

## BIBLE MYSTERY AND BIBLE MEANING OLD TESTAMENT

### Lesson 2

#### THE UNFOLDING OF ORIGIN

*Required Reading: Genesis 2:4b through 11 omitting genealogies.*

The writers of the Bible were not concerned with time, that is to say, that the world began at a particular time or that we evolved physically in a specific manner. As there are certainly histories of other cultures that pre-existed the Hebrew race, it is easy to see that we should view the initial stories from these other cultures as myths. Also, we should begin to understand that the timeless spiritual Truth found in parts of the Old and New Testaments evolved through inspired Hebrew writers. At times they borrowed stories from other cosmologies as settings to describe man's beginning relationship with One God.

The Old Testament is based upon principles or law, and here we are not referring only to the "Ten Commandments." Law is not cold and unfeeling, but is understood to mean the way things are. Dr. Irwin Gregg stated it this way, "*God's nature is expressing itself according to its own innate qualities and characteristics here on this earthly plane.*" We are on this earthly plane to learn and to grow in consciousness. The Old Testament presents "laws" that we learn as we begin to understand; it shows us how we can use these laws to help us grow spiritually. The stories of the Bible are our stories and how we begin to recognize our "True" connection to God. The primary difference between the Old and New Testaments is that while the Old is based on "law," the New is based on "love," and this is a wonderful part of our total spiritual growth.

We learn to understand that each story is about our evolving consciousness. Dr. Al Salazar stated "We are not here to cater to the human condition, but to transcend it."<sup>i</sup>

In addition to the creation story, the remaining four stories of Genesis are not history; they should be looked at as parables, or a cosmology of life. These stories explain the real nature of our life on earth, for within them we find a textbook on both spiritual and psychological growth. We are here to learn about our nature, and these stories give us the basics to how this great universe works.

#### LITERARY SOURCES OF THE PENTATEUCH

The Pentateuch is a compilation of four documents, and includes the Books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. An excellent book regarding the literary sources of the Old Testament, and related history, is Who Wrote the Bible by Richard E. Friedman.<sup>ii</sup>

The J-Document (compiled about 850 B.C.) is based upon an early Judean history. It is known as the Yahwistic or Jehovistic document because the consonants YHWH or JHVH are used to designate the Deity. Its style is that of the oriental story-teller, simple, picturesque, and dramatic. Jahveh (translated Lord) is depicted as a manlike Deity—an eminent God.

The E-Document (compiled about 760 B.C.) is based on an Ephraimite history (a tribe of Northern Israel). It is called the Elohistic Document, because it uses Elohim as its name for God.

Its literary style is more formal and precise. Its traditions are told to reinforce religious ideas. Elohim (God) is a God of Spirit, issuing his decrees from afar.

The D-Document (found in the temple in 621 B.C.) is a compilation of laws and customs, inspired by the prophetic tradition and discovered during the reign of Josiah. It is believed to have included most of the present Book of Deuteronomy, and was accepted as the law of the land.

The P-Document (probably compiled during the Babylonian Captivity) was prepared by the Jewish priesthood, known as the Priestly Document, it reconstructs national history. It pays special attention to genealogy and numbers, and emphasizes the origin of legal and ceremonial institutions. Elohim (God) is seen, as in the E-document, as being transcendent, ruling from afar.

In this course the goal is to foster a metaphysical understanding of Bible stories. It may be helpful to understand the time frame in which the stories were written. To give a time reference to the Pentateuch it was written after the time of King David.

## DEFINING OUR TERMS

Every story in the Bible is centered on a specific state of mind. It is important to understand that every proper name gives us a clue to the level of conscious demonstration at any particular moment. We will also see that there is movement in consciousness, or an activity. We are always in motion.

Every person is unique, and yet we all grow by going through similar experiences. Although the stories are different in their settings, and from different perspectives, they are leading us to the same conclusion. We must grow out of our self-imposed bondage and return to a conscious understanding of our true connection with God. WE ARE ONE.

The main character within every story represents every individual. We are each at a specific level of our growth; the other characters within the story represent different aspects within the main character.

In looking at metaphysical Bible study, there are three areas where we learn to focus.

The first topic is proper names. Whether a person or a place, every proper name in the Bible has a meaning. If we speak of Egypt, it is a consciousness of bondage, darkness, ignorance or the subconscious. Eden on the other hand means harmonious, productive state in which all possibilities of growth exist.

