

Chapter 2

The Beginning of Mankind



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ADAM—Created in God's Image

God fashioned both men and women. Like the Trinity each of us, whether male or female, plays a unique role in society. The Word teaches general behavior for everyone to follow in order to please and draw increasingly closer to God. However, we also must pray individually to find out precisely how They want us to act as a distinct person in order to correspond Their perfect will and path for our own life. It is important to study enough to learn to discern what Bible teaches about generally accepted conduct, versus how the sexes functioned in certain cultures. Human beings were modeled in the image of God, meaning that they looked like Them. However, humankind was not only made only to resemble Them in appearance, but in absolute harmony of thought, feelings, and behavior towards each Other. God's Son, Who lived as a Servant to all of mankind demonstrated this unity, as no other person ever was able to.

"God said, 'Let Us make man(kind) in Our image according to Our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth, and every living thing that creeps on the earth.' So, God created man(kind) in His Own image. In the image of God He created them. He created him male and female. He created them both."
(Genesis 1:26-27)

God is a Trinity composed of three individual Beings: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each blends Himself always in complete agreement and

harmony with the other two Entities, yet functioning separately at the same time. They have distinctive assignments in how They help us as They work together in similarity of attitude and purpose towards mankind. God is both singular and plural. He is singular in whatever makes God the Supreme Being in the entire universe. What are those characteristics? He has many attributes that distinguish Him from the entire rest of creation. He is self-existent, unique, eternal, all-powerful, and all-knowing.

In the Scriptures the Name God may refer to the entire Godhead, God the Father, or God the Son. It is hardly ever used to designate only God the Spirit. The context of the passage will determine to Whom the author is referring. Likewise, They can be ascribed as being singular or plural because They are both: Each member of the Trinity has His Own identity and function towards humanity. Nevertheless, They always are in complete agreement among Themselves, thereby being One as well as Three.

There never was, has been, or will be any disharmony within God. Therefore, nor should there ever be between people. Any and all conflict among human beings was not Their intention, nor do They ever instigate it. God not only created mankind in His *image*, He likewise made us in Their likeness, too. It is vital to bear in mind in the above passage is that They conferred among themselves as to how to create mankind and all agreed how to proceed. That is to say, not a single one of Them was in disagreement with Another about the decision. This conformity demonstrates a quality that we all should possess.

God Designed Two Sexes

"The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life/Life and man became a living/Living being. The Lord planted a garden eastward in Eden and there He put the man whom He had formed and out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of Life was also in the midst if the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that skirts the whole land of Havilah where there is gold and the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Tigris; it is the one that goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and to keep it.

And, the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely Die!'

And, the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a helper comparable to him.'

Out of the ground the Lord formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would name them and whatever Adam called each living creature that was its name. So, Adam

gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. And, the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept, and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which God had taken from the man He made into a woman and He brought her to the man.

And Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man.' Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh. And, they were both (physically) naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." (Genesis 2:7-25)

God created both men and women, as well as every other living creature. He created the man and brought all of the other creatures before him and let him name them. However, not one was comparable to the man as a helper to perform God's command to tend and keep the Garden of Eden. So, God made the man fall asleep, took part of his body, and fashioned the woman out of it. Therefore, they both came from the dust of the earth, only he was made more directly from it.

God presented mankind with the entire earth as a gift, not a loan. As a consequence, God also made humanity responsible for whatever transpired on this planet. We were given the authority to command any bird, fish, or animal that naturally flew, swam, or crept. Mankind was given total dominion over these all, yet our authority was limited. What other things live on this planet did God not include? Beings who walk up-right, namely any other people than ourselves. The Trinity did not assign any person ever even to try to dominate other human beings.

Since God gave us each the freewill to decide whether to accept and follow Them or not, and They want us to imitate Them, it follows that They also want all other people to be completely free to control their own lives, too. Therefore, whenever anyone at all tries to compel or even enslave other human beings to do what he/she wants, instead of respecting their liberty and individuality, it never is God's will for him/her to do so. Never.

