

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY 1

CREATION TO THE TOWER OF BABEL

Let's turn to the beginning... Genesis 1:1...

It's interesting that God summed up the most explosive and colossal event in the history of the universe in one short, yet powerful statement!

The Bible's first ten words are as sweeping and as significant, as any other ten words every written.

God sums up the *remarkable birth of the heavens and earth* in one sentence... Genesis 1:1, **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."**

This one verse is perhaps the most important religious statement ever made. It answers all of life's vital questions: *the who, what, when, and where* of life.

Who are we? God's creation!

What is our purpose? Obviously, any creation should bring pleasure and glory to its Creator.

When did it all occur? In the beginning.

And where are we going? Since God created us, we can assume, He has a plan and a destiny for us.

First we're told, **"In the beginning God..."**

Notice it doesn't say *"In the beginning of God,"* but **"In the beginning God..."** The Bible tells us that God is timeless and eternal. He had no beginning, and He has no end. He is from eternity past to eternity future.

In 1 Chronicles 16:36 King David sings, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting.” Our great God has always been and will always be.

Notice also Genesis 1:1 teaches, “In the beginning God created...” The Hebrew word translated “created” is “bara” - or “to create out of nothing.” God used no raw materials. He created *everything* out of *nothing*!

There are skeptics who deny God’s creation, and say the universe originated from random forces and chance occurrences. They believe there is no God, and the universe is an accident. But that doesn’t fit the facts. Everywhere, we see evidence of a Creator.

For example, look how cleverly constructed the earth is to support life. Our planet is 93 million miles from the sun - 10% closer, and the earth would burn to a crisp - 10% further away and it would turn into an ice cube...

The air pressure at sea level is 14.7 pounds per square inch. If it were 25 pounds we’d all be crushed. At just 5 pounds we’d all pop like a water balloon...

Look also at the human body. Your heart pumps 72 times a minute, 40 million times a year! Each day your heart pumps enough blood to fill a 4000 gallon tank.

And it pumps blood through 75,000 miles of vessels running through your body. Understand, if you traveled 75,000 miles you’d go three times around the Earth.

An adult body consists of a layer of skin, and organs like a heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, eyes, glands - 26 billion tiny cells

in all! Yet those 26 billion cells came from a single cell, formed at the time of conception.

Your eye is also a miracle of engineering.

The retina is a thin wall at the back of the eye. It contains 137 million cells shaped like rods and cones.

Each of these cells are sensitive to light, and send messages to the brain along slender nerve fibers.

Your brain also sends messages to other parts of your body. Those messages travel by nerves at 300 mph. You tell your hand to move and it instantly moves.

To suggest the human body, or the world in which it lives, happened by chance or accident is silly. You don't get a perfectly designed world without a designer.

To say the world is an accident is the equivalent of saying a hurricane blew through a steel factory, and out of the sky fell a fully manufactured automobile.

In order to produce intricately and highly designed objects like automobiles you have to have a designer. [And in order to produce creation you need a Creator.](#)

There are 31,173 verses in the Bible, but if you can believe this one verse, **Genesis 1:1**, you'll have no problem believing the other 31,172... If God created the universe, and the laws that govern it - then He can intervene or interrupt those laws if He so chooses.

If God created all things... then parting the Red Sea, or causing the sun to stand still, or multiplying five buns of

bread and two fish, or walking on water, or rising from the dead... are really no problem after all.

In fact, if God created the universe, the problems you're facing in your life today are no problem either.

Genesis 1:1 tells us, “**In the beginning God created** (or *bara-ed*) **the heavens and the earth.**” He created all things out of nothing. But there's another Hebrew word that can be translated “*create*” - it's the word “*asah*,” and when you hear it, think of the word “*assemble*.”

If we *bara* this podium we would produce it out of thin air! But if we *asah* this podium it would mean we got steel and paint and varnish, and put it all together.

And here is where the plot thickens...

For in Exodus 31:17 we're told, “**In six days the LORD made (or *asah-ed*) the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.**”

In Genesis 1:1 the universe is created from nothing.