The second topic is key words. Water is a movement in consciousness: fluid, and can be either positive or negative. A structure is a level of mind; a house would be very stable; a temple represents an elevated state of consciousness, whereas a tent would be temporary.

The third topic is numbers. Seven indicates spiritual completion. God created for six days and rested on the seventh, which can also refer to as physical completion. Twelve is spiritual perfection, while four is an indefinite but completed time. If you add a zero to the end of any number it intensifies the meaning.

This is but a brief view of the names, words and numbers that we deal with in our study. There will be additional information as we move through the individual studies.

We are working with inspired stories in this lesson which are intended to evoke questions and answers within the individual. Each story contains multiple lessons, however; our study will highlight but a few.

## **ADAM AND EVE**

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The Garden of Eden represents the infinity of thought, a realm of infinite ideas of good. It is a place where everything that is to our benefit is at our disposal, welling up within us and flowing out from within to seek expression. Adam represents man (kind) and we are that man in expression at the moment. What this means is that we do not have to create anything. We do not create our good by thinking it into being because in this good we already have our being. As you read the story you will notice that while Adam did not have to create anything in this veritable garden of good, he did have to cultivate it. He was required to keep it and maintain it. Man can partake of everything in this place; eat use, enjoy, and find strength and sustenance by doing it. Man can have anything within the garden, except one thing, and that is, he must not partake of the tree of good and evil.

Adam and Eve represent different aspects of every individual. Adam signifies the thought, and Eve stands for the emotions. Adam makes the appearance first, for the thought always comes first, the emotional response comes from our thoughts. Our intellect, our thought process (Adam) is told not to eat of the tree of good and evil, and yet the emotional nature (Eve) responds by questioning why, what will it hurt?

We do have that serpent which represents the *lower nature or carnal mind*, the human intellect. It slithers along, creeping into our thoughts, allowing us to think that we are servants to outer appearances as we begin to observe, to evaluate and turn our thoughts from Spirit. We now see limitation, sickness, and disharmony for we see separation where it does not exist. We have separated ourselves from the truth of our being. Let us be very clear; although we can separate ourselves from understanding our true nature, **WE CAN NEVER BE SEPARATED FROM GOD.** There is no duality.

Our Adam/Eve consciousness can choose to eat the forbidden fruit of judgment. When we judge at any level we live in fear, greed, and envy; we have sacrificed our innocence; we are naked in the garden. The choice is always ours; we may choose not to judge and in doing so

name everything good. In seeing only good we continue to live in Eden, a garden of unending possibilities. The care of our garden remains with each individual.

Adam/Eve consciousness is aware that the Lord is eminent, is always with them, walking in the garden, speaking to them, totally a part of their nature. We walk in this Adam/Eve consciousness and even as we are sent from the garden, the Lord goes with us. We are never alone. The Lord is the law; the way things are. There is order in our lives.

## CAIN AND ABEL

The story of Cain and Abel is the first of several stories that deal with brothers. It happens that in this culture, the “Law of Primogeniture” was the order of the day. The older brother was by right of birth entitled to the father’s blessing and to a larger portion of the family inheritance. Although it was his birthright, Bible stories have quite a different outcome.

Each brother represents a distinct facet of our consciousness. The name Cain means *possession* and represents our earthly *nature*. Cain had a very basic understanding; Cain represents sense man, the material man. Abel represents *breath*, which is of the mental realm. The mental man’s actions are always ascending. Abel was a shepherd and sheep represent good, kind, and pure thoughts. Abel was a shepherd caring for them; Abel was being.

The two tendencies, when allowed to express in our lifestyle, manifest as acquiring and possessing versus contemplation. We can busy ourselves in living our life but this is only secondary to our spiritual growth. This is why God was accepting of Abel’s offering and not Cain’s.

Cain slays Abel. The doer in us rises and metaphorically destroys the feeling/spiritual nature. We want to succeed in life, and we have repeatedly been told that this is connected to our possessions. The reality is that these Bible stories have everything to do with creating or manifesting a particular quality of life that is in perfect harmony with a particular state of consciousness, that being the consciousness of our Oneness in God.

The Cain consciousness is “marked.” This is a reminder that God’s Love is greater than the total of any and all of our mistakes.