Although the man did not fully comprehend this charge, God was referring principally to spiritual Death not physical death. Man would loose the Life force that God had breathed into him. Clearly, after disobeying God the man and woman still functioned as earthly physical beings: seeing, thinking, moving, and talking. Their outward bodies did not become lifeless. However, Spiritual Death eventually resulted in physical death because the body ultimately began to function incompletely, and, therefore insufficiently perfect to sustain itself forever as God originally intended.

Adam's Disobedience

"The serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made and he said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of Garden?'

And the woman said to the serpent. 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the Garden; but, of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the Garden God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, less you Die.'

Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely Die, for God knows that in the day that you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' (Isaiah 4:14b)

So, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her and he ate. Then, the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And, they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the Garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the Garden.

Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?'

So he said, 'I heard Your voice in the Garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself.'

And He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?'

Then the man said, 'the woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I ate.'

And the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?'

The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me and I ate.'

So the Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this you are cursed more than all cattle and more than every beast of the field. On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And, I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her Seed. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel.'

To the woman He said, 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception. In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you.'

Then to Adam he said, 'Because you have heeded the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you saying, 'You shall not eat of it.' Cursed is the ground for your sake. In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life, both thorn and thistles it shall bring forth for you and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground. For, out of it you were taken for the dust you are and to dust you shall return.' (Psalm 103:13-14)

And Adam called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living. Also, for Adam and his wife God made them tunics of skin and clothed them.

Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us to know good and evil. And, now, lest he take also of the tree of Life and eat and Live forever--'

Therefore, the Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So, He drove out the man and placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way to the Tree of Life." (Genesis 3:1-24)

Why did the woman decide to rebel against what God had said and eat the fruit of the forbidden tree? Was it because someone else had tasted it and recommended its flavor? No, she merely looked at it and saw that it looked good; she ate it because its beauty, not its flavor, tempted her. It was like one of us being goaded into eating a flower. Also, consider the immediate outpouring of additional sinning as a direct result of the Adams' disobedience:

- (1) fear of God replaced their faith in Him,
- (2) they hid from God instead of approaching Him, and
- (3) self-centeredness replaced Godly love--the man blamed the woman, the serpent and even God Himself for his own choices and actions.

The first man and woman evidently were fascinated by, paid attention to, and obeyed the instructions of a being, who unfortunately for them, and us, was God's enemy, out to capture what or whom God loved. If he couldn't destroy God Himself, and then he would go after something or someone he could conquer, something or someone God cared deeply about, namely His beloved children. Since God had given them dominion over the rest of creation (*Genesis 2:28-30*), when they were dominated and contaminated so was everything under their custody.

Where was the man, her husband, during the time it took for her to listen to Satan and decide to mutiny against God's will? Was he in a distant location unable to hear Satan's dare, too far away to stop her from accepting it? On the contrary, the male Adam was right beside her had to have heard yet never stopped the verbal exchange. How can we infer this? She only had to turn to him to give him the same fruit, which he likewise ate.

Eve has some awareness that she was disobeying God; she even told Satan so before she allowed him access to her reasoning and con her. However, the man recognized even more fully that they would be expressly acting in opposition to what God had commanded them to act, and therefore the more responsible of the two for what transpired and its inevitable consequences.

"Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell into conquest."
(II Timothy 2:14)

"Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin."
(James 4:17)

"... nor give place to the devil." (Ephesians 4:27b) (See also Job 1:7 & II Peter 5:6-8)

Since the man knew as much, if not more of God's commands to them, being the older and more experienced in God's ways of the two, why didn't he answer Satan and rebuke his deception instead of letting her be subject to it? He was as guilty as she for disobeying God and starting the chain reaction of sin that still affects us living today. The repercussions of that single offense started to spread instantly throughout their spirits, souls, and bodies. This negative and harmful influence would have continued to affect the rest of whatever was in the Garden of Eden, and eventually God's Kingdom in Heaven, for, "a little leaven leavens the whole loaf." (Galatians 5:9)

What should the man have done when being tempted by Satan to turn away from God's words? We can see this by reading about when Jesus--the Second Adam--did when Satan tried the same kinds of con on Him, namely food and power. Jesus did not yield to Satan's sensual temptations, even though He was almost starving and probably quite weak. He countered every single thing by which the devil tried to sway him with God's word; and, as a result His tempter had to stop trying, as well as leave His presence.

