

HISTORY OF REDEMPTION

BY

Dave Shirley

Lesson 2

God at Work in Human History

Brought to you by:

The Blue Letter Bible Institute

<http://www.blbi.org>

A ministry of:

The Blue Letter Bible

<http://www.blueletterbible.org>

The following lecture is provided by Sowing Circle and Blue Letter Bible ministries. More information is available at www.Blueletterbible.org. This course, *The History of Redemption*, is taught by Pastor David Shirley.

Let's pray.

Father, we know that You are so excited and pleased with Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. I mean, You leaned out of heaven and said it a few times. "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And we notice that You always wanted that even when Abraham said he was just not totally satisfied with Eleazer, though he was a good guy. But he wanted his own son. And you just kind of went, "Amen. That is what I want too, Abraham. You are going to get it and so am I." And through that supernatural birth of Isaac, who pointed forward to that perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who had it in His heart, Abba Father, and pleased His Father.

Lord, we want to see You more clearly in Your fullness and to see in Your Word that just from beginning to end, it has all been about Jesus and the redemption that is in Jesus. And so Lord, help us to just revel in it, to meditate on Jesus, to see the new and fresh aspects of our redemption from Genesis to Revelation. Not just in class, but I mean during our private times or reading Your Word or maybe in another class or just being off and listening to a tape or having devotions. Lord, help us to see over and over the theme of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, for Your glory. Amen.

God is working. God Himself, without human help, is at work throughout all human history. And we are going to learn three concepts this morning, or think about them. The first concept is this: It is a work, not merely an idea that ties the books of the Bible together. So, many times we think it is just the idea or the doctrines. It is not.

God is Working

**God Himself, without human help,
is at work throughout all human
history.**

KEY CONCEPT #1:

**It is a *work*, not merely an *idea*,
that ties the books of the Bible
together.**

When we first go from Genesis to Revelation we want to look at what God did. And our salvation is based not on a concept or an idea or a doctrine of atonement. Our concept—what we want to get is this: Our salvation is based on an activity of God. It is something God really did. Not just a thought process.

And so the question we first ask is this: Is your salvation based an idea or an activity of God? Well, what about Romans 8:9–11? Let's read it. Now tell me, is this a concept or is this in reality an activity?

But you are not in the flesh, but you are in the spirit. [I mean, even this morning. You are in the spirit.] If indeed the spirit of God is dwelling—[and that is present active

indicative—continual, linear dwelling. He is dwelling in you right now.] Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is dwelling in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His spirit who is dwelling in you.

Now tell me, is that an idea or is that a real activity of God? The salvation you are experiencing right now—The Holy Spirit, if He is dwelling in you and you are truly Christ's, and if you are truly Christ's He is dwelling in you, you are experiencing the real activity of God in your life. It is not just coming and learning a bunch of concepts and thoughts and theologies. But it is reality.

And in Ephesians 1:19-21 we read:

And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at the right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this life but also in that which is to come.

So isn't this real activity? This is something God did. This is something God is continuing to do now presently and will continue to do in your life until we are brought to that full redemption of the body.

And so our salvation is an activity of God. And that is why we go through from Genesis to Revelation the first time to talk about what God has done. Not so much what He said, but what God has done. We will talk more about what He said.

Now, obviously as we go through, you cannot separate what God has done from what God has said because they are not two separate things. They go together. But we kind of divided them up so that you can see the relationship better in the end.

Our salvation is an activity of God, so certainly it was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, wasn't it? He thought it. So much so that Scripture says, "The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). God, when He thinks something in His mind it is like it is as good as done. You see, you and I think things but it does not mean anything if you think something. You can sit here and think, "Boy, I would love to take that girl out to dinner." That does not mean a thing. That is just you thinking. When you think it is not like when God thinks. When God thinks it is as good as done. When you think there is a whole lot of pain and sorrow because she may not be interested at all. But from the foundation of the world, God thought it. But He is described as the Lamb that was actually slain from the foundation of the world. That is how close God's acting and doing is connected with God speaking and thinking. It is just in another whole realm.

