

VICTORY OVER THE NATURE OF THE SERPENT

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Even though this is not my message this morning, I just want to remind us to remember Israel. Remember the hostages. We really can't imagine the pain they're in. For many of them, the pain is both physical and emotional.

Again, I know I say this a lot, but just recently I've kind of been awakened to how much pain there can actually be.

Just a funny little side story: I went hunting a few days ago and I saw a deer so I took my shoes off out there in the desert. I went about a hundred yards going after this deer. Then it began to rain, it got cold, and the sun went down so it got dark. There I was: in wet socks, in the cold, in the dark, walking around trying to find my shoes!

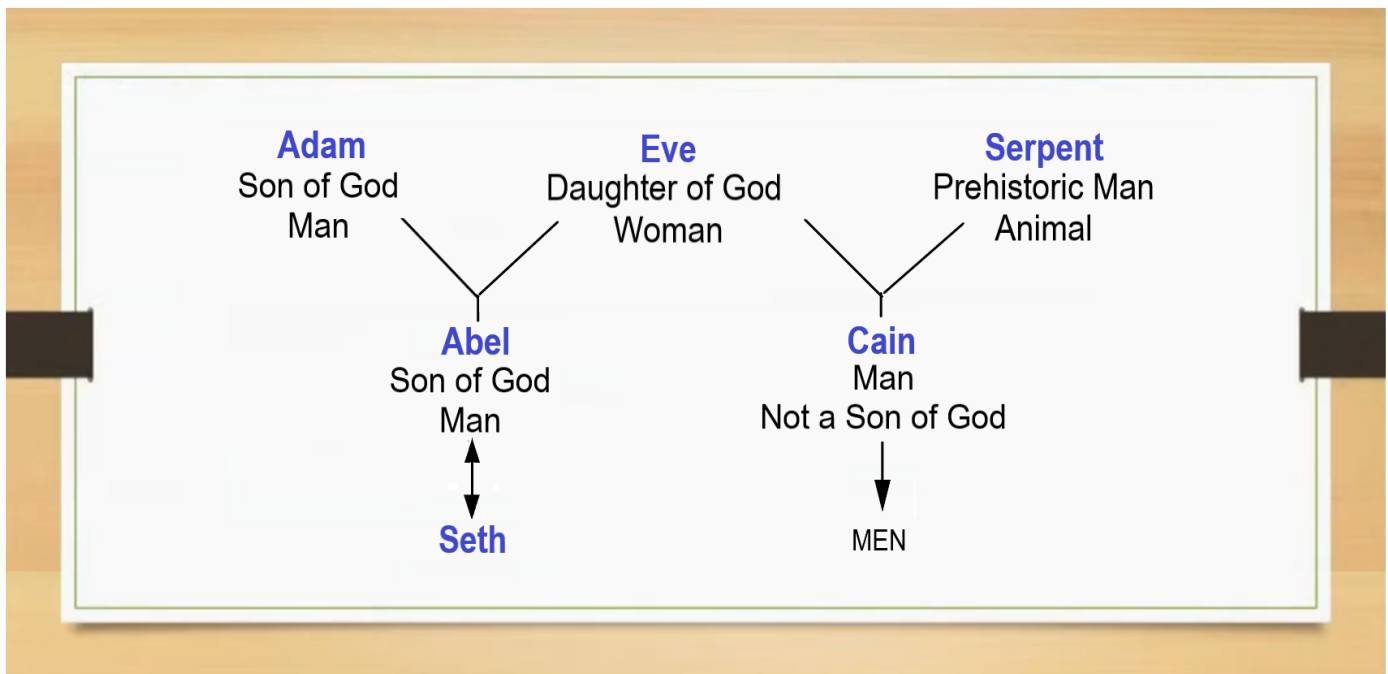
There were rocks and cacti everywhere. Thankfully, I didn't step on too many cacti but on the rocks, it was pretty tough, very painful. I did get through it – and really that's *nothing* – but for me, it was *awful*. I kept praying: Lord, please, help me find my shoes! Forgive me for not paying attention to where I left them. He finally did help me find them. But that's *nothing* compared to what those people in Israel are going through.

Now they're finding out: one of the biggest agencies that's crying out for aid to the Palestinians, about twelve of their members had participated in the October 7th attacks.

All these nations had been giving money to this organization, and now they're finding out that some of their people had participated in the attacks. So now they're beginning to withdraw some of their funds, or they have stopped sending funds, but that just shows the reality of the way things are over there.

This morning we'll continue: we've been on the subject of *the seed of the serpent*. On Thursday, we basically finished up – maybe I can say – *the outline* as to *how it is* that we all have that *seed of the serpent*.

