

NOTES AND QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF GENESIS

CHAPTERS 3 AND 4 - THE FALL AND THE SPREAD OF SIN TO THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE

Christ created everything in the entire universe.(Jn.1:3; Col.1:16) In doing so He showed us what He is like:

- Wise – He always said before He did.(1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26) He had an intelligent plan which He communicated.
- Powerful – what He said He could do and did. Nothing was too hard for God.
- Good – everything He did was of superb quality. He never compromised on the very best.(1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31)
- Loving – everything He made was for man to enjoy and care for.(1:28-30)

This same Christ is the head of His body, the church, and lives in Christians individually.(Col.1:18,27) He wants to be allowed to be the same today – wise, powerful, good and loving in every situation.

He created plants, animals and man with bodies, animals and man with souls, but only man with a spirit in which he could know God's Spirit and so show the image of God to the whole creation.

Chapter two moves from the big picture of creation to focus on the detail of man and his environment. God gave man –

- a physical responsibility for a beautiful and fruitful world.(2:4-15)
- a spiritual choice to trust Him or not, as represented by 2 trees.(2:9,16,17)
- an intellectual task to design language to describe his world.(2:19)
- a social partnership with his wife so that they could help each other. (2:21-25)

It was a great plan which would have continued to work – and still works today when the Spirit of Christ is back in our spirits.

Having set out in chapters 1 and 2 what God did in creation and how He meant human life to be for eternity, and therefore what the Christian life could be if we really trusted the Creator to work in us, Genesis 3 and 4 move on to the question of what went wrong. All too often we look at the results of sin through our highly biased eyes instead of at its real nature. This section not only shows us the true problem but introduces God's answer, salvation through Jesus Christ. Salvation is re-creation.(II Cor.5:17) The message of the whole Bible is that the Lord is the Creator and the Re-creator. The books of Romans and Galatians are built on Genesis 3; if this is not history, they cannot be true either.

Again let me encourage you to read Genesis 3 & 4 through carefully and prayerfully, letting God show you things you have never seen or understood before. Divide it into sections and title each section. My suggestions are as follows:- 3:1-6; 3:7-13; 3:14-19; 3:20-24; 4:1-5; 4:6-8; 4:9-15; 4:16-24; 4:25:26. Look for the flow of ideas from one section to the next.

Section 1 - 3:1-6

Q.1 Who was the serpent? What had he been before? What were his motives in tempting Adam and Eve? What was his technique in temptation? How did he use the same techniques with Jesus Christ? And with us? What will be his final fate?(Isa.14:4-21; Ezek.28:12-19; Lk.4:1-13; II Cor.2:11; 11:14; I Jn.2:15-17; Rev.12:9; 20:2,10;)

Q.2 Why does God not want us to have knowledge of good and evil and then make our own decisions to do good? Give present day examples of how we 'eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil' in every day situations? If Jesus Christ had done as the Devil suggested in Lk.4 how would He have been making the same mistake as Adam?

Section 2 - 3:7-13

Q.3 What immediate effect did listening to the Devil have upon Adam and Eve? How did they behave differently towards God and one another? How do we behave the same when we feel guilty?(Rom.5:12-21)

Q.4 Several times Paul refers to this story in his letters.(I Tim.2:14; II Cor.11:3) Was he putting women down? What is the real meaning of his warnings?

Section 3 - 3:14-19

Q.5 What did God say would be the long term effects on the serpent, and on human life at home, in our environment and at work? What was the good news in verse 15?(Jn.8:44) Does verse 16 mean that having babies was meant to hurt, and that men were intended by God to rule over women?

Section 4 - 3:20-24

Q.6 What did God do then about man's sin? What did He do later? How does one picture the other?

Q.7 What are the cherubim? What is their role elsewhere in the Old Testament? What therefore would have been their task at the entrance of the garden of Eden?(Exod.25:18-22; Ezek.10)

Section 5 - 4:1-5

Q.8 Cain and Abel each brought God what they had produced. Why was Cain wrong and Abel right?(Heb.11:4) In what ways did Cain take after his father? How does this story help explain every crime of violence since?

Section 6 - 4:6-8

Q.9 Why did Cain murder Abel?

Section 7 - 4:9-15

Q.10 What was Cain's punishment? Why did God punish Cain instead of forgiving him? Is Cain's sin an example of the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?(Matt.12:31,32)

Section 8 - 4:16-24

Q.11 Where did Cain find his wife if there was only the family of Adam and Eve on earth?(Gen.5:4) What glimpse are we given of the various parts of man's way of life even at this early stage in history?

Q.12 In what way did Lamech take after Cain and Adam?

Section 9 - 4:25-26

Q.13 So often throughout history God makes a new beginning after disaster. How does this story illustrate the patience and perseverance of God? What does verse 26 tell us about the spiritual life of Seth's family? How would they have learned to 'call on the name of the Lord'?