However, it is the cross of history upon which Jesus died—that is the activity of God. And so it is quite an amazing thing. Are you saved by the cross of history or by the doctrine of atonement? What really saves you? Well, the fundamental unity of Scripture is not merely an idea. It is the real historical work of God. Specifically it is the work of God concerning the redemption of mankind. And everything else in the Bible is related to this main thing of both the old and new covenants—the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

So salvation is based on what God does, what He has done in the past, what He is doing in the present, and what He is going to do in the future.

What is an Old Testament definition of grace? If you were to define grace in terms of the Old Testament, how would you define grace? Is it looking forward to the cross? To some extent, but it is even more than that. What is grace in the Old Testament? It is simply this: Grace is God doing it. Write that down. Grace is God doing it.

Now what is faith then? And you know what? That is grace in the New Testament too. Grace in the New Testament and the Old Testament is the same thing. Grace is God doing it. That is why in the New Testament we say, “When you have grace you have no more excuse for not doing it, do you?” Because if God gives you grace that means you have the ability of God to do it. So how can you possibly make an excuse when you have the power and dynamic of the eternal God, the Omnipotent One, the Almighty El Shaddai, and you are saying, “I could not do it. Would you please give me grace because I could not get it done.” That is just a misinterpretation of grace and we need to rephrase that stuff.

I heard it again yesterday. Somebody said, “Could you give us grace?” It was like, “Oh man, here we go again. You meant, could I give you mercy. Yeah, I could give you mercy. I cannot give you grace because grace means you have the dynamic and power of God. And if you have the dynamic and power of God, you do not have any excuse for not doing it. You have the resurrection life of Jesus Christ and you are going to say, “Well, give me grace.” You do not understand grace. Grace is God doing it in the Old Testament. And grace is God doing it in the New Testament.

What is faith then? Faith is a response to God doing it. That is what Abraham did. He responded. And his first response was really simple. The only thing Abraham said was what? He said, “Amen.” That is all he said. “Amen. Okay.” That is where he started. He responded with an affirmative. “Okay. You are going to do it. Let it be done. I am all for it.” That is where you start.

Well, what is the wrong response then to God doing it? The wrong response to God doing it—which is grace and you ought to have faith and a proper response in His grace—the

wrong response to God doing it is you trying to do it yourself. And that happens so many times. When that happens in the New Testament we call that the what? They are in the flesh. When you say someone is in the flesh what you really mean is this: they are trying to do themselves what God wants to do. And we call that the flesh. And it is because it is man trying to do what only God can do. When what God wants from us is the right response to Him doing it.

Now He has already done it. “In Christ Jesus He has given you all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). We have the dynamic and power for life. And when I fail I cannot say anything except this: “I just fell short of what was supplied me. I had it; I just fell short of it.”

And that is why we go through the Epistles and learn how to interpret and appropriate and apply Jesus Christ. That is what is so wonderful about going from Romans to Jude and spending time there. Because it teaches you, in that section of Scripture from Romans to Jude, you are learning how to interpret, to see and apply Jesus Christ in real life so that it is God doing it and not us that is doing it. And it is a beautiful thing. So, the first concept is basically that it is a work that God is doing. And He is the one that we look to.

Now, think about this. Since it is a work and not merely an idea that ties the books of the Bible together—what if God quit working? What would happen? Well, it would all fall apart, wouldn't it?

**He holds all things together
by the word of His power.**

**If God quit working the positive particles
of all atoms would split apart!**

**Apart from Him there is no salvation.
He alone is God.**

***“This is the work of God that you believe on
Him whom He as sent.” John 6:29***

Right now if God quit working today every positive part of every atom would just split. I mean, scientists do not even understand why the positive particles of the atom are held together. They go and they have figured out a way with the isotopes in order to split an atom. They can divide those positive particles of the atom and it causes a chain reaction. We get this atomic bomb. But they do not really understand why the positive particles in the center or nucleus of an atom are able to stay there and hold their position. Because they are supposed to really be repelling but they do not repel. They just sit there in the center of the nucleus of the atom and nobody can understand. But they figured out how to throw an interference in there. And if they throw certain isotopes in there they can cause an interference and then those things do go [fftt joom]. And it just goes into a chain reaction and you have got an atomic bomb.

