the top of the highest mountain? Or 150 days from the moment the rain, etc. started for a total of 110 days that the water was above the top of the highest mountain?

¹⁴⁵

[Genesis 31:55](#) Early in the morning Laban arose, and kissed his sons and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place (וַיָּשָׁב לָבָן לְמִקְוֵהוּ).

[Numbers 24:25](#) Then Balaam arose and departed and returned to his place (וַיָּשָׁב בָּלָעָם וַיָּלֶךְ לְמִקְוֵהוּ), and Balak also went his way.

¹⁴⁶ This is the paragraph of the waters' receding from the earth so that dry land would eventually appear.

From the seventeenth day of the second month to the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the rain and springs flooded the earth until the waters receded so that the ship “rested” (וַיִּתְּנָהּ) (ἐκάθισεν) “on the mountains of Ararat.

Then, on the first day of the tenth month, “the tops of the mountains were seen”—almost eight months since the rain and springs started flooding the earth.

¹⁴⁷ This is the paragraph of investigating the state of the water to see if dry land had truly appeared.

It took fifty-four days from the day Noah sent out the raven to his sending out the dove for the second time, so that it did not return, indicating that there was sufficient dry land for it to survive without the provisions and food on the ship.

¹⁴⁸ This is the short paragraph of the final assessment of the earth, that it was dry, so that the point in time was the twenty-seventh day of the second month of the next year, when the process of flooding the earth had begun in 7:11 on the seventeenth day of the second month of the previous year. Therefore, the whole flooding ordeal until the earth was dry enough for Noah to disembark from the ship was a little over a year.

For anyone, that would be a rather long time to wait to live on dry land again. But Noah obviously endured with the patience derived from his belief in God and trusting Him that eventually He would bring about life on the earth and dry land for his family and him.

¹⁴⁹ This is the paragraph of God's command to Noah to leave the ship and take his family and all the animals, etc. with him.

And God declares that all the animals, etc. will go all over the earth as they reproduce themselves. By saying this, God is indicating that life and increased population of the living creatures is an important part of the story.

¹⁵⁰ This is the very short paragraph of Noah's obeying God again and disembarking from the ship with all the people and animals, etc. that God had originally commanded him to bring on the ship, so that they would live and not die through the flood.

Thus, leaving the ship and restoring normal life on the earth becomes as important as entering the ship and being rescued from death and the flood. The same will be true for sinful human beings who will leave the threat of judgment and destruction and live in the Kingdom of God with Jesus as their ruler.

¹⁵¹ This is the paragraph of Noah's rituals of authentic worship of God and His response of promising never to create a mass destruction of life on the earth—as long as this earth continues rotating and producing the seasons.

Probably before the flood, Noah had been used to demonstrating his belief in God through this kind of religious ritual of offering “clean” animals and birds to God on an altar. Consequently, he does the same now that God has brought him through the flood when He killed everyone else besides his family.

Again, Noah knew already which animals and birds were clean and which were not.

¹⁵² First, God accepted Noah's demonstration of his belief and obedience, because this ritual was a “pacifying aroma” as opposed to an obnoxious one for Him. He smelled, so to speak, the burning of the dead animals and birds, and because of Noah's authentic belief, they smelled good to Him, so that He was not angry and condemning towards him. Instead, He was gracious and forgiving. But it was not the ritual itself that pacified God. It was what God would eventually do with Jesus the Messiah, that through his death and resurrection, Jesus becomes the basis for all of God's

grace, mercy, forgiveness, and gift of life to sinful human beings. This is what the book of Hebrews teaches. Second, God said to Himself that, as long as this earth exists in the present universe with its seasons and rhythm of life for human beings, He will never again cause a complete destruction of the human race and other living beings—in spite of human's continued and humanly inescapable sinfulness and rebellion against Him. He will never “curse the ground” by using the ground with water as He did to wipe out life on the earth. The seasons will change, and human beings will continue to exist until God is finished with history in this realm at the end of the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20 of Jesus' return and rule of the whole earth.

¹⁵³ This is the paragraph of God's exhortation to Noah and his family (pl.) to be blessed with descendants who live and sustain themselves by means of the food that He provides through the same kind of living creatures, e.g., animals, that disembarked from the ship and the same kind of plants that God had initially brought into existence as described in Genesis 1.