And just to show a little review, we had this slide up before:



We have Adam and Eve, and we know Abel was their son.

Then Abel was, of course, *killed by Cain, his brother*. [Genesis 4:8] We can say *his brother* in the sense that they were raised in the same family. They grew up as *twin brothers* but they had very different *natures*.

We see here *the serpent*, which we know was *a resurrection of the prehistoric man*. We know he was the one who *beguiled Eve*. [2Corinthians 11:3]

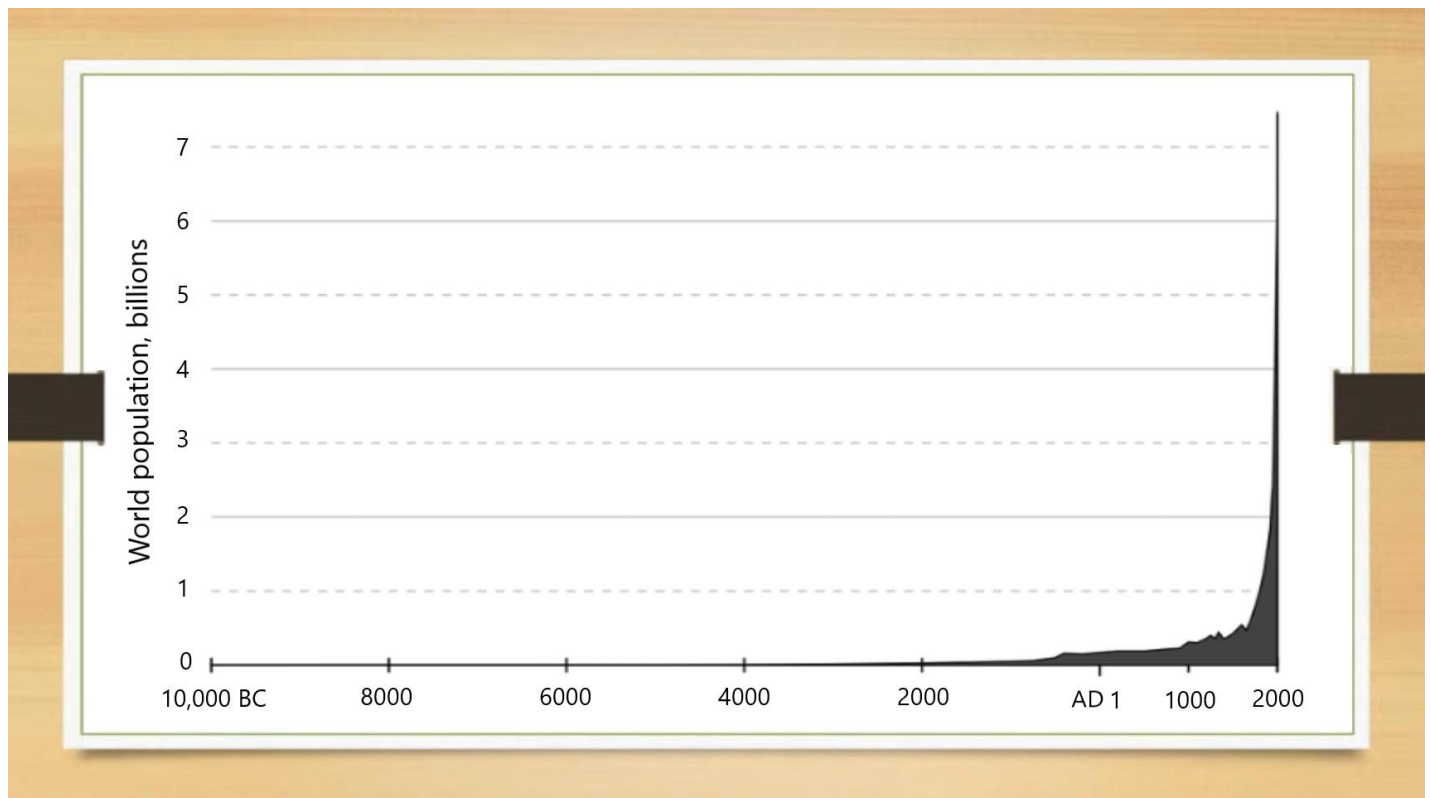
And *Cain* was the *offspring* from that relation. [1John 3:12]

Then we get into Genesis chapter 6. We could continue this chart down a little further: we have those who are called *men* and we have *the sons of God*.

We see in chapter 6, *the sons of God took wives of the daughters of men.* [Genesis 6:2]
So there began to be a *mix of the lines.*

The *sons of God* were no longer a pure line. And by the time it got to *Noah*, there was a *great change in the nature of man.* There was *no longer a pure seed* by the time we get to Noah.