But we know from the Word of God that “all things are held together by the word of His power” (cf. Hebrews 1:3). And so if God quit working for just one second, all of the atoms of the universe would just [fftt]. You would not even have to worry about homework or anything. It would be just like—it would be all gone, you know. And the elements melt with fervent heat. So it is like we just cannot afford for God to quit working. And our whole salvation is based upon what God has done and upon His work.

All right, what else besides working is God doing throughout the Scriptures? Well, He is not just working but He is speaking. He is explaining. He is exhorting. He is predicting. Jesus summed up the whole thing very well when in Matthew 11:2–4 He said this: “Go tell what you hear and see.” What they were hearing was doctrine, theology, truth. But what they were seeing were the very deeds and working of God. And Jesus told them, “Go give them both of those things. Go give them the whole counsel of God. Give them both what God has done, what God has said. Put them together.” And I think that is great.

We learn that God is speaking and what God says is related to what God is doing. In Amos 3:7 the Scripture says,

Surely the Lord does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets. A lion has roared who will not fear. The Lord has spoken, who can but prophesy?

So the supreme Word and Person Jesus Christ became the supreme work. And that is why Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:2, “I have determined to know nothing except this: Jesus Christ [That is His person] and Him crucified [that is His work].” The supreme Word, the Person became the supreme work. And so there is a relationship between what God has said and what God is doing.

And the historical books talk mostly about what God is doing. The other books speak about what God has said. And we are going to look at both of them because, you know, it is like the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. It is hard to separate God’s mind and His concept with the fact that it is already done because if God says it, it is already done whether it has happened yet in a historical context or not—it will because it is God that is doing it. Isn’t that neat?

Now we get excited on birthdays, don’t we? But when does God get excited? He gets excited on conception day. Ryan and Gina they are going to be really excited when that

baby finally pops out. It will be great and they will take that date and they will go, “All right, that is the birthday.” And everybody will celebrate that day because that is what we see as humans. But you know when God got really excited? He got excited on conception day; they probably did too. But you know, something that God looks at and He says, “Boom, right here, this is the beginning of life.” And that is a “God thing,” you know. I mean, really it is. That is not weird. God designed that. And if you think God is not excited about that, then you just do not understand God.

It is just like when He came to Abraham and Abraham said, “I have got to have my own son, God. I love Eleazer and he has been great, but I just have to have my own son.” And God went, “Yes! Abraham, you want the same thing I want. Ever since I have created man I have wanted someone that would like rule for Me, someone who would be in relationship with Me and I need that.” It is like God could not get it until He sent His only begotten Son, His beloved Son Jesus Christ, because the rest of us always fell short of that. And if there could have been any other way God could have arranged it He would have done it. But He could not and so He sent His own Son to do it.

And so God gets excited because of Who He is on conception day, whereas like us, in the natural, we get excited on the birthday, on the delivery day.

Key Concept #2

God does everything progressively.

As His plan begins to unfold, we understand more of His ways.

Since the days of Genesis, God has worked through trusting souls.

His plan and program has been progressively revealed through Jesus Christ.

But God is not just working and doing things, He is also speaking in Scripture. And we will look at that. And so the key concept number two is this: God does everything progressively. That is just the way He likes to do things. And as His plan begins to unfold—and it does like the unfolding of a flower—we understand more of His ways. As God worked throughout time, He worked through these trusting souls. He started way back in the days of Genesis and we can see that He has progressively revealed His plan and program through Jesus Christ. That is just the way God likes to work.

Now, why are vast periods of time in the Bible just passed over while other periods are recorded in detail? Don't you just hate that sometimes? And we will see—maybe not, I don't know if we will see it, maybe we will this week, if not, next week—how in Genesis 1–11 you have all this big stuff that took place. It was huge, wasn't it? And it just passed over stuff. It is like, there are things I want to know about in Genesis 1–11 and He did not tell me. It is like, I want to know about that whole thing. How did evil start? Why didn't you tell me how evil started there, Lord? I want to know that whole thing about Satan and how he could be the covering cherub and be created that way and then all of a sudden he

is evil. You can go from Lucifer, this light-bearer, and he can turn into Satan this adversary of God. I would have liked to have known more than just saying, “Well, he fell.” But He did not tell me any more. I would like to have known about the angels and the stars and all of that kind of stuff. But He does not give us that information. And even throughout the Bible He will go through big sections of history and there will not even be anything recorded about that section of history. And then you will get to the next section of history and there will be all of this stuff about this little period that lasted for ten years. And you go, “What is up with that?”

