

In The Beginning God . . .

*An In-Depth Study of the
First Three Chapters of Genesis*

All Truth Begins Here



Thy Kingdom Come

INTRO: As we come toward the end of the first part of our series (only two topics left: eschatology and the presence of evil in the universe) it is fascinating to discover that the first three chapters of Genesis give strong indications of what the future will hold. Built into the narrative of first things is a forecast of last things. As we compare what these chapters have to say about the early earth with what the rest of the Bible says about the future and the millennial kingdom we find striking parallels and a growing awareness that part of God's great purpose in redemption is the restoration of all that was lost by Adam in the beginning.

I. Understanding Last Things from the First Things—Redemption & Restoration

- A. The message of the Bible is multi-fold in the unfolding of truth and God's eternal purposes, the more we understand the "bigger picture" the better able we are to pray effectively and to comprehend the will of God.
 - 1. Personal salvation is the best understood message and the obvious introduction into the will and plan of God
 - 2. Seeing ourselves as a part of a larger whole, and understanding that Christ died for the Church collectively (not just for me individually) is the next step in contextualizing our faith: in other words, "It's not just about me!".
 - 3. Understanding the whole direction of redemption as restoration of lost things to full recovery and the warfare that is involved within the context of unchanging spiritual laws brings us into fellowship with the heart and purposes of God and enables us to join Him by faith in His ultimate work.
- B. We are in a battle commonly known as spiritual warfare, and it is perhaps the least understood but most important truth in our daily walk with Christ as joint heirs and citizens of His Kingdom. We need a deeply rooted comprehension of certain eternal truths to enable us to wage this warfare successfully:
 - 1. Our God is a covenant keeping God Who cannot lie and Who does not withdraw or rescind His promises.
 - 2. There are spiritual laws that govern our universe just as there are physical laws. These spiritual laws are more permanent and binding than the universe itself.
 - 3. The earth was made for mankind and placed under the stewardship and authority (dominion) of Adam and Eve. This dominion was surrendered in the fall and the rights of oversight were yielded up to the devil who is now the "god of this world" (2 Co 4:4) and the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2) and the ruler of the "domain of darkness" (Col 1:13).
 - 4. Because of God's covenant nature and His absolute moral righteousness He cannot violate His own character by simply stepping into the disaster of sin and just "standing all the blocks up again." He must recover what was lost by righteous and honorable means consistent with His Person.
This includes:
 - a. solving the sin problem in a morally just way
 - b. restoring rightful authority to mankind
 - c. destroying the deeds and powers of darkness one person and one place at a time
 - d. recovering the beauty, harmony, and joy of creation through the redemptive process

II. The First Adam and the Last Adam—Taking Back What Was Given Up

- A. What the first Adam lost through sin, the Last Adam has redeemed through the cross
- B. When Jesus appeared on this earth in the incarnation, He was the first sinless and morally pure Man to walk on this planet since Adam and Eve before the fall.
 - 1. He announced his ministry by proclaiming "the Kingdom of God has come to you" and explained His miracles in those terms (Luke 4:13-44)
 - 2. He drew a distinction between all that happened prior to His arrival, and what would happen after when He said what He did about John the Baptist: Luke 7:28 *I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.*

Luke 4:13-43 ¹³ When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time. ¹⁴ And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. ¹⁵ And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all. ¹⁶ And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, ¹⁹ TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." ²⁰ And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" ²³ And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself!' Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well." ²⁴ And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown. ²⁵ 'But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; ²⁶ and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ 'And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; ²⁹ and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff. ³⁰ But passing through their midst, He went His way. ³¹ And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath; ³² and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority. ³³ In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴ "Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are-- the Holy One of God!" ³⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people, he came out of him without doing him any harm. ³⁶ And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, "What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out." ³⁷ And the report about Him was spreading into every locality in the surrounding district. ³⁸ Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her. ³⁹ And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and waited on them. ⁴⁰ While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them. ⁴¹ Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ. ⁴² When day came, Jesus left and went to a secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and came to Him and tried to keep Him from going away from them. ⁴³ But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose."

- II. C. Once He had conquered sin and the grave through the cross and made it possible for men and women to be born again and restored to spiritual life, He invested them with His Spirit and with His Name by which the world could be re-conquered as the message of the Gospel and the Kingdom spread across the globe.

III. Parallels Between Eden and the Kingdom

- A. As we study the nature of the early earth, we see clear indications of the future Kingdom when the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan is bound for a thousand years (Rev 12:9 & 20:2)
- B. In the promise of the future son to be born through Eve there is the promise of the restoration of humanity and the lost paradise.
- C. In the early earth (Eden) AND in the Kingdom
1. There is great longevity of life
 2. There is love, harmony, and innocence
 3. The animals are once again vegetarian and peace is restored with humanity
 4. God is walking among us and His light fills the earth
- D. We can see the historical progression of redemption and restoration:
1. A beautiful paradise where Adam and Eve have dominion under God over all the earth.
 2. The fall and plunge into darkness and exceeding sin
 3. The flood which purges and cleanses the awful beginning
 4. The call of Abraham and a new people of God
 5. The revelation of God's moral righteousness in Moses & Law
 6. The kingdom under David
 7. The incarnation and birth of the Church
 8. The spreading Kingdom through world evangelism
 9. The return of the King
 10. The establishment of a 1,000 year Kingdom like Eden
 11. The grand summation and final judgment
 12. The New Heaven and the New Earth forever—Redeemed & Restored

Questions for Thought & Discussion

Can you explain God's overall purpose in human history and redemption and why things are the way they are now? What is your role in the path toward the ultimate revelation of the Kingdom of God?

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