

CASKET EMPTY:

God's Plan of Redemption through History

Old Testament Overview

Session 1 - Creation, *Genesis 1-11*



God and God's Good Design

- God creates the world and living creatures (Gen 1).
- The Lord God (*YHWH*) is Creator (*Elohim*) — He alone is God (Gen 1:1, 2:4).
- God creates human beings in his image and likeness to rule over creation as his royal representatives, and to fill the earth with his glory (Gen 1:26-28).
- Adam and Eve have life in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2)
 - Adam is to work the garden and keep it.
 - The tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil are located in the center of Eden.
- God commands Adam not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
 - Adam will die if he disobeys God's command.
- Eve is created as Adam's kin: She is "*bone of my bones.*" (Gen 2:23)

Humanity's Distrust and Rebellion against God

- The serpent lies to Eve in the garden, saying: *"You will not die...you will become like God."* (Gen 3:4-5)
 - Eve decides that the tree is "good" in spite of the command.
 - Adam and Eve listen to the creature instead of God.
 - They disobey God and eat from the prohibited tree.

- God comes in judgment, but there is grace (Gen 3:15).

Sin and Death Enter the World of Humanity

- Adam and Eve are exiled from Eden (Gen 3:24).
 - Exile (which we could also see as slavery) and death function as corollary themes of the consequence of rebellion against God's Word throughout the Bible.
 - e.g.: Israel will later be kicked out the Promise Land for the disobedience and carried into exile. Their story shows that exile is actually slavery. Then we see the metaphor of slavery to sin in the NT. Thus true freedom, true life, only found in knowing God and living in his presence.

- Death comes as a result of sin.

- Adam's son Cain murders his brother (Genesis 4:8).

- But hope for humanity through Seth's line → Noah
 - Seth, Heb. "to institute"
 - Linear genealogy in Gen 5 to show connection between Seth and Noah
 - Adam to Noah (10 generations) - see Gen 5
 - Noah to Abraham (10 Generations) - see Gen 11
 - Hint of this hope: Enoch "Walks with God"
 - Adam's genealogy is a movement towards death, except Enoch.
 - Noah also "walked with God" (Gen 6:9)
 - Path to life (theme picked up in Psalms in connection with God's Word)

Sin Increases as Humans Multiply.

- God plans to send a flood to wipe out human beings.
- But Noah finds GRACE (Gen 6:8)
 - “Found favor” = God’s gracious election, not based on human merit
- Noah is saved along with his family (Gen 6-8)
 - Joined themes of salvation and judgement common in the Bible.

Noahic Covenant (Gen 8:20 - 9:17)

- “pleasing aroma” (8:21), lit., “savor of rest” (God’s wrath satisfied through sacrifice, foreshadowing the ultimate sacrifice), related to Noah’s name (*nikhoakh*)
- God will not send another flood, even though sin continues after the flood (Genesis 8:21).
- The rainbow is a sign of the covenant. (9:12-17)

People build a name for themselves, but God scatters them in judgment (Gen 10-11)

- “Babel” = play on Hebrew word that means “confuse.” Babel becomes the archetype of human pride and worldly kingdoms.
- Tower of Babel, representing wider effects of the Fall, serves as a backdrop to God’s covenant with Abraham.

- In NT:
 - Foreshadows Pentecost
 - “Anti-Babel” of Revelation 5:9
- Hope for humanity through Shem’s line, which leads to Abraham.
 - Shem = Heb., “name”
 - God making his own name, his own way.

Discussion

- Read Romans 1:18-23. How does Paul’s description of humanity’s continued tendency towards idolatry echo the original sin of Adam and Eve?
- Read Romans 5:12-19. How is Jesus like a second Adam? How is he a better representative of humanity?
- God has made us his royal representatives, to represent and reflect him on earth, seeking to fill the earth with his glory. How should this truth change the way we think about our talents, abilities, careers, money, etc.?
- Adam and Eve were tempted to distrust God’s word. This always leads to idolatry. How can we help each other prioritize and trust God’s word today?
- Despite the entrance of sin and death into the world, the first chapters of Genesis foreshadow God’s plan of redemption through Christ Jesus. What effects of sin and death do we see in the world around us today? How can we point people to the hope of redemption in Jesus?
- God’s grace empowered Noah to have faith in God’s Word. The book of Hebrews says that through his faith he was declared righteous. Today, those who put faith in the promises of God in Christ are also declared righteous. How does the teaching of righteousness through faith alone in Christ alone set Christianity apart from other religions? How does it provide us hope and challenge us in our Christian lives?
- In what ways are we, like the people of Babel, tempted to make a name for ourselves? Why is living for our own glory such a futile thing? In what ways does God use his people to spread *his* fame?