But in Exodus 31 we're told the universe was made out of existing materials. *Which is it?* Well, **it's both.**

Genesis 1:2 reads, “**The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.**”

This opening scene of creation is not what we would expect. In chapter 1 each aspect of God's creation is considered “*good*.” In verse 31 it's summarized, “*very good*.” But here the earth is **unformed** and **unfilled**.

The Hebrew phrase is “*tohu wabohu*.”

The terminology usually describes the aftermath of judgment. In verse 2 the earth is a shapeless, empty mess... just a vast sea shrouded in darkness.

It reminds me of a joke I once heard. There's a doctor, an engineer, a lawyer - they were arguing over whose profession should be considered the oldest...

The doctor noted that God performed surgery on Adam when he created Eve. He opened up Adam's side - proving that the medical profession was oldest...

The engineer though, pointed to creation. In just six days God started with chaos and confusion, and built a universe... But that's then the lawyer jumps in, "*Where do you think the chaos and confusion came from?*"

Isaiah 45:18 casts a light on verse 2, "Thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited..." Isaiah says the earth was not created *in vain* - or "tohu." The same word used in Genesis 1:2.

In other words, Genesis says the earth was created *tohu* - *unformed*. Isaiah says it was *not*. It was formed and inhabitable. *Which is it?* Perhaps it was both!

Some Bible scholars believe that a gap of time exists between verse 1 and verse 2 in Genesis 1...

When were the angels created? Genesis doesn't say, but Job 38 asks, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?... When the morning stars sang together, and all

the sons of God shouted for joy?” The implication is the angels were created before the Almighty went to work on the earth in Genesis 1:2.

We also know that one of the angels sinned.

Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, Revelation 12, describe Lucifer’s fall, and how a third of the angels joined in his revolt. Jesus said in Luke 10:18, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." It could be Satan’s fall brought a horrible judgment damaging God’s original creation.

Some scholars believe God created a perfect, beautiful earth, and put Lucifer in charge. But the angelic rebellion brought cataclysmic judgments on the pre-Adamic world. Thus, verse 2 of Genesis 1 is essentially the *recreating or reassembling* of the earth.

There is a Hebrew tradition which explains why Satan fell. Accordingly, he got wind of God’s plan to create man, and give him dominion over the earth.

Lucifer was proud. No way would he serve little dust balls, so he revolted and tried to thwart God’s plan.

He first appears in the sea opposing the creation. Job 26 speaks of creation in an unexpected way...

“He hangs the earth on nothing. He binds up the water in His thick clouds, yet the clouds are not broken under it...He stirs up the sea with His power, and by His understanding He breaks up the storm. By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent.” God pierces a fleeing serpent as He creates. Genesis 1 opens with a battle in progress.

We don't usually think of creation as a war, but it was the first skirmish in a long-running battle. The serpent appears again in Genesis 3 to tempt Adam and Eve.

If Satan can't stop creation he tries to spoil it...

In Psalm 74 we see a sea serpent in the waters of the Red Sea opposing Israel's exodus from Egypt.

In Revelation 12, a dragon appears at the end of the age to attack Israel... In Revelation 13:1 the antichrist is depicted as a beast rising out of the sea... From beginning to end, the Bible is the story of a sea-battle.

In Genesis 1 the recreation of the heavens and earth continue... On Day 1, God creates light. He releases His energy into the physical realm... Then on Day 4 He gathers up the light and deposits it in sun and stars...

On Day 2 God created the firmament, or the clouds above the Earth - an amazing feat of engineering.

Scientists say the water vapor in the clouds weighs a combined 54 trillion, 460 billion tons - yet God suspended it on Day 2, and now holds it in thin air.

On Day 3 God corralled the waters into seas, and produced dry land. He then covered the planet with plant life. He created the grass, herbs, and fruit trees.

As I've already mentioned, on Day 4 God created the heavenly bodies - the sun, and moon, and stars.

On Day 5 He fills the sky He created with winged creatures - *with birds*. And He fills the seas with fish.

On Day 6 He creates the insects and land animals.

And I believe that each day was a 24 hour period.

After each day of Creation the Scripture says, “so the evening and the morning” - implying a literal day.

Ten times in Genesis 1 we're told God created everything, “according to its kind.” From generation to generation you can see tiny changes in living things.