Now I have shown this chart before. This is according to archeologists or I should say: *anthropologists* as far as how they see the population of mankind.



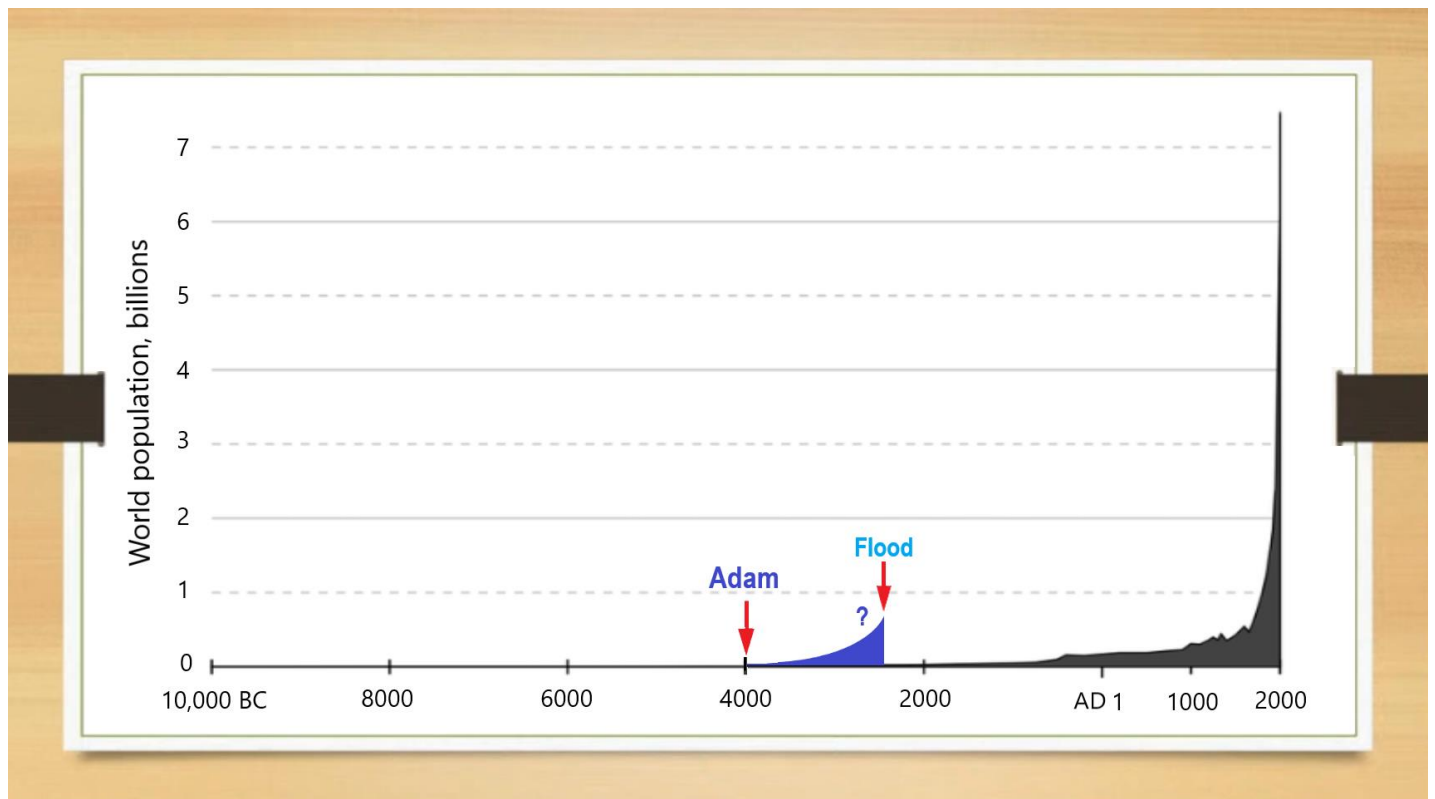
Well we *know* that actually from 4000 BC all the way back to 11 000 BC – so certainly beyond what they have on this chart – there was *nobody* because of the *ice age*. We can say: *all life had been extinguished.*

They want to say: well, there were *a few here* and *a few there* who survived.

We have to remember a couple of things: number one, they didn't have natural gas and heating systems like we do today. They basically had what we would call a *campfire*. That was how they warmed themselves.

We also have to remember that modern man today *does not believe in a resurrection*. So when we consider that, the only thing they *can* say is: there were a few here or there.