Why were the Adams so concerned about being physically naked since they were the only two people around then? It couldn't be that they covered themselves purely out of modesty, because there was no one else to see them but God, Who already had done so. However, they naively attempted to use whatever they found handy (leaves) to try to recover themselves physically, when it was the absence of God in their spirits that was missing. It was not their physical bodies that suddenly had changed, it was their spiritual nakedness that they detected, yet they still tried physically to regain what they had just lost spiritually to endeavor to keep their behavior from God so He would not be able to detect any difference in them.

What is the difference between physical death versus spiritual Death? And, which was God referring to when He told the Adams to stay within His boundaries of behavior? Physical death is the cessation of the functions of our physical bodies through which we can experience ourselves and the world around us through our five senses. It is a temporary state of existence, no matter how long we are on the earth. On the other hand, Death is everlasting separation from God, and is inalterable once we experience death. This former state of being is far, far worse than anything our minds can even imagine. Being what we consider to be tormented in our earthly bodies does not even compare with the agony of living thus forever.

"If your right eye causes you to sin pluck it out and cast it from you. For, it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell fire. And, if your right hand causes you to sin cut it off and cast it away from you. It is better for you to enter into Life crippled rather than having two hands to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched.... For, it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And, if your foot causes you to sin cut it off. It is better for you to enter into Life lame rather than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched...." (Matthew 5:29-30 & Mark 9:43-50)

God the Father does not want for any of us to be sick or crippled. Jesus of Nazareth, His Son, His exact image, proved this every time he healed people. He did not intend the above quote to show that either He or His Father wished for us to be physically disabled in any manner. Rather, His purpose was to describe the severity of Death. It was (and still is) immeasurably better to take these extreme measures than to risk dying with a sinful, unsaved nature which can never be reversed. From the time we are born until the time we die is the definition of life, which can be comfortable or not, depending on the circumstances. It, too, is temporary and unstable. Life, though, is what God breathed into Adam after He had formed his body, and what amounted to a

mannequin began to move, think, and speak. This element of being was what left when the Adams perceived that they were "naked". They still maintained the transitory life that we experience on the earth, but they lost eternal Life with God in Heaven.

What the Adams lost was God the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of them, for once they rebelled they allowed evil to enter themselves and became flawed from within. If the Holy Spirit had not left the Adams when He did, He would have divided the Trinity, thus letting Satan inside God, which had been his true goal all along. Jesus taught us about this consequence when He taught; "*Every kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.*" (MATTHEW 12:15a) Jesus did not refer to His Father's Kingdom as being exempt from this effect. He said that it would happen to every single kingdom, not all of them but God's.

The regeneration of Spirit is the metamorphosis that takes place the instant any individual person decides to become born 'again'. Then they are able to approach God the Father once more at His Own Spiritual level, not merely a fleshly intellectual or emotional one. God's Son became like one of us to defeat Satan so that we could become like Him again in Spirit and truly fellowship with the Trinity.

If not eating (or even touching) that tree was so vital for their welfare, why did God place it in the Garden in the first place and why so prominently? God desires for mankind to choose to be with Him. He does not want us around because we feel compelled to be. To truly give us the freedom to decide for ourselves, individually, there has to be an alternative presented, otherwise we would be nothing more to Him than slaves. Likewise, if the decision is not readily available to all the arrangement is not a fair one, as the outcome is uneven and unbalanced towards one of the parties involved. If the tree were not conspicuously displayed and easily accessible one member would hold an advantage over any others concerned.

Why did God ask Adam where He was when, being omniscient and omnipresent, He already knew? God approached Adam before Adam came to Him, and by questioning acted as if He did not know what had just transpired. In effect, God made Himself available to Adam not accusing Him of his disobedience but evidently hoping that Adam would choose to confide in Him and regain their previous intimacy.

God's Son acted the same way. The Word teaches that He knew our hearts and thoughts. Yet, He also continually asked people to share themselves with Him. Jesus likewise demonstrated to people the model of perfect interaction with God the Father in Heaven, how He Himself must have communicated with Him when He went away alone to pray. We also can see a bit more of their interaction when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

What was God's immediate solution to this problem? After all, Satan (still in the form of a serpent) must have been sticking around to gloat to God about his new triumph. God made the first promise about the appearance of His Son Jesus as a natural, flesh and blood human being, not merely the Son of God but the Son of Man, too, Who would take away the sins of the world. God confronted His enemy who had instigated the rebellion and told him the consequences of his treachery. Neither of the two other participants affected recognized the scope and enormity of what had just taken place, but God did. He realized that if He still desired to be a Father to His new children, He had to set up a strategy to counteract their mutiny against His Lordship and Kingdom.