No son looks exactly like his father. Over time living things adapt to their surroundings. They mutate. And I for one I'm glad, my kids don't have to be as ugly as I am! *Micro-changes* occur, but not *macro-changes*.

Each variety of life produces after its own kind. Which means fish don't produce or change into birds. And monkeys don't produce or change into humans. Monkeys produce monkeys. Humans produce humans.

By the time we get to Genesis 1:26, Earth is ready to support the crown of God's creation... *the man and the woman*, “Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

All life was created according to its own kind - *the offspring reflects the parent*. But God goes one step further with man - man alone is made in **God's** image.

Human beings not only reflect their earthly father, but they also bear the image of their Heavenly Father.

Man was made in God's image in numerous ways...

Our *spirituality*, and *morality*, and *rationality*, and *creativity* are all unique among God's creation.

God and man are also *relational beings*. Like God we enjoy fellowship. God is a trinity - Father, and Son, and Spirit. He has always lived in community.

Both God and man are also *self-determining* - we're free to make our own choices. This too makes us "*in His image...*" *But I think foremost man was made in the image of God... **in that, we were made to rule!***

In verses 28-29 God tells the humans, "**Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. "**

Man was given dominion over nature.

Human-kind has the God-given authority to rule and use our planet. This idea is the difference between developing and under-developing countries today...

Cultures reared on Jewish and Christian thought have advanced in science and technology. They've learned to harness nature for their our own benefit.

The Bible teaches that humans are separate from nature, and it's our job to subdue and use its power.

Whereas, cultures dominated by paganism see man as a part of nature - *as one with nature*. Rather than subdue natural forces, man's role is to submit to them.

This is why Hindus in India have died of starvation, while elephants believed to be gods, roam the land eating as they please. Pagans in the third world have lived for centuries trapped by their environment. Whereas, Christians have taken dominion over nature.

Genesis 2 paints a picture of the first man in his new environment... God situates man in a garden of delights. The word, "*Eden,*" means "*delights.*"

And understand, even in paradise, **Adam had a job!**

He wasn't lazy. He tended the garden. Sometimes we think the perfect world is one in which we can rest and sleep away the day. But work itself is not a curse. God made man for meaningful activity and service.

Notice too, that man was made on the sixth day. This means his first full day of life was the seventh day, *or the day of rest*. **Adam rested with God before he ever labored for God.** *And here's the lesson for us...*

So often we jump out and immediately want to serve the Lord, without first learning to rest in God and enjoy God - to rely on His strength, not our own. **Christians don't just work to rest, they also work from rest.**

A mist and four rivers watered the Garden of Eden, and its trees. Two trees were of special significance.

Fruit from **the tree of life** insured that Adam would live forever. Fruit from **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, was just the opposite. God said in Genesis 2:17, if Adam ate of it, *he would surely die*.

God placed **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil** within Adam's reach to test him. Here was a way for Adam and Eve to demonstrate their love for God.

For love to be meaningful it has to be voluntary. God didn't stick a gun in Adam's back to make Adam love Him. God gave him a choice. Adam could show his love and loyalty for God by staying away from that tree.

Genesis 2:7 tells us, **"The LORD God formed man of the dust..."** If I were to purchase the raw chemicals that make up a human body it'd cost me a mere 20 bucks.

In a physical sense, mankind is fragile and meager.

Yet God **"breathed into (Adam's) nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."** Never forget, human life is sacred because it comes from God.

The first man, Adam, must've been highly intelligent, *the first Mensa member*. For he was given the task of naming the thousands of diverse animals God created.

But as they passed before him, Adam noticed they all had a companion. They were coupled - male and female. God awakened in Adam his need for a wife.

After all that God created he pronounced that *it was good*, except in 2:18. There God says, **"It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper..."**

And so God performed the first surgery. He put the man to sleep, and opened Adam's side. Folks say God took a "rib." The Hebrew word means "something curved." It doesn't sound as romantic, but it might've been a cartilage, or extra organ. *It could've been a rib.*

But it comes as no surprise, to most married women, that after Eve was created, Adam was "*not all there.*"

A piece of Adam was now missing. He would need the woman to fulfill him, and *her* greatest fulfillment would be by her man. From this point onward, the man and woman would complement each other. There's an old country song that goes, "Without you baby, I'm not me." That's exactly how Adam felt about his new wife.