We notice that God stated in 8:17 that other living creatures would increase in population—by implication, without their making the rational and moral choice to do so. Here, with His commandment, God is indicating that the same for human beings will be because of their moral and rational choice to increase their population. It is not just about their physical desires but about their obedience to God.

¹⁵⁴ The “fear” and “terror” of Noah and his descendants on the other living creatures was God's way of saying that these would be available for food for them, that the animals and birds will have a relationship of respect for human beings, because the latter have the former available to them to sustain their physical lives in the process of assessing and engaging with existence on this earth in their relationship with God.

Other living creatures operate on the basis of mechanical necessity, while human beings are capable of operating and required by God to operate on the basis of rational and moral decisions.

¹⁵⁵ The point of vs. 4-6 is that God wants both men and animals to respect the lives of human beings, albeit sinful human beings, by not taking their lives. Except, when they do take their lives, then they deserve to have their lives taken from them. This is how important human life is, so that human beings should always take this into account in the midst of the decisions that they make that affect other human beings.

But God has just taken the lives of all other human beings and living creatures besides Noah and his family, demonstrating how important justice that brings death is and how important mercy that brings life is. God wants Noah and his descendants to consider the visual lesson of blood that points to both life and death, while also teaching them that only He has the right to bring an end to the lives and existences of human beings. And the way that human beings indicate that they understand the value of each other's lives is by not using the blood of animals that they kill as part of the food that they are obtaining by means of the animals. In a sense, all blood, whether animal or human, represents the value and worth of the lives of human beings and should be treated with respect by not ingesting it. The blood of a living creature is physical and visual evidence of its existence and being alive. And, again, LIFE, meaning eternal life, is the goal of God's having created the cosmos and man on the earth. Therefore, as long as even a sinful human being is alive, he has the opportunity to be humble and repent of his sins in order to meet God's condition for obtaining eternal life.

And if an animal or another human being unnecessarily takes the life of an innocent person, I assume with malice aforethought, which is murder and not just killing the person, then the murderer himself deserves to die. He has forfeited his right to existence in this realm, and his death becomes an object lesson for all others that human life is too important for people to disregard it.

¹⁵⁶ Because, according to the apostle Paul in Romans 9, God's plan is to save a remnant of mankind from His condemnation and destruction by means of His mercy through Jesus the Messiah, while the other people will incur His justice at the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20, God commands Noah and his descendants to make the moral and rational choice to provide physically the additional human beings who will live or die eternally. Therefore, both the salvation of some and the condemnation of many will require a large group of sinful human beings after Noah and his sons renew the human race.

Consequently, God repeats His command to Noah and his family (pl.) to swarm the earth and populate it. In other words, the whole world is theirs on which to live, and they should take the opportunity to use it all in order to sustain their physical lives and to increase the population of human beings.

¹⁵⁷ This is the first of two paragraphs about God's covenant with the living creatures of the world to the effect that He will never flood the earth again in order to destroy them because of man's sin.

In this paragraph, He says simply that He is establishing this covenant with the inhabitants of the earth and that the covenant means that He will not destroy them by a flood ever again, even though He would be justified in doing so on an ongoing basis because of human beings' sin.

¹⁵⁸ This is the second of two paragraphs of God's covenant never to bring about a flood to destroy life on the earth. In this paragraph, God states the sign to both Him and the people that will remind both Him and them that He has made

this covenant with them. The sign is the rainbow in the cloud that He will “place” there, which we know from experience is typically after a rain storm.

God says that this covenant is between Him “and the earth,” meaning the living creatures on the earth, not actually the ground itself.

¹⁵⁹ This short paragraph sets up the reader for what follows, the interactions between Noah and his sons, especially involving Ham and his son Canaan. This is why Canaan is identified as the son of Ham, as will be clear from the rest of this episode.

¹⁶⁰ Before the author tells the next story, he wants the reader to know that all other human beings on the earth descend from Noah through one of his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, born presumably in this order.

¹⁶¹ In vs. 20-23, the author briefly provides the necessary details of the beginning of this story of Noah, his sons, and his grandson.