But when we look at the winter we just had here in the United States, I have to say: thank God we have electricity and natural gas, or there would have been many more deaths. It was even hard for us here in Phoenix and that wasn't even close to what the rest of the country was going through.



We know that Adam was placed on the earth around 4000 BC and then the population began to grow. It may have gotten up to about *half a billion*, maybe *five hundred million people* and then there was *the flood*. Then it would've dropped back down.

Now somebody could say: how could it have gotten to so many people? Well, we have to remember something: number one, *people were living almost a thousand years*. Right?

And God had told them to *refill the earth*. [Genesis 1:28] Right?

Today if a woman has twelve children, we might think: that's a lot. But fifty years ago, that wasn't really seen as a lot. And even today, it probably wouldn't make the news.

Now there's nothing biblical that really tells us how many children they had. It just says: *they had sons and daughters*. It never really tells us *how many*. But according to some things I've read, as far as what's been taught and handed down to the Jews from generation to generation, some say: they had about *seventy children*.

We might say: oh that's just an unbelievable amount!

Well I have to say: if they were living to *almost a thousand years old*, it really *wouldn't* be as much as *twelve children* for us today.

So if we were to say that they started with *seventy children*. And those *seventy* had *seventy* – or you might say: it says *male and female* – so say: *thirty-five*, and *they* had *thirty-five*. And those *thirty-five* had *thirty-five*. We would soon find that after seven or eight generations, we'd be *amazed* at how many people there would be.

It could actually easily go *beyond* the number I've given.

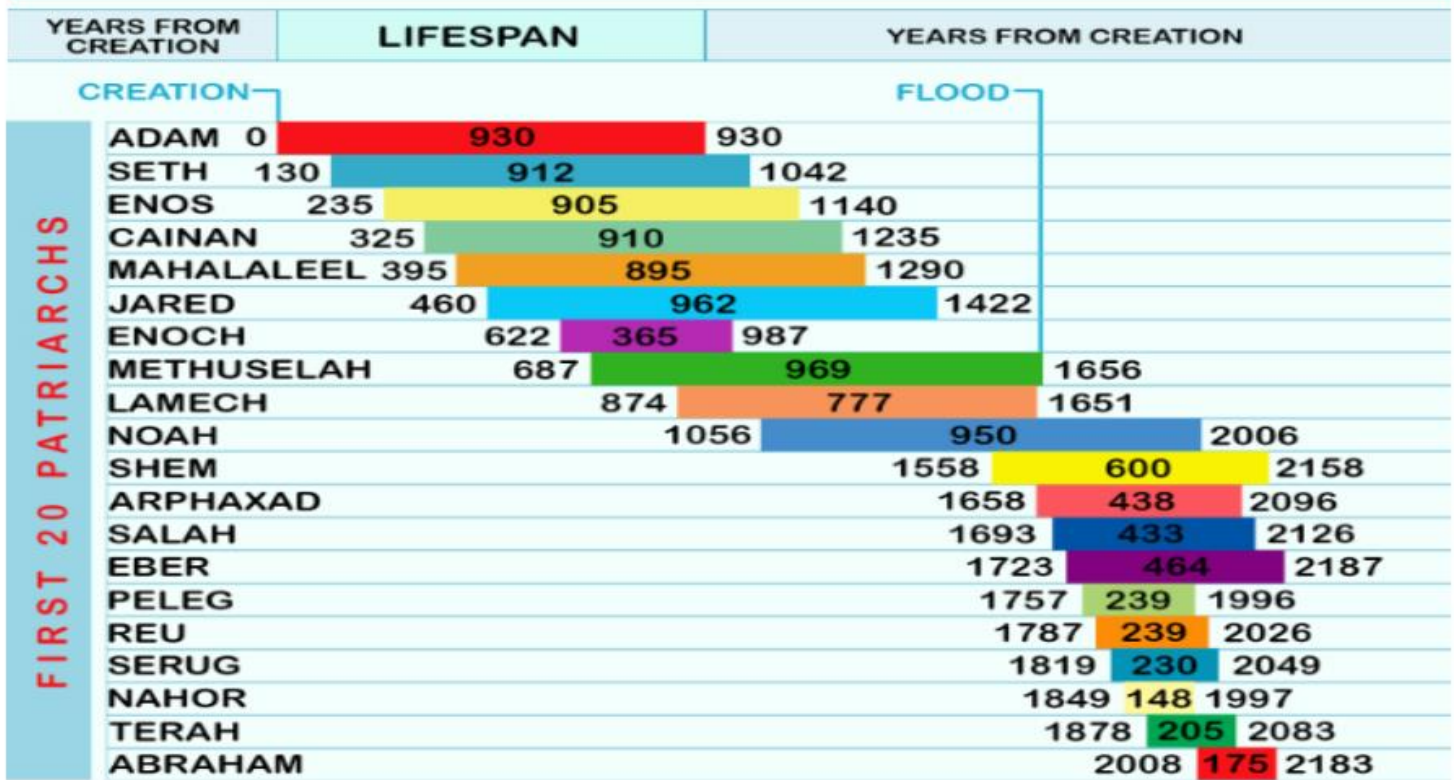
We don't know the exact number but I would not be surprised at all if the population on the earth had been *hundreds of millions* before the flood, and *maybe more*.