Matthew Henry makes the lovely comment, "The woman was taken from Adam's side, not from his head to rule over him, not from his feet to be trampled on, but from his side to be equal with him, from under his arm to be protected, and from close to his heart to be loved." This is how all husbands should view their wife.

And this summarizes the Bible's description of God's creation... We'll symbolize it as... **Creation (arms up)**

At the end of chapter 2, Adam and Eve have it made... *a house in Paradise, all the fruit they can munch, and they're madly in love with each other.*

But in Genesis 3 the trouble starts. They stop putting God first. Satan appears as a snake, and tempts the first couple to eat the forbidden fruit. And as soon as they eat they both became aware of their nakedness.

Until this point they've been oblivious to themselves. They've both been *God-centered* and *others-centered*. Now sin turns them inward. They're now *self-centered*.

Adam and Eve's immediate response to their sin was **to hide**. Their second response was **to hurl**. If we can't cover up our sin; we blame it on someone else.

In fact, in Genesis 3:12, Adam even blames God, "**The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.**" Eve blames the serpent.

And folks today are still blaming each other for their problems. We need to take responsibility for our own sin. There's an old AA saying that puts it, "**If I am not the problem there can be no solution.**" Repentance is owning our sin and the consequences that it causes.

In verse 14 God punishes the serpent. He's destined to crawl on his belly. And it's interesting, that means that before this punishment snakes must've had legs.

And what is a snake with legs? A dragon.

In Revelation 12 we'll see Satan as that "**old dragon the devil.**" This is why I hate eating at Chinese restaurants that have dragons on the wall! It's creepy.

Eve's punishment for her role in the fall was two-fold. She experiences **pain in childbirth** - **and** she was given the tough task of **submitting to an imperfect man**.

Even in the New Testament Church, women are instructed to be submissive to their own husbands.

In the church and home men are to lead and women are to follow. Don't let anyone tell you that male authority and female submission is just a cultural construct. Wherever gender roles are discussed in the NT the issue is taken all the way back to the fall.

Gender roles are a creation issue, not cultural issue. When men lead and women follow we are teaching people about the curse, and our need for a Savior.

Adam is sentenced last. And from now on he'll encounter thorns and thistles in the course of his work.

At first Adam enjoyed his job - tending the garden was easy - a breeze. Now he encounters constant obstacles. *Work is now a burden.* God says to Adam in 3:19, **"In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread..."**

Some men go from job to job looking for the perfect situation. It doesn't exist. All work has its frustrations.

A person never gets out of their job all that they put into it. It's part of the sinful world we've created.

When Adam and Eve sinned they try to hide their nakedness by sewing fig leaves together, and covering their bodies. Instead, God clothes them in animal skin.

Which necessitated the death of an animal - **a sacrifice.** God told Adam if he ate the forbidden fruit the penalty was death. From the outset God taught man that forgiveness required the death of a sacrifice.

Fall (arms down)

When Adam sinned against God - he thought he knew more than God - that he could do better without God - so God gave him what he thought he wanted.

God banished the man and woman from the beautiful garden, and made the first couple go it alone.

And the first thing they noticed, was their two sons were born with the same rebellion in their hearts. Adam and Eve had passed on their sin to their offspring.

Understand, **sin is hereditary**. My father passed to me a sin nature, that I passed down to my son. In fact, the whole Adams family got it from the first man, Adam.

Both of Adam's sons, Cain and Abel, were sinners, and needed to cover their sin. And remember what God taught Adam... **forgiveness requires a sacrifice**.

Cain was a farmer, and brought to God a portion of his crop. His gift represented the work of his hands.

Abel though was a shepherd, and he sacrificed a lamb. He offered the blood of a substitute. *And God accepted Abel's sacrifice over Cain's offering.*

There are people today, like Cain, who try to earn God's favor with the work of their hands - *kind deeds and religious rituals*. They hope they can earn God's mercy, **but forgiveness always requires a sacrifice**.