Noah plants a vineyard, which is the first we have heard of such a thing. This was not a grain field to make bread. It was a grape field to make wine. And we do not know how Noah came by the knowledge that crushed grapes will ferment and produce an alcoholic beverage. Perhaps, he merely wanted to make grape juice, and the fermentation occurred unbeknownst to him, so that when he tasted the wine and liked it, he drank more with the result that he got drunk.

In fact, Noah became so drunk that somehow he ended up naked in his tent. And possibly he was not even aware of his nakedness. His middle brother, Ham, saw his father in this condition, and rather than taking it upon himself to cover his father, which, apparently, would have been the proper thing to do, he communicated the information of his father’s nakedness to his brothers. Then, it was they who made the caring and loving choice to cover their father’s nakedness in a manner where they kept themselves from seeing his nakedness.

Apparently, Ham’s son, Noah’s grandson Canaan, was involved in this incident. But, again, the author does not inform us what Canaan’s role was. Whatever it was, we find out by Noah’s cursing him that it was not good.

Genesis 2:25 And the man and his wife were both naked, and they were not ashamed.

Genesis 3:21 And Yahweh *Elohim* **made** for the man and his wife skin tunics, and He put them on them.

By the way, Canaan’s descendants become the people who are living on the land of Canaan when Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt, and His instructions to them is to destroy all the Canaanites, because, I assume, they have become like their ancestor, people who continue to rebel against God and are unwilling to submit themselves to Him.

Genesis 10:15 And, as for Canaan, he gave birth to Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth **10:16** and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite **10:17** and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite **10:18** and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite. And afterwards, the families of the Canaanite were scattered. **10:19** And the border of the Canaanite will be from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza, as you go toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.

Exodus 3:8 “So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the **Hivite** and the Jebusite.”

¹⁶² We are not told how, but Noah discovers what his middle son, Ham, did to spread the news to his brothers that he was drunk and naked in his tent. And he must have become aware of what Canaan had done also.

¹⁶³ This are the first words of Noah in the story of the flood and afterwards. Only God has spoken up to this point, because it is God’s righteousness, justice, and mercy that are important to the author.

Noah becomes so angry with Ham that he curses his son, Canaan. But why not curse Ham instead? Or why not curse Ham and then Canaan, too? There must have been something about both Ham and Canaan, and especially Canaan, that led Noah to curse his grandson. They probably had demonstrated marked unbelief in God, while Shem and Japheth revealed their authentic belief in Him.

This, of course, does not mean that all the descendants of Shem and Japheth will be people of authentic belief in God. Abraham’s descendants, the nation of Israel, demonstrate this fact. Nor does it mean that all the descendants of Ham and Canaan will be people of unbelief. Melchizedek demonstrates this fact. Noah is saying that people who continue to disrespect others the way that Ham and Canaan did will not end up obtaining the blessing of Life from God, which he probably understands is eternal life.

As a result, Yahweh is the God, *Elohim*, of Shem and of Japheth, while unbelievers like Canaan will end up “serving” believers as God uses them to aid believers. How? I assume by providing them with good examples of what not to think, believe, or do from a theological and moral stance and to mold believers into more established believers. One example will be how God will command the Israelites to destroy completely the Canaanites on the land of Canaan as they enter that land which He has promised them in the Abrahamic Covenant. Through their death, the Canaanites will “serve” the descendants of Shem as an object lesson of unbelief vs. belief. Unbelievers receive death, indeed eternal death, while believers receive the promise of God, which, in the case of the Israelites who are entering the land of Canaan, is the land—the first promise of God to Abraham.

This is in line with God's statement to Rebekah about Esau vs. Jacob—

Genesis 25:23 Yahweh said to her, "Two nations are in your womb; and two peoples will be separated from your body; and one people shall be stronger than the other; and the older shall serve the younger."

In other words, the one person and group of people, Esau and his descendants, will play an important role in the history of the coming Kingdom of God, but not the primary role, which is the one that Jacob fulfills. In the same way, Canaan and his descendants are important to God's plans, but not as important as definitely Shem. And Japheth will hitchhike off Shem so that Canaan's role will be important to him and his descendants of belief, too. Therefore, "serve" (עָבַד) (δουλεύω) means to play an important role but not the primary role in comparison to the one whom the person "serves."

¹⁶⁴ Here, the author provides the length of Noah's life, which was a total of 950 years. And he naturally says, "And he died (מָוֹתָהוּ)."