Following the activity in mind identified as Cain (*the physical*, destroying Abel; *the mental-subduing the spiritual*), a new thought is born to the Adam/Eve consciousness; it is the Seth awareness. Seth is representative of a *law of destiny*. Destiny is not predestination, for we are given free will. It is important to realize that while we have free will and can choose our own course, we are created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, it stands to reason that it is our destiny to realize and demonstrate our spiritual perfection. We are forever one in the consciousness of God. We cannot, even with extreme will, ever get out of this consciousness. God created us in his image, to show forth the fullness of our understanding. It is this awareness that shows us our true nature is one of goodness, wholeness, and oneness. We will continue to grow no matter how often we try to limit our spiritual growth. The gracious activity of a loving Father has always provided us the opportunity, through the Seth capacity, constantly to move forward.

The story of Adam and Eve and their sons is a blueprint for all of the Old Testament stories. For example, through our Seth consciousness we can return to the Garden of Eden, a place of unending possibilities.

## THE FLOOD

This narrative can be somewhat difficult to read, animals two by two, or seven of every animal. The reason for this confusion is that this is a compilation of both the J and the P documents.

Noah “found favor in the eyes of Jehovah.” He was instructed to “Build ye an ark.” An ark is a structure; a dwelling place; and a place of *safe habitation*. This then suggests a consciousness of protection.

The metaphysical meaning for Noah is “*rest*.” We begin to build our ark, as we turn within for unity with God. Our ark is a sacred place within us. **God is our ark.** We must abide in this ark, not just turn to it occasionally. “I am with you always.” Our ark is a place of peace, where we choose to spend time. It does not matter what other thoughts we have entertained. When we learn to reside within our ark of peace, the intellectual or material thoughts of the day do not matter. We are not of the world, but in the world.

God has already provided for us on every possible level. Every thought has been thought; every solution has been found. What we accept as the Truth of ourselves is our choice. Take no thought. We need only listen and allow Spirit to reveal itself to us. It is then that we find peace by residing in our ark. Noah was sowing a place of peace in consciousness by turning within, allowing Spirit to manifest within him. When we use our Noah consciousness, we are protected from anything in the outer that has previously been our norm.

Noah was aware there was to be a flood, and this is absolutely a fact that we need to understand. To a person who dwells in negativity, a flood is devastating. Metaphysically a like consciousness will consistently reproduce on a similar level of demonstration, so we get more and more of the same condition. This is law. To the pure in heart, a flood can be inspiration, a flood of joy. There is a very old saying that it never rains but it pours. The story of Noah, as are many in the Bible, is oftentimes gravely misunderstood. It is not a story of destruction but one that explains one of our basic beliefs in Truth-- “law of expression” or like produces like. When we turn within to our ark, we are keeping our thoughts in alignment with our true nature.

Now if you go a bit further, after the flood, Noah slides back a bit. Noah became a husbandman, or a keeper of vines. Well, he had a bit too much from his vines and became drunk. It would appear that he was substituting one kind of spirits for our major Spirit, God. In this portion of the story, Noah is in a tent, which means a *temporary state of consciousness*. He awakens, as we all do, and resolves not to go that way again.

This is a story of reaping what we sow, and the importance of constant communication with Spirit. As we continue to take the time to turn within, we reap the peace that is God.

## TOWER OF BABEL

The beginning is quite promising. It says, "Now the whole earth was of one language, and one speech." This speaks of the unity in the inner thought and feeling and the outer expression.

The story of the unfinished Tower of Babel happens on the plain of Shinar, *a divided mind, a belief in two powers* (duality). In the land of Babylon there are ziggurats, a pyramid like structure with stairs on the outside wall ascending toward heaven. Man began to believe that God was somewhere outside of himself.

God is All. Spirit is not only everywhere within the world but also within every man. We must turn within, for to look outside of ourselves causes confusion, and so we not only lose the ability to speak to God but also to communicate effectively with each other. The Lord said "let us go down and there confuse their language." The people chose to live in duality, and the law manifests as confusion, or babel. We are reminded of the saying, "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." (Psalms 127:1)

## ASSIGNMENT

1. Write a detailed account of at least three of the spiritual truths or laws that were presented in this lesson.
2. Discuss or write about the introduction of duality and its consequences in the Adam and Eve story.
3. From the basic Fundamentals Divine Science class, what is the Law of Expression
  - a. How does the flood story illustrate this law?
  - b. What do the animals 2 by 2 and 7 of every animal mean to you metaphysically?

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