And this is why Jesus came into the world. He is the ultimate sacrifice. He shouldered the sin of all mankind, and died in our place so we could be forgiven.

Because of jealousy, Cain killed his brother Abel. It was the first murder. And in response God punished Cain. He became a fugitive and a wanderer.

Realize, Cain and Abel were not Adam's only children. Tradition says Adam and Eve had 33 sons, and 27 daughters. *Cain must've married a sister.* Later the Bible prohibits marrying family members, but that wasn't the case at the beginning of the human race.

If you started with 27 couples, and each couple had six kids - within 100 years of the Creation, you would have a population of 40,000 people. Cain had plenty of women from which to choose to start a family

And Genesis 4-6 charts the progress of two families descendant from Adam - the family of Cain, and the family of another of Adam's sons, a man named Seth.

Cain had a son named Lamech, who had three sons, [Jabal](#), [Jubal](#), and [Tubal-Cain](#). All three names come from a root word which means [to produce](#), or [to invent](#).

[Jabal](#) was the father of all cattle ranchers.

[Jubal](#) was the father of all musicians.

And [Tubal-Cain](#) was the father of all metal-workers.

Often we're told that early man was Neanderthal-like, and primitive, and lived in caves, but the Bible implies that the first human civilizations were smart and capable of technological and scientific advancement.

We are not [evolving](#), we're actually [devolving](#).

But though early man was highly intellectual, he was also extremely immoral, and violent, and rebellious. And God would decide to judge the world with water.

There was though, one family that remained faithful to God - **the family of Seth**. In Genesis 5 Adam's descendants through Seth are named, "Enosh, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methusaleh, Lamech, Noah."

Notice in Genesis 5 each of Adam's *kin* inherited his *sin* and his *end*. After each name we find the words, "and he died" - except for one individual, *Enoch*.

In 5:24 we read, "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." One day Enoch and God took a walk. They walked and talked for a long time, until Enoch said, "*Lord, it's late, I'd better go home.*"

But the Lord told him, "Enoch, we've been walking so long, we're closer to My house than we are to yours. Why don't you just come home with Me tonight?"

We should all desire a walk with God so intimate that God would say our hearts are more in tune with heaven than with earth. "*Enoch*" means "*dedicated.*"

Enoch was a prophet, but it's interesting *his son was a prophecy!* Methusaleh, the oldest man who ever lived, 969 years - became God's prophetic timepiece.

His name means "*when he dies, it will be sent.*" And Methusaleh died the very year the earth was flooded.

Methusaleh's age, 969, is quite old. All the ages noted in Genesis 5, excluding Enoch, average 908. Which asks the question, *how did folks live 900 years?*

Remember, in Genesis 1:7, God divided the waters below the sky, from the waters above. Some people believe *the water above* referred to more than simply the water vapor contained in today's atmosphere - that before the flood a dense, highly compacted, vapor canopy existed in the upper levels of the atmosphere.

The oldest written book, Job, seems to speak of this canopy in 38:9. God says, "When I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band..."

Aging is a mystery. For some reason around the age of 25 your body stops rejuvenating itself and you start to die. There are scientists today who believe our exposure to the sun is a culprit in the aging process.

Solar radiation acts as a trigger that starts our aging.

But if we were shielded from the sun in the days prior to Noah we would've live longer. It's possible that the pre-flood vapor canopy blocked the sun's harmful rays.

When God floods the earth with water this canopy collapses. And you'll notice that after the flood human life-spans quickly diminish to what they are today.

Genesis 6 describes the perversion that destroyed the antediluvian world, "Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all

whom they chose. And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be 120 years." God is *omnipotent*, or all powerful - *omniscient*, or all knowing - *omnipresent*, or all present. But God is not *omni-patient*. There are limits to His long-suffering.

Mankind's wickedness had gotten to such a point where God had to wipe the Earth of a terrible scourge.

Here's what happened, "The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose."

There are two interpretations of what happened...

Some scholars see the "*sons of God*" as *the family of Seth*, who intermarried with "*the daughters of men*," or *the family of Cain*. Seth's godly family compromised by taking pagan wives. But this fails to explain why God wiped out the *whole* earth, nor the description we have of their offspring in verse 4, "There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown." This is why I believe more is going on than believers marrying unbelievers. I've seen mixed marriages, but none that birthed a giant.