This statement was the first of many prophesies and covenants that God initiated with mankind in order one day to obliterate the consequences of that first sin as leaven that began to erode His Kingdom on the earth. It concerned the birth of His Only Son, the Seed Who one day would conquer Satan's newly acquired earthly domain and redeem it back into God's direction. Once Jesus finished His part of Their covenant it was up to anyone else to decide to participate in its benefits, or not.

"The Lord (God the Father) said to my Lord (God the Son), 'Sit here at My right hand till I make your enemies Your footstool.'" (Matthew 22:44)

Why did God mention that it was vital to keep the man and woman away from eating from the tree of Life? He never had commanded them not to touch it before, only the other one--the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In fact, God specifically instructed Adam that he should indeed eat of the fruit of every single other tree in the Garden, which must have then included the tree of Life; so then why was it then vital that they not partake of it?

Beforehand, God wanted Adam to Live eternally with His Holy Spirit residing within him. However, after he and the woman sinned, the spirit of Satan (rebellion, indulgence, and Death) completely replaced God's (harmony, discipline, and Life). He did not wish for His children and creation to exist in that evil state eternally without ever being able to benefit from His solution to their mutiny. God's Son Jesus of Nazareth was the Savior, or ransom, for our souls and spirits out of the darkness that had taken control. Since the successful completion of Jesus' mission as a human being, whenever any person accepts the renewal of their human spirits by the Holy Spirit, they may once again partake of the tree of Life.

Why did God have to send the Adams completely out of, as well as away from the Garden instead of merely somehow preventing them from partaking of the tree of Life? In their new unrighteousness condition the man and woman had let themselves be turned into what amounted to leaven in God's Kingdom. He had no other choice but to banish them from it before their flawed nature started to corrupt His perfect reign. Jesus revealed this to us when He taught that even a little hidden leaven would disperse and affect the entity in which it is placed.

Observe how God Himself took care of the man and woman before He exiled them from Eden. He, not they, made their new clothes; and, not of leaves, but of animal skins to protect them from the harsh weather that they eventually would encounter. Additionally, He must have sacrificed the blood of some animals in order to do it, thus initiating the first of many blood covenants, culminating in the ultimate blood sacrifice to redeem mankind from their foolish and reckless behavior, His only Son.

Finally, please notice that the woman's name was not separate from the man's until after they sinned. Until then they simply would have been referred to as "the Adams", so to speak, a union of two making one. However, they unknowingly not only had caused a split between themselves and God, but a division from each other, too.

Rebellion against God Continued to Spread

The children of Adam and Eve continued to perpetuate, and even add new

dimensions to, the sins of their parents. The Adam's offspring began to allow envy and even murder to corrupt themselves further away from God's righteousness.

"Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived and bore Cain (meaning 'Acquire') and said, 'I have acquired a man from the Lord. Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel (meaning 'Breath')

Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And, in the process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground of the Lord. Abel also brought of the first of his flock and of their fat. And, the Lord respected Abel and his offering; but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry and his countenance fell.

So the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And, why has your countenance fallen? If you do well will you not be accepted? And, if you do not do well sin lies at your door and its desire is for you. But, you should rule over it.' (James 4:7)

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother and it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Then the Lord said to Cain. 'Where is Abel your brother?

He said, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?'

And (the Lord) said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. So, now you are cursed from the earth which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and an outlaw you shall be on the earth.'

And Cain said to the Lord, 'My sin is greater than I can tolerate! Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face. I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth; and, it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.'

And the Lord aid to him, 'Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold and the Lord set a mark on Cain, lest anyone who find him should kill him.' (Genesis 4:1-16)

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Why was Cain's sacrifice rejected? It couldn't be just because it wasn't a blood sacrifice, because later the Lord did accept the same tithes from other people. The only difference was that Abel brought the "first" of his crop. His offering seemed deliberate and thoughtful, whereas Cain's was like an afterthought, an obligation more than an offering in praise, thanks, and worship to God.