And you begin to realize that the Bible has been selectively chosen by the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit has put these things in the Bible for us to read because they had to do with one theme and that is the theme of redemption. And He has told us everything we need to know about that theme of redemption. So it is a sovereign selection of God.

But God reveals things progressively. What did God simply say to Abraham and what does that statement include? What did He say to Abraham in Genesis 12? Now you go through Genesis 1–11 and there is all this big stuff. You get to Genesis 12 and from Genesis 12 to the end of the book, for thirty-nine chapters, all about one guy—Abraham and his family. And you go, “Well, how come I got 1–11 and I got the creation of the world. And I have got the creation of stars and animals and whales. And I have got man. I have got the fall of man. I have got woman. I got this whole thing with Satan coming in. I have got the Tower of Babel which I wish I know more about the Tower of Babel and the whole thing, you know, but I do not. And there is the flood, destroys the whole earth.” And all of this stuff is going on and you go, “How come we do not know more about that?” And then you turn at chapter 12 and for the rest of the book of Genesis, from chapter 12 to the very end, you talk about one guy, Abraham. And you go, “What is up with that?”

Well, it is because the Holy Spirit is selectively choosing what is revealed. And He is doing it on the basis of a theme. And the theme is redemption. But He does it progressively. And it is just like He starts with a seed and it becomes fully developed. He

starts with an acorn and it becomes an oak tree. He starts with a sperm or an egg and then that DNA code begins to unfold and pretty soon there is a person and there is twenty-three chromosomes of the man and twenty-three chromosomes of the woman and there they are. The two have become one flesh. He starts with Abraham and He ends up Israel, a nation. He starts with one guy, an individual, and a nation develops. He starts that you are born again and then you grow into full maturity in Christ. You start with the incorruptible seed to being born again. And then pretty soon you are in the fullness of Christ. It is amazing. He starts with disciples, just twelve of them, and it goes and develops into world evangelism.

So when God does something He just likes to do it in a progressive way because, well, that is just who He is. So He goes from Abraham, an individual, to a family. And who is the head of the family? Who started the family? Jacob. Jacob started the family. Then He went from a family to a tribe. Where do we catch the tribe? How many people were in the tribe when the tribe started? Seventy, seventy people were in the tribe and those seventy people left and went down into Egypt. The tribe developed into what? A nation. And we see them at Sinai and they are this nation. But it is a nation that started way back with one guy, Abraham. And then the nation develops in Acts 15 into what?—this international scene. And finally, Isaiah 2 prophesies that it is going to become a universal situation. And then eventually in Revelation 21, by the time we get there it is a whole new heaven and a new earth. But it all started with one guy and it just keeps progressively developing and getting bigger and bigger and bigger.

It was the same kind of thing when He started with the tabernacle. It was this little tent of a tabernacle where God was dwelling out in the middle of nowhere. And the tabernacle developed into what? They finally developed it into a temple. Well then the temple developed into what? It developed into Christ in the flesh, God with a body. Then God with a body—Christ in the flesh—said, “It is best that I go away.” They said, “Oh, no, no. Stay here. It would be better if You just stayed here and be Christ in the flesh.” And He said, “No, you guys do not understand anything. I need to go away.” They said, “No, stay here. Stay in the flesh.” “No, no. I need to go away because I need to develop into

what?—the church.” And the church is going to develop into?—the next thing coming will be the kingdom. And the two will become one. And after the kingdom, we will go into eternity. And it is like everything God does He just, pop, pop, pop along the way, does it progressively and it keeps developing. That is just the way He likes to unfold things. That is our God and it is really neat.

So, God has a plan and God has a goal. So the key concept number three is God is going with purpose towards a goal. So, we first learned that is an activity of God that is the basis of our salvation, not just an idea. Then we learned that God is going to do His activity progressively. Little by little it is going to unfold. But thirdly we learn that God is going with purpose towards a goal.