This is similar syntax to several men whom the author has mentioned as living a certain number of days and then dying, starting with Adam through Lamech, Noah's father. Again, death after birth and life is simply the manner of human existence this side of the eternal Kingdom of God and God's transforming those whom He has chosen into morally perfect and eternal, created beings.

Genesis 5:5 And all the days of Adam occurred, when he lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

Genesis 5:31 And all the days of Lamech occurred, seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.

There are also—

Genesis 6:17 "And, as for Me, behold, I am **bringing** the flood of water on the earth to **destroy** all flesh in which there is breath of life from under the heavens. Everything that is on the earth will die (מָוֹתָהוּ)."

Genesis 7:21 And all flesh died (מָוֹתָהוּ)—the things that teem on the earth, among the birds, and among the cattle, and among the beasts, and among the swarming things of the swarming things on the earth, and all mankind.

¹⁶⁵ The author announces that this is the end of the fourth major section of the beginning accounts of Genesis.

Genesis 2:4 These are the bringings forth of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Genesis 5:1 This is the account of the bringings forth of man.

Genesis 6:9 These are the bringings forth of Noah.

Genesis 11:10 These are the bringings forth of Shem.

Genesis 11:27 And these are the bringings forth of Terah.

¹⁶⁶ The beginning of the fifth major section of the beginnings of Genesis that will continue until 10:32 (?). Now the stories of the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth will unfold, while those of Shem through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be featured.

The author explicitly indicates that these are people who will be living "after the flood." They are a new beginning of humanity and will come from Noah, a man of authentic belief and obedience to God.

Plus, the author lists exactly seventy descendants of these three sons of Noah, probably to make the point that God is producing and shaping all ethnic groups and their histories for His sovereign and eternal purposes. No group of people is without their role, regardless of where they are and what they do (or do not do), within human history that will culminate in the Kingdom of God when Jesus returns.

Will these new and future human beings be any different from those before the flood, especially the ones whom God assessed and destroyed through the flood? The rest of the story of the Old Testament and the New Testament states that the answer to this question is unfortunately, No. God will always be justified in bringing a series of floods on the earth, if He were to so choose, which He does not.

Genesis 17:5 No longer will your name be called Abram, but your name will be Abraham, because I have established you as the father of many peoples.

Genesis 46:26 All the persons belonging to Jacob, who came to Egypt, his direct descendants, not including the wives of Jacob's sons, were sixty-six persons in all, **27** and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt were two; all the persons of the house of Jacob, who came to Egypt, were seventy.

Deuteronomy 32:8 "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel."

¹⁶⁷ The author presents the youngest son's descendants first, and then Ham's, and finally Shem's. Fourteen names associated with Japheth are listed, i.e. seven sons and seven grandsons.

This reverse order of Noah's sons makes sense in the light of God's using Shem's descendants, specifically Abraham and the Jews, culminating in Jesus and the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20, as the central ethnic group within the rest of the story. It also make sense because of the role that Ham's descendants, specifically the Canaanites, are going to play in the history of Shem's main descendant, Abraham, who will come through Eber (10:21,24-25).

Thus, Japheth and his descendants do not play a major role in biblical history. But they are involved nonetheless. For example—

Psalms 72:8 May he also rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth... **10** Let the kings of Tarshish

and of the islands bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.

This is the first mention of “language” (לִשָּׁן) (γλῶσσα), literally “tongue,” in the Bible. This statement, and those like it, are possible references to what takes place after the Tower of Babel of chapter 11, that different languages did not arise until the Tower of Babel incident.

The author does not give much press to Japheth. He will present Ham’s descendants more extensively. And then Shem’s of course will continue for the rest of the Bible, while his initial mention of him is relatively short in vs. 21-30 in comparison to what he says about Ham.

¹⁶⁸ The greatness of Nimrod as a “dominant hunter” and, I think, power hungry leader on earth, becomes important, because human beings will build the tower of Babel in the region of Shinar of his descendants, and Assyria and Babylon, major enemies of Israel, will arise from the Mesopotamian Valley where his descendants will settle and dwell.