The phrase "*sons of God*" in the Hebrew is "*bene elohim*." This phrase appears four times in the Old Testament, and each time it's used, it refers to angels.

Jude 6 speaks of the angels "*who did not keep their proper domain...*" I believe the "*sons of God*" in Genesis 6 were those angels... A perversion of the human race took place in the antediluvian world. Fallen angels impregnated women,

producing a distorted race of mutants. These people were freaks of nature, and became common on the earth... Verse 4 calls them, “*giants*” which is the word “*nephilim*” or “*fallen ones*.”

I mentioned earlier when Satan couldn't stop man's creation he sought to spoil it. He tries to contaminate the human gene pool, and engineer our extinction.

This is why God's judgment was so severe!

God destroys the Earth with water, and wipes out an entire population - *all but eight people*. The desperate measures was the only way to save the human race!

It's interesting, all ancient cultures have myths about demigods - beings half-human, half-divine. Of course, myths are myths, but some of the stories could've been inspired by the actual events described in Genesis 6.

Notice too, verse 4 says there were giants in Noah's day “*and also afterwards*.” Later when the Hebrews spy out the land of Canaan they report seeing giants (*which is the same word, “nephilim”*). Remember David's famous opponent was a giant named Goliath.

There's a Hebrew tradition, found in the extra-biblical book of Enoch, where these fallen angels are identified as the one's who taught humanity the evils of black magic, and the science of war and weaponry. They even taught mankind how to abort unborn babies.

It's also interesting, that the subject of Genesis 6 is a favorite Hollywood theme. In the 60s with “*Rosemary's Baby*”

- and in the 80s with “Cocoon” - in both movies demons or aliens, and humans are linked sexually.

In the late 90s a movie came out called, “Michael.” John Travolta plays a lust-filled angel whose desire is to hit on beautiful women... Hey, this stuff is demonic.

In the occult the highest experience possible is sex with demons. Their offspring are called a “moon-child.”

I believe this was the reason God destroyed the earth with water - *and chose to start over with Noah.*

Notice in 6:9 it says, “Noah was perfect in his generations.” The idea is that he had a pure pedigree.

Why was that so important at this point? *Only if everyone else’s lineage had been polluted.*

Whatever the reason man’s sin had become so horrible that “the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.”

“Grieve” is a love word. You can anger someone, or frustrate someone, but you can only grieve someone who loves you. And God loved mankind. That’s why He was grieved that we rebelled and sunk to such depths.

Yet notice in verse 8, “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD...” Realize, Noah wasn’t chosen by God because of his righteousness or goodness. He was a sinner like all men, but “Noah found grace.”

Noah was saved by grace. God will wipe out the world with a flood, and start over with Noah’s family.

In verses 14-15 God tells Noah to make an ark of gopherwood. Using 18 inches as a cubit the Ark's dimensions were 450' long, 75' wide, and 45' high.

It had three decks - 100,000 sf of floor space. More than enough room to hold two of every kind of animal.

And by modern day shipbuilding standards it was the perfect proportion to survive in rough waters. According to flotation experts the Ark could never capsize.

In 6:17 God says, "I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die." This wasn't a local flood. It covered the whole earth... And there is tremendous geological and historical evidence for a universal flood. All cultures, from America, to Mexico, to the Middle East, to China, have accounts of a great flood, a boat, and a family who survived. God judged the entire earth with a flood.

The only people to survive the flood were Noah, his three sons, and their wives - just eight people.

And it didn't matter how good a swimmer you were, if you weren't in the boat, you drowned. This is also true of our salvation. It doesn't matter how good a person you are, if you aren't in Christ you can't be saved.

Genesis 8:20 records Noah's first act when he steps out of the Ark onto dry ground, "Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings." The first thing Noah does is renew his devotion to God with sacrifice.

And in 9:12-16 God hangs a bow in the clouds.