Key Concept #3

God is not random.

**He is going with purpose
toward a goal.**

Now when I grew up, well, I used to read the paper back home. And my favorite philosopher, my little guy that I read all the time was a guy named Hambone. Now some of you, if you are not from the South, you did not grow up in the South, you never read Hambone. Hambone was this old country boy. And Hambone used to say, “Some folks don’t get nowhere cause they weren’t going nowhere in the first place.” I thought, “That

is a lot of wisdom in that.” Even at Bible College some folks do not get anywhere because they were not going anywhere to begin with.

When you set a goal, you start heading toward the goal then you get somewhere. Oftentimes when you are just random, you know, you may, but oftentimes when you are random you do not end up anywhere. You can just go around in circles if you are not careful.

Well, God is not random. We know that because Jesus was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There is nothing random about that. God had a goal and He is going with purpose towards that goal. And we see that we, in 2 Peter 3:13, we, according to His promise are “looking for a new heaven wherein dwells righteousness.” We are somewhat in sync with God’s goal. What does God want to do? Well, He reveals it in Scripture. Here is God’s goal. And you can bet your bottom dollar God is going to accomplish His goal.

The first is found in Numbers 14:21. He says, “Truly as I live.” What does that mean? It means if I am God and I am alive, this is going to happen. And He is God and He is alive. And as truly as He is God and He is living and He is the living God, here is what is going to happen—“All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” The whole earth is going to be filled with the glory of the Lord. That is God’s goal. That is God’s purpose. It will happen if He is alive and He is God. And last time I heard He is still alive and He is still God. And He is progressively, little by little, accomplishing it.

You turn on the news today and you read what is happening in the Middle East. You know what is happening? God is little by little, progressively, accomplishing His goal. And that is why it is so good to step back and see the big picture so we do not get weird when we are found in a little section of history, because God will accomplish that goal. All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

Now He says it again in Habakkuk 2:14. He says, “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” Well, how do the waters cover the sea? Pretty well? What a colloquial expression. Well, that is the way the earth is going to be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. And His ultimate fulfillment will be found in Revelation where you see, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men. He will dwell with them. They shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God” (Revelation 21:3).

This is something that God has always wanted. And our potential is to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ and to live like Christ on earth and to rule for God. That is what God has always wanted. That is His desire.

Where is God going with His program of redemption? What is He going to do? He is going to fill the earth with His glory. That is where God is headed. Are you in sync with God? Do you have as your goal the same goal that God has as His goal? Do you really understand and know God’s goal? Because if you do not know God’s goal and you are not walking in step with God, it is like you may hear Jesus say to you the same thing that He had to say to Peter. “Get behind Me, you adversary! Get behind Me, Satan. You are not walking with Me, you are against Me.” You need to get with the program. And the program is to fill the earth with His glory.

Well, the question remains then, what is His glory? Well the answer is this: God will be glorified when the earth is filled with people who live like Jesus Christ. And we, according to His promise, are looking for the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells. He called you, 2 Thessalonians 2:14, “by our gospel for the obtaining of [what?]” The gospel will enable you to obtain what?—the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**God will be glorified when the earth
is filled with people who live like Christ.**

***“According to His promise, we are looking
for new heavens and a new earth in which
righteousness dwells.”***

2 Peter 3:13

**Do you see God’s view of the
chief end of man?**

As the Westminster Confession says, “The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.” It has all been, from beginning to end, about having such a relationship with God that He could be your progenitor and He could put in you His own life. And He does that through Jesus Christ so that now today we already have the life of Christ in us. And the life we are living by faith really is the life of Christ. We are dead but we are alive and we are alive with His life. And He wants to fill the earth with His glory. Right now He is doing it through the church. And when the church comes together and there are two or three together, Christ is in the midst. And Christ wants to fill us with His dynamic life and His glory, which oftentimes is revealed in love, because God is love.