"By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous. God testifies of his gifts and though he be dead still speaks." (Hebrews 11:4)

After God had rejected Cain's offering He was the One Who initiated a dialogue between them in order to discuss and clear up any misunderstandings and grievances. In other words, God approached Cain not the reverse. Cain did not respond to the

Lord's questions or warnings about how he was letting Satan direct his wrath, which would result in more evil. Cain did confront his brother Abel though, and in a jealous rage, not **only** attacked but actually killed him. This was additional evidence of the sinful nature that would continue to appear increasingly within God's children.

When God addressed Cain the second time, after he had killed Abel, Cain did answer God this time but not directly. Cain tried to mislead God about what he had done by answering the Lord's question with another. This is a classic ploy to attempt to deceive without outright lying. The Lord reacted exactly like a parent whose child has committed a horrific crime. He did not condemn Cain; rather, He told him what he must endure as a consequence of his behavior. Also, the Lord tried to do as much as he could to keep Cain from suffering more, without letting him off the hook for his previous conduct. Cain had to live accountable for his transgression; just as his father and mother had to suffer the consequences of their own rebellion against God's will.

Although God hated what Cain had done He showed mercy and made a way for Cain to live as safely as possible from then on. Just as God made the clothes to protect his father and mother from the elements dominating their new life outside of the perfect climate of the Garden of Eden, God put a mark on Cain to warn others so that no one would do the same crime to him that he had done to his brother.

God's mark on Cain likewise was designed to spare any other person who wanted to commit the same sin as Cain had done. The Lord's mercy not only was designed to keep Cain as safe as possible, it anticipated the consequences if anyone else followed Cain's example and warned them of their fate. The Bible tells that Cain got married, bore a son, and even built a city. In other words, God showed mercy on Cain and allowed him to prosper after he killed Abel.

Several new sins already had evolved from the rift that further separated mankind from their Creator--insecurity, envy, and murder. More would evolve. These would lead to more of the same, until we presently find ourselves living in a world far removed from God's perfection and ever increasing in evil.

"Know that in the last days perilous times will come, for men will become: self-centered, lovers of money, boasters, conceited, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, insulting, despisers of good, traitors, self-willed, arrogant, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of Godliness but denying its power, and from such people turn away. For, of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away with various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (II Timothy 3:1-7)

With the advent and increasing popularity of radio, then movies, television, VCR's, personal computers and the Internet, it becomes easier and easier for Satan's ideologies to influence and pervert people's lives secretly, without them or anyone else even realizing what they are allowing to happen. When a message, song or program is overtly diabolical many people can recognize its power. However, when it is a subtle, seemingly trustworthy enticement we may not be able to detect anything unGodly about it and therefore allow those ideas and words entrance into our lives.

Only by reading, studying and obeying God's commands that have been revealed to us in the Bible can we ever even hope to escape any bad consequences that result from our continual disobedience. And, since it is utterly impossible for any one of us to avoid doing this completely, it is vital that we turn around from our natural, flesh oriented ways and turn to Jesus Christ to redeem us back to God the Father's Kingdom.

NOAH—Found Grace with God

In *Genesis 3:17-19* God told the first man that as a result of his disobedience, he had brought curses instead of constant blessings, into the earth. It never, ever was God's will for decay and destruction to be able to invade His creation. Whenever He made something He declared it to be good, perfect, without any flaws or defects. However, all of His intentions became changed when disobedience and sin were invited into the world. God did not curse the earth or us; the choice to hear, listen to, and finally obey Satan instead of God did, beginning in the Garden of Eden. Therefore, when He said as much to Adam God was not cursing the world, merely revealing his new state of being.

God has tried to save mankind from its foolish and destructive behavior ever since that moment. Satan's influence and control over the inhabitants of the earth finally corrupted mankind away from God so much so that everything about them became evil. Consequently, as their bad stimuli spread it had affected all of creation outside Eden. God was so distressed at that turn of events that at one time He actually considered destroying every single person on the earth. However, in His search to find someone who still would recognize Him, God finally located one man, Noah, who would indeed follow His dictates instead of the then present spiritual ruler of the earth.