Indeed, the author refers to Nimrod’s “kingdom.” This is the first use of the word (מְלָכָה) in the Bible. The second use of this word will be in regard to Abimelech’s kingdom in Genesis 20:9 in relationship to Abraham. The third use will be when God, in the midst of making the Mosaic Covenant, says of the Israelites that they will become a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

Exodus 19:6 “‘and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

And, of course, God builds His own kingdom, the nation of Israel, starting with David and the Davidic Covenant, which will culminate in the final king, Jesus as both ruler and high priest of God’s people, both Jews within the nation of Israel and Gentiles who participate in this kingdom and beyond on the eternal earth of the new cosmos of Revelation 21.

In the list of cities of Nimrod is also Babel “in the land of Shinar,” which will find its own story in Genesis 11. Plus, Assyria is associated with Nimrod and Babel, so that the two places of Assyria and Babel (Babylon) are mentioned as they will play an important role in the existence of the nation of Israel. Both will destroy kingdoms of the Jews, that of the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah respectively. There will also be God’s vision in Revelation when Jerusalem and the Jews will unfortunately be associated with Babylon because of their disobedience towards God.

¹⁶⁹ These descendants of Canaan settle and dwell in the area that will eventually be the land that God promises to Abraham and his physical descendants, the Jews, and whom God will require that the Israelites destroy when Joshua leads them into the land after He has brought them out of slavery in Egypt under Moses’ leadership.

Zechariah 13:7 “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man, My Associate [literally ‘the man of My community’],” declares Yahweh of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered (וְתִפְּצֶינָה); and I will turn My hand against the little ones.”

Notice the author excludes Put and his descendants. Why?

Put is not mentioned again until 1 Chronicles 1:8 and then in the prophets, e.g., Jeremiah 46:9, where he is associated with Cush, i.e., Ethiopia.

¹⁷⁰ Here is the most important aspect of Shem, his descendant Eber and then is son Peleg, from whom Abraham comes. In addition, the author reminds the reader that Shem is the older brother of Japheth, whom Noah blessed by blessing the God of Shem and Japheth in 9:26-27.

Genesis 4:26 And to Seth, to him also was birthed (וְיָלַד) a son, and he called his name Enosh. Then, it was begun to call on the name of Yahweh.

Genesis 6:1 And it occurred that mankind began to multiply on the face of the ground. And, as for daughters, they were birthed (וְיָלְדוּ) to them.

¹⁷¹ The focus is on Shem’s son, Arpachshad, and his son, Eber, from whom Abraham will come, although the author provides a rather extensive listing of Joktan’s sons to help fill out the descendants of Shem through Arpachshad.

Plus, Peleg’s descendant, Abraham, will journey west to the land of Canaan, the land which God will give him, while Joktan’s descendants are associated with “the mountain of the east” in v. 30. This may very well be the division to which the name “Peleg” refers, a division ultimately between belief and unbelief, between individuals who willingly submit to God and individuals who remain unwilling to do so.

God is always taking one person and his descendants to demonstrate that He will fulfill His plans to bring about a lasting kingdom for those whom He has chosen to be His people forever. These are the ones who willingly submit to God.

¹⁷² These last two verses are the close of this account of the patriarchs and descendants of Noah’s sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹⁷³ The beginning of the sixth major section of the beginnings of Genesis that will continue until 11:10. Indeed, there is going to be a dramatic separation as a result of the Tower of Babel event that the author will not relate.

¹⁷⁴ Perhaps this story is anachronistic, demonstrating what the immediate descendants of Noah attempted to do, which was to make a “name” (שֵׁם = *shem*, i.e., a role in human existence that is satisfying and fulfilling) for themselves—

- 1) by moving east, the wrong way in these stories, and
- 2) by building a city, the wrong kind of community if it is not based on worshiping God properly, and
- 3) by using one language to communicate well enough that they think they can provide all they need for the best life possible, when only by belief in and by trust in God does the true blessing of LIFE come.

The Septuagint – καὶ εἶπεν Δεῦτε οἰκοδομήσωμεν ἑαυτοῖς πόλιν καὶ πύργον, οὃ ἡ κεφαλὴ ἔσται ἕως τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ ποιήσωμεν ἑαυτοῖς ὄνομα πρὸ τοῦ διασπαρῆναι ἐπὶ προσώπου πάσης τῆς γῆς

¹⁷⁵ Once again, God assesses the moral and spiritual condition of a set of human beings, Noah’s sons’ descendants, and finds it lacking in authentic belief and obedience. And He decides to take action. In this case, He makes it more difficult for them to strategize together to ignore Him as their creator and ultimate provider of a sustained, physical existence and the best life possible, which the Bible goes on to point out will happen for them after their deaths and in the eternal Kingdom of God.