The world is able to look on and observe and see God is alive. How do you know God is alive? I know it because Jesus Christ is meeting in the midst of those two or three who are loving each other so much, in such a way that is so observable that we can tell that God is a living God and He is alive. And the earth is being filled with the glory and dynamic of God who so loved the world that He gave Jesus Christ. And these people are living in such a way that we know they have a relationship with Jesus Christ because they are giving themselves in ministry to one another and to the rest of the world. And we can

see the Spirit and dynamic and life of Jesus Christ in and through them. And so we know God is living.

And that is largely what we should be doing now as the people of God. And if we fall short of that glory, the glory of that kind of love, we have no excuse because grace means God is doing it and He has given us sufficient grace to be able to accomplish that. No matter what our circumstance of life is we have that ability to live the life because it is Him living the life in and through us. He is working in us both to will and to do and to cause this to take place. We have to just rest and yield and allow it to take place.

So it is quite an amazing thing that goes on here. So that is His glory. It is the same old issue. It has not changed. What did God want from the beginning? He wanted a people that would rule for Him. He said, "Adam. Why don't you rule for Me? Hey Adam, I will even make you a helpmeet. I will make you a woman because you are going to need it. You are going to need a lot of help." And He just wanted them to rule for Him. But what did they choose? Yeah, Eve was deceived in the thing. Adam was not deceived in the thing. Adam chose, "Well, you know what? I would rule for You, Lord, but right now I have got to please this woman." So he bit into it and everything changed. And what God has always wanted was a man that would rule for Him. And so from Adam on the story of man has been well he will almost rule for God.

What was so great about David when you get to him? It was simply this. He was not some kind of perfect guy or anything at all. It was just that God could say, "He was a man after My own heart." I mean, he wanted to rule for God even though he stumbled all over himself. At least he wanted to. And a greater One than David has come. That is Jesus Christ. And in Jesus Christ is the Abba Father. When He was in the Garden of Gethsemane He was crying, "Abba, Father." All He wanted to know was this: "God, You have got to tell Me. If I am supposed to go to the cross tomorrow and lay My life down and be silent and all that stuff that is in the prophecies, I just have to know, is this really Your will?" Because He was still human and it was like, "This is not going to be easy, is it?" It is like, "Is this really Your will? All I got to know is, is this Your will, God?" And

He was crying, “Abba, Father what is Your will? I have got to know Your will.” And He prayed and God showed Him the will. And once He understood completely and thoroughly and came to the grips that this is the will of God, then He set His face like flint and He went. And it was for the joy that was set before Him. Pleasing the Father, He went. Yes, our salvation was a byproduct, but ultimately He wanted to rule for God and He wanted to please the Father.

And now He has sent the Spirit of His Son into my heart and your heart. And His Spirit is crying within you and me, “Abba, Father!” And we want to please the Father and do His will. There was a time in your life you did not want anything to do with God’s will. But now you want God’s will. And the Holy Spirit is in you lusting to the point of envy. There is a jealousy that goes on, a fight. You know how it can be. You know it in human relationships how jealousy can get in. But the Holy Spirit wants all of us. And it is not that we need more of the Holy Spirit. It is just that He needs more of us. And we need to yield to Him and let Him have all of us, because if He gets all of us He is going to lead us on into the perfect will of God. And the Abba Father that is within us because of Christ. And we will be filled.

And the earth begins even now through the church to be filled with the glory of God. But that is not the ultimate. It will not be until Jesus returns that we see the ultimate and we see the kingdom. Well, the real ultimate will be after the kingdom and the new heaven and the new earth are established wherein dwell righteousness. And that is why Peter says we are looking for that. Is your goal the same as Peter’s goal? Do you have this great hope to see God’s goal accomplished on earth? I mean, it is no problem with God’s will being done in heaven, is there? I mean, didn’t He tell us to pray even on earth, pray that His will would be done where?—on earth. Why? How? Just like it is in heaven (cf. Matthew 6:10). God is not having a problem having His will done in heaven. And everybody says, “Well, let’s just go to heaven and have God’s will done.” And God is saying, “I would really like to get My will done on earth, thank you very much.” He says, “I have always had it done in heaven. That is not a problem. I would like to see My will done on earth. That is My goal.” Heaven is easy. He wants to see it done on earth. And

begin now through me and through you as we yield ourselves to Him completely. That has always been His goal.