God Warned about an Impending Disaster

"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continuous! And, the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth and He was grieved in His heart.

So, the Lord said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.'

But, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generation. Noah walked with God....

The earth was also corrupt before God and the earth was filled with violence. So, God looked upon the earth and indeed it was corrupt; for, all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

And, God said to Noah, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopherwood, make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. And this is how you shall make it: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its

height thirty cubits. You shall make a window for the ark and you shall finish it to a cubit from above, and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.

And, behold, I Myself am allowing the 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. But, I will establish My covenant with you and you shall go into the ark--you, your sons, your wife, and your son's wives with you. And, of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you--they shall be male and female.... And you shall take for yourself all food that is eaten and you shall gather it to yourself and it shall be food for you and for them.... For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights. I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.'

And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him.... So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his son's wives went into the ark because of the waters of the flood." (Genesis 6:5-21, 7:7)

God told Noah exactly what was going to occur over this entire planet as the inevitable consequence of rampant worldwide sin. He also instructed Noah precisely how to avoid the destruction. It must have taken many years for God's prophesy to take place because Noah not only had to construct a huge sailing vessel with only his family to help him and no modern technology or equipment, he had to locate a pair of every single kind of species of animal and bird living, as well as transport them onto the ark. Additionally, he had to get the necessary supplies for eight people and every creature therein to survive for over twelve months.

From the time God revealed to Noah what was going to result on the earth to the moment it actually began to rain probably was many years. So, Noah and his three sons had to maintain their faith in Someone and something yet unseen that whole time they were building a craft that measured: length 150 yards x width 25 yards x height 15 yards. That they were able to do this, much less gather and bring all of the animals and supplies is staggering.

The flood began to strike seemingly without warning; however, there must have been signs of an inevitable environmental catastrophe of some kind. God was searching beforehand for everyone whom He could save from the impending destruction because He does not ever favor one person over another. He would have rescued other people from the catastrophe that struck the entire planet if they had been willing to hear and follow His instructions for deliverance, just as Noah did. The fact that only a one family was spared is not an indication of God's will in this matter. He never actually wanted a single person to be killed, but they never heeded the signs of the inevitable consequences of sin. Their rampant misbehavior not only had affected themselves, but the rest of their environment as well. The story of Noah has two important factors: (a) how the impact of sin had influenced people long ago, which led to their destruction, as well as (b) how their story is similar to today's world.

"As in the days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. For, as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and

giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark and did not realize until the flood (actually) came and took them all away. So also, will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then, two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and the other left. Watch, therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming." (Matthew 24:37-42)

Constant Rebellion Induced a Worldwide Catastrophe

"The flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth and the ark moved on the surface of the waters. The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth and every man. All in whose nostrils had been the spirit of life and all that was on dry land died.... Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

Then God remembered Noah and every living thing and all the animals that were with him in the ark and God made a wind pass over the earth and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were also stopped and the rain from heaven was restrained and the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of one hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen. So it came to pass, at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. Then he sent out a raven which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth.

He also sent out for himself a dove to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot and she returned into the ark to him for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and drew her into the ark to himself.

And he waited yet another seven days and again he sent the dove out from the ark. Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return to him anymore.

And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, in the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth. And, Noah removed the covering of the earth and looked, and indeed the surface of the earth was dry. And in the second month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.

Then God spoke to Noah, saying, 'Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and

your sons and your son's wives with you. Bring with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.'

So Noah went out, and his sons, and his wife, and his son's wives with him. Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth according to their families went out of the ark. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar and the Lord smelled the aroma.

Then the Lord said in His heart, 'I will never again curse the ground for man's sake although the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth. Nor will I ever again destroy every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seed, time and harvest, cold and heat, Winter and Summer, and day and night shall not cease.'

So God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and all the fish of the sea. They are given unto your hand. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. But, you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood....'

And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you--the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. Thus, I will establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood. Never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.'