¹⁷⁶ So it becomes God who scatters and disperses these human beings “over the face of all the earth” and mixes up their languages, in order to prevent the fullness of communication that they hope they can preserve to become self-sufficient apart from God.

Consequently, this particular city with its tower becomes irrelevant for them, so that they simply stop building it. After all, God scatters them from it and thereby prevents them from building it together. He foils their group effort to avoid Him and turns them back to the land as the source of their sustenance.

Just as God destroyed Cain’s city in the flood, He ends the history of this city, Babel. However, Babylon per se will arise and replace it as an enemy of the people of God, the Israelites, to the extent that they will destroy the southern Kingdom of Judah, Jerusalem, and the temple in 586 B.C.

¹⁷⁷ If I am correct about the pattern, then the author is saying that story of Babel and its tower is mainly about how Shem became such an important man with his descendants, because through him the desire of mankind to make a name for himself comes through him. In other words, the desire to become great and becoming great is not a bad and evil thing in and of itself. It is to do it through strictly human means that usurps and ignores God’s presence and plans that is. We should seek the greatness that God through His grace promises and will give us in the Kingdom of God.

Romans 2:6 He [God] will pay back each man according to his deeds—**2:7** on the one hand, eternal life to those who, in accordance with the perseverance of doing good, seek for glory, honor, and immortality, **2:8** but, on the other hand, wrath and anger to those who, out of contentiousness, both disobey the truth and obey unrighteousness—**2:9** affliction and anguish to every existing human being who does evil, to the Jew *first* and *also* to the Greek, **2:10** but glory, honor, and *shalom* to everyone who does good, to the Jew *first* and *also* to the Greek.

¹⁷⁸ The beginning of the seventh major section of the beginnings of Genesis that will continue until 11:27.

Genesis 11:27 And these are the bringings forth of Terah.

Now, the author narrows the reader’s attention just that much more to the line of Shem that results in Abraham, starting with one of Shem’s five sons, Arpachshad.

The pattern of presenting these generations of people is like that regarding Adam and his descendants through Seth in chapter 5.

¹⁷⁹ Eber is Shem’s grandson. The author has already stated that Eber has two sons, Peleg and Joktan, but the first of the two is the more important for the story, because from him eventually comes Abraham.

¹⁸⁰ Here is a break in the pattern, because the author will now focus on Terah’s son, Abraham, while Haran’s children, especially Lot, will be important in the near and distant future.

¹⁸¹ The author announces the end of the seventh major section of the beginning accounts of Genesis.

Terah is the father of Abraham. From here on the story gets very narrow, focusing on Abraham and his physical descendants, the Jews, which will culminate in Jesus of Nazareth and the Kingdom of God.

¹⁸² The beginning of the eighth major section of the beginnings of Genesis that will continue until 25:12 (I think), when the word תְּלִידוֹת appears again in 25:12 and 25:13.

There are eight names in the list of vs. 27-32, in contrast to previous lists where there have been ten. Perhaps the author wants the reader to anticipate two more names, first Ishmael and second Isaac (the tenth and most important name after Abraham’s), who will fill out this list that will feature Abraham for the rest of time to come.

In this way, the author begins a major part of his account of people who will be extremely important to the whole rest

of humanity, starting apparently with Terah, but only so that he can show that from him comes Abraham, the first Jew, and Lot, his nephew, with whom Abram will have to share to a degree the land that God promises him. The author also names Sarai, Abraham's wife, for she, too, will play an important role here in the beginnings of the Jews.

We see that initially, Abraham's name was Abram (אַבְרָם), which means "exalted father."

¹⁸³ In the midst of the author's presenting important foundational material for the reader as he heads toward describing God and His relationship with Abraham, he writes of Sarai (סָרַי), which means ? .

It will be good to know that Sarai cannot have children, so that it will require a miracle for her to fulfill her role as the mother of Isaac.