Well, as we begin the first act we see that God is going to build a nation through the channel that He has provided. And we are going to look, starting next week we are going to look at Genesis 12 through 1 Kings 10. This is the first section of Scripture that has to do with the history of redemption because God is going to build a nation. It is going to be His channel to provide redemption. And the redemption is the theme, the heart of the history, the prophecy, the poetry, the whole drama of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament. And it is going to prepare us for the Messiah to come. And then the Messiah is going to be provided. So it is clear that God's program develops progressively.

And there are three major acts. There is the rise of His program. There is the fall of His program, you might say. And there is the rebuilding of the nation to prepare for Christ. And that is what is promised in Genesis 12. And it is accomplished from Genesis 12 to 1 Kings 10. That is our first big section of Scripture.

So, before the drama begins what we are going to see in Genesis 1–11 is we are going to see the creation and fall of man because God is just setting the stage, showing us that we really need God. We cannot do it without Him. We are dead in the water without Him. Then we see the destruction through the flood in 6–9. Then we see everybody scattered at Babel because it is the same old story, who will rule for God?

Now it ends at verse 9 and you really begin, you might say, with what God wants to do in Genesis 11:10. What takes place there? In Genesis 11:10, what happens? You have the beginning of the Hebrew race, which is the channel for redemption. You had Adam who was the head of the original race. You had Noah who was the head of a new race after the flood. But now you have Abraham, the head of a new race, or a new channel of redemption. We will see that.

And so as we compare Genesis 1–11, dealing with the whole world, Genesis 12 is going to shift right down to one guy. And we are going to focus on him. And while 1–11 is devoted to heaven and earth in general, 12–50, thirty-nine chapters are devoted to one man and his family.

So, how would you sum up what God is showing or doing in Genesis 1–11? What do you think is happening there? I can only sum it up as this: God is setting the stage for redemption. He has selectively chosen certain things to reveal to us that set the stage for the drama that He wants to talk about. And it is a drama. From Abraham on it is just a big drama. And if you love drama you will love the Bible because it is the drama of redemption. And Genesis 1–11 sets that stage for us to go.

So, you know, He alone is God. Without Him we are dead in the water. And so God is showing us the great need for a salvation and His intervention there.

Now as we go through you will note this: What do the first two chapters of Genesis and the last two chapters of Revelation have in common? What does Genesis 1 and 2 and Revelation 21 and 22 have in common? There is no sin in Genesis 1 and 2. And there is no sin in Revelation 21 and 22. In the first two chapters of the Bible there is no sin. In the last two chapters of the Bible there is no sin. What is all the rest of the Bible about? It is about sin and how to be redeemed from that sin. That is why we say the theme has always been the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is largely what God is doing.

Now, that cry from Genesis 3:15 is going to develop until it is answered. And God is for us. And part of the reason God is for us, I think not only because He created us in His image, but one of the practical reasons that is a byproduct of that is this: Did man invent sin? Never. Man did not invent sin. Satan invented sin. And that is one of those things in Genesis 1–11 we wish we knew more about, isn't it? How did Satan invent sin? I wish I knew more about that. All I know is he was given a position and he decided he did not like it. You know. He was given this position and he just said, "Nope, I do not want that." And he moved out of his place and ever since everything has been messed up. And he

went and he infected man with it too. So man did not originally start with sin and man is not going to end with sin either, because of the theme of redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And Satan is finally going to be cast where he belongs because hell was prepared, eternal destruction and Ghenna was prepared for Satan and his angels not for man. It is a shame that people choose to go there with him.

In closing, let me ask you this: How would you sum up how we learned about these different issues in Genesis 1–11? All right, think about it. I am going to give you a statement. You tell me whether you learned this from what God did or from what God said.

We learn in Genesis 1–11 God is a God to be feared. How do you learn that—from what God said or from what God did?—from what He did.

God is able to create and destroy. How did you learn that?—from what He did. He did it. You saw it. It happened.

He is patient with sinners but He judges. How did you learn that? From the way God did, from the way God acted.

He is a loving God but He is also righteous. You learned that from what He did.