Then God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you for perpetual generations. I will set My rainbow in the cloud and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be when I bring a cloud over the earth that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh: the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.' And God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.'" (Genesis 7:17-9:17)

The rain itself only lasted about a month and a half (forty days and nights), it took an additional 5 months (150 days) for the floodwaters to even begin to recede. The ark finally was able to land on a high mountain in the seventh month of their confinement, but Noah and his entire family still had to wait another 3 months before the tops of the mountain upon which the ark was stuck were even visible to them. Then, after another month and a half (40 days) Noah took two birds to fly and check out the situation to see if anyone but a bird could depart safely. So, up until the time that it was even remotely

possible for those inside the ark to leave it even for a while, they had been confined inside it for almost an entire year.

The birds that Noah released from the ark were a raven and a dove. He never saw the raven again but the dove returned to him because it had found no other place to rest. We do not know anything about the raven's fate. Noah waited another week and sent the dove out again and she came back with an olive branch in her beak so he knew that the waters had indeed receded. However, instead of allowing anyone to even venture out at that time, he made them all wait even another week before he gave permission.

God instructed Noah in detail as to how he was to act before he went into the ark. Accordingly, it is logical to assume that He maintained His guidance throughout the journey, too. So, wanting for Noah, his family, and the creatures not only to survive, but also multiply and repopulate the earth, God must have been instructing Noah to remember that and trust in Him to wait for His timing when they could leave, not be moved by what they saw or thought. If you'll recall, this way of acting was what got mankind into their predicament in the first place. The woman "saw" that the tree was good for food so she made her own judgment call and purposely rebelled against God's instructions and wisdom. Her husband then was moved more by her persuasion over God's commands. It was the first evidence of the strength of peer pressure.

"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But, one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and seduced. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin. And, sin when it is full grown brings forth death/Death." (James 1:13-15)

After the flood, God instructed Noah and his family the exact same way He did the first man and woman that He had created. Even though He was acutely aware of what we were capable of, He again entrusted the care of this planet to us. Look what we, not God, continue to unleash by constantly polluting ourselves and environment in some way or another. God even set a sign in the sky to remind us of His covenant with Noah--the rainbows that appear after every rainfall. We should remember His promises each time we notice one.

Noah's Insobriety

"Noah began to be a farmer and he planted a vineyard. Then he drank some of the wine and was drunk and became uncovered in his tent and Ham... saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japeth took a garment and laid it on both their shoulders and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away and they did not see their father's nakedness.... And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years and he died." (Genesis 9:20-23, 29)

After enough time had elapsed for the grapes in Noah's new vineyard to have

matured, cultivated, and been made into wine, something happened and Noah consumed so much of it that he got drunk enough to pass out. The Bible does not relate the circumstances about why Noah got drunk. However, God must have forgiven this sin of drunkenness, and whatever else Noah may have committed during the incident, because even centuries after his death the Holy Spirit directed someone (probably the apostle Paul) to include Noah's name in the list of the most faithful people who lived during the Old Testament.

"By faith, Noah being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with Godly fear prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." (Hebrews 11:7)

Why would God the Father lead Moses to mention one maybe isolated but surely embarrassing and unfortunate occurrence in Noah's life, yet not reveal the details that provoked it? According to the Scriptures Noah lived a total of nine hundred and fifty years so there were many, many other things that he did that God's Spirit easily could have revealed about his life instead of this humiliating incident. This account is another example of two things: (a) no matter how righteous we may be for a time, any one of us eventually will sin, and (b) God will forgive the transgression even when other people do not. He reacts to what is in our hearts, not merely our shortcomings.

Even Noah's own sons were embarrassed by his behavior. One of them found him in his tent unconscious and stark naked. This son told the other two who went and covered their father, even walking backwards and thus unable to see the spectacle Noah made of himself. They were respectful of their father in that condition, yet they seemed to be embarrassed by it also. The son that found Noah did not stop and cover his father and keep quiet about the incident, he went right away and told other people, his brothers in this case, about it. Instead of considering what the negative information would do, cause a rift within the group if only a small one, Noah's son chose not to keep the event private but publicize it.

There were no justifiable reasons why anyone else had to find out what Noah had done. The matter was not vital to their survival, it did not do anything to promote harmony within that family, nor could it change either the past or the future. This was another example of the sin spreading throughout mankind, even after the flood that purged the earth of the previous evil deeds--gossip.

"These six things the Lord hates... one who sows discord among brethren."
(Proverbs 6:16a, 19b)