The Hebrew word translated “*rainbow*” refers to a “*bow and arrow*.” It was as if God were hanging up His bow of judgment. The flood was over. It would never be repeated. God’s agenda from here on out - until the end of the time - will be *salvation*, not *condemnation*.

Flood (pinch nose & hold breath)

Genesis 8:18 lists your grandfather!

Everyone of us came from one of Noah’s three sons: **Shem**, **Ham**, or **Japheth**. In chapter 10 we have their genealogies. We call it “**The Table of Nations**,” and it shows the people distribution throughout the Earth.

If you took the population trends over the last 100 years and extrapolated them back 4,500 years - its amazing, but you would end up with a total world population of 8 people. This is exactly what the Bible teaches. God started over repopulating the earth around 2,500 BC with eight members of Noah’s family.

Today, anthropologists agree that humans can be grouped into three major racial categories: **Caucasian**, **Afro**, and **Asian**. Follow this **Table of Nations** and Noah’s descendants parallel these three divisions...

Japheth migrated north into Europe. His descendants were the Caucasian tribes... **Shem**’s descendants moved east. He originated the Asian and Semitic peoples... And **Ham**’s family traveled southward. The Afro nations were fathered by Ham...

Nations (salute)

In Genesis 10:8 there's an important parenthesis in the family of Ham. We read, "Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD." And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel..."

The word "*Nimrod*" means "to rebel." And that's exactly what he did... God had hung up His bow in the clouds, and wanted to make peace with man - but Nimrod became "the mighty hunter before the Lord."

One interpretation reads, "a mighty hunger against the Lord." The idea is that Nimrod went hunting to draw people away from God, and after himself.

In other words, he launched a coup against God, and led the first organized revolt against Him. Nimrod was the first Antichrist, and a type of the future Antichrist.

In Genesis 9:1, God commanded Noah and his descendants, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." But rather than spread out and fill the earth, in Genesis 11 we see that the population is gathering together as one people - at a place called *Babel*.

It was Nimrod who formed a one world government, and led the people in rebellion against God. Nimrod even tries to build a tower to the heavens...

Surely, Nimrod's tower was for star-gazing. It was an astronomical observatory - built to consult the stars.

The Babylonians worshipped the stars. And Nimrod was first to introduce the world to the evils of astrology.

But there was another dynamic going on. Notice in 11:3 the people constructing this tower use asphalt for mortar. The Hebrew word for asphalt refers to a water-proofing material - which causes us to ask, *“Why would you build a water-proof tower out in the desert?”*

You would only do so, if you were expecting a flood!

Nimrod had convinced the Earth dwellers that God was a liar - He and His rainbow couldn't be trusted.

Nimrod (shoot bow & arrow)

We're told in 11:6, *“And the LORD said, “Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.”*

To break up man's rebellion God confuses the one language. People are forced to gravitated into diverse language groups, and scatter out to fill the earth.

Since the people had refused to obey God - to scatter and multiply - God forces the people to do it by confusing their language. And the city where it all took place was given the name *“Babel”* or *“confusion.”*

Babel (vibrate lips)

So at the end of Genesis 11, here's where we're at...

Satan leads a *rebellion*... He does so by choosing *a man, Nimrod - a place, Babel - and a means, fear.*

Nimrod was able to convince the people that God was the bad guy - that they need to be afraid of God.

And this is the sad state of man today. This is why the psalmist writes of God, “No good thing will He withhold for those who walk uprightly.” God is not the great party pooper. He loves us and wants the best for us. He’s hung up His bow. Now He only wants to bless.

In Genesis 12, God begins a work of *redemption*...

God wants to bring man back into relationship with Him. And He does so by choosing *a man, Abraham - a place, the land of Canaan - and a means, faith.*

Satan’s scheme was *Nimrod, Babel, fear.* Now God’s plan centers around *Abraham, Canaan, and faith.*

Most people divide the Bible in two halves - the Old Testament and New Testament. But I’ll suggest a better dividing point is *before-Abraham, and after-Abraham.*

Before Abraham God tried to reach mankind on an individual basis - one person at a time. But with Abram, God’s plan of salvation zeros in on one family.

With Abraham God begins a new work on the Earth. His plan of salvation and redemption begins to unfold.

This happened... **4000 years ago**