He is concerned about His earthly creation and He is concerned personally because He came and talked to guys. How did you learn that? I mean, because He came down and He did it. He sat with them.

He has complete control over His creation. How did you learn that in Genesis 1–11?—from what He did. He caused a flood that breaks upon everything.

He is a God of new beginnings. How did you learn that? He put Noah in that ark and brought him out and said, “Hey, start over. I know it is muddy but do what you can.”

He rescues those who trust in Him. How did you learn that?—from what God did.

And He keeps His promises. How did you learn that and how do you know that?—from what He is still doing.

Our salvation is directly related to an activity. It is what God is doing, not just concepts and ideas there.

So what else does God reveal about Himself? What I see is this. God reveals that He is a lover, that He has a beloved Son, and that there is a spirit of love between them. He is a triunity. And that is the basic foundation stone of all communication. Apart from this foundation stone there is no such thing as communication because He is the eternal God who has always been in perfect communication with Himself. There has always been a lover, God the Father. There has always been a beloved Son to receive that love, Jesus Christ. And there has always been a Holy Spirit who is the spirit of love between them. That has always existed. That is why communication between people is so cool.

If I can love you properly according to the Word of God, it is so neat because there is a God kind of communication going on. And that is part of the eternal God. We have that because we are created in His image. I mean, think about it. You can sit in this room and even your brain is a tri-part. And you can sit here and you can think about what is being said, and you can have a conversation with yourself about it, and then a third part of your brain can remain to make a judgment about what you are talking about to yourself. Isn't that weird? Even your brain has a tri-part relationship. And it is because we are made in the image of God who is a triune God who has always been a lover, had a beloved Son and a Spirit of love exists between them.

And His purpose of creation is for His own glory and that largely has to do with a manifestation of who He is and He is love. And He decided to create us and pour out His love upon us regardless, uninfluenced, because He is just that kind of person. No wonder Jesus would come along and say, "Let My life be in you and you will prove to be a loving

person. You will love your neighbor as yourself. You will love God with all your heart. And nothing can stop it because you have My grace, My working, My ability in you.” You know, now that is life.

Salvation is what God has done, what God is doing, and what God is going to do. And I find real security in that myself. He started it; He will finish it.

And we will begin looking next week at the first act in the drama of redemption as it begins with Abraham.

Let’s pray.

Lord, help us as we go through to see the drama that is involved in redemption. But to see it not just from our perspective Lord, but I just need to see it afresh from Your perspective. And I just pray that You would show us all the potential we have to be part of Your plan, to be part of Your glory. And that the love wherewith You have loved us could truly live and abide in us to where we love You and love our neighbor as ourselves and have a special love for believers among ourselves so that Your glory is brought to earth. And I cannot think of anything more glorious than this kind of love. Lord, we will be the first to admit we have fallen short of the glory. We thank You that Jesus Christ has not fallen short at all in any point in any way. And as He lives in and through us, we can see that we can be brought to maturity.

Cause us to grow up and be 100% in sync with Your theme, redemption, and the glory You want to bring through Jesus Christ in our lives now to this world. Let Your kingdom come, we pray. Let Your will be done on

earth as it is in heaven, for Your glory. As Jesus said,
“Abide in Me, My words abide you that you might have
My joy and that My joy might be full in you.” Affect
redemption in us, Lord. And help us to see it more and
more as we go through this class. I pray in Jesus’ name,
amen.

Thank you for listening to this lecture brought to you by Sowing Circle and Blue Letter Bible ministries. The Lord has provided the **resources**, so that these materials may be used free of charge. However, the materials are subject to copyrights by the author and Blue Letter Bible. Please, **do not** alter, sell, or distribute this material in any way without our express permission and the permission of the author.

We invite you to visit our website at www.Blueletterbible.org or www.BLBi.org
Our site provides evangelical teaching and study tools for use in the home or the church.
Our curriculum includes: classes for new believers, lay education courses, and Bible-college level content. The lectures are taught from a range of evangelical traditions.

You can email us at: BLBi@BlueLetterBible.org

And our mailing address is:

Blue Letter Bible

22431 Antonio Parkway, Suite B160-618

Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 USA