When we look at the time right before the flood, we know Adam was 930 years old when he died. [Genesis 5:5] Then I believe Noah was born about 120 years after that.

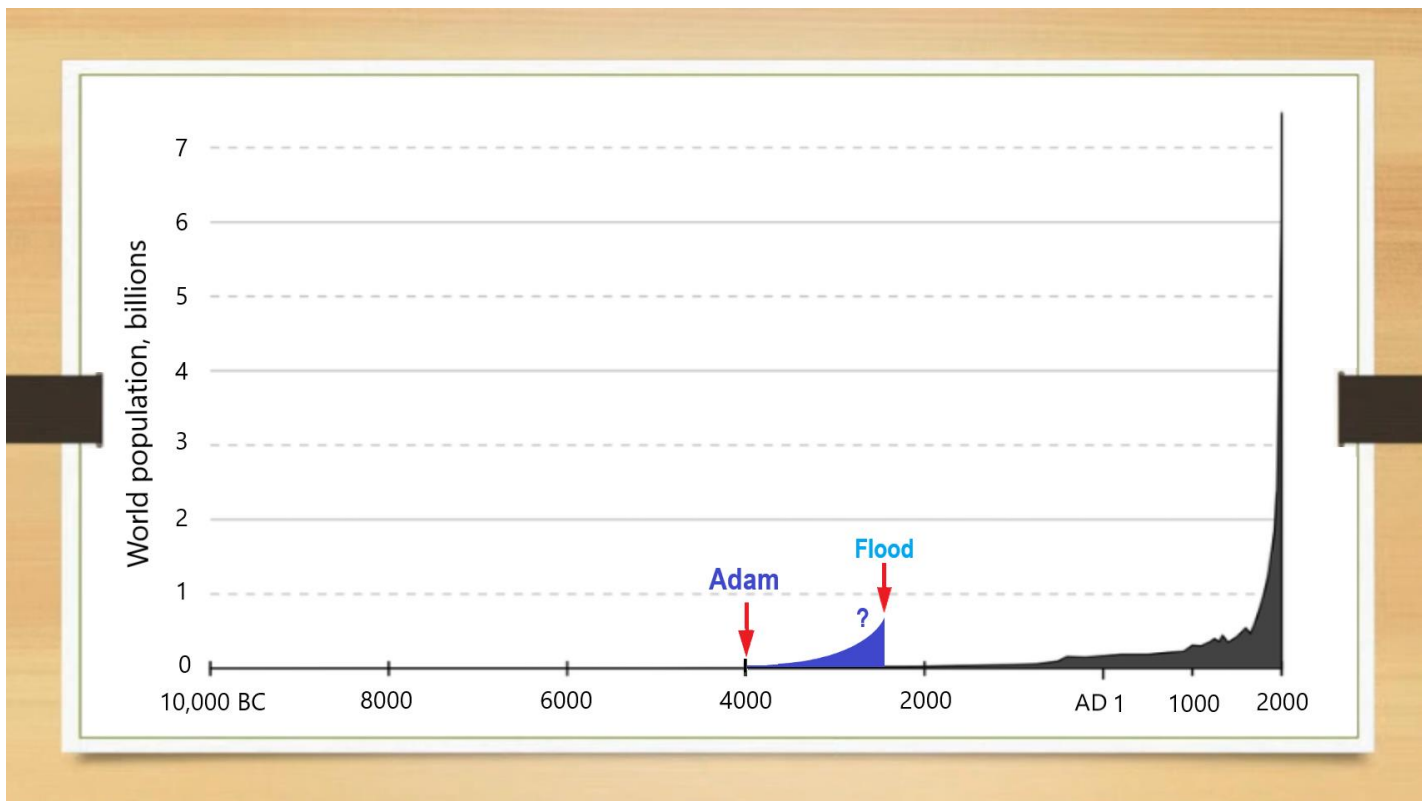
I could probably tell it more precisely with the chart I had the other day.

CHRONOLOGY CHART FROM ADAM TO ABRAHAM

Lifespan of the Biblical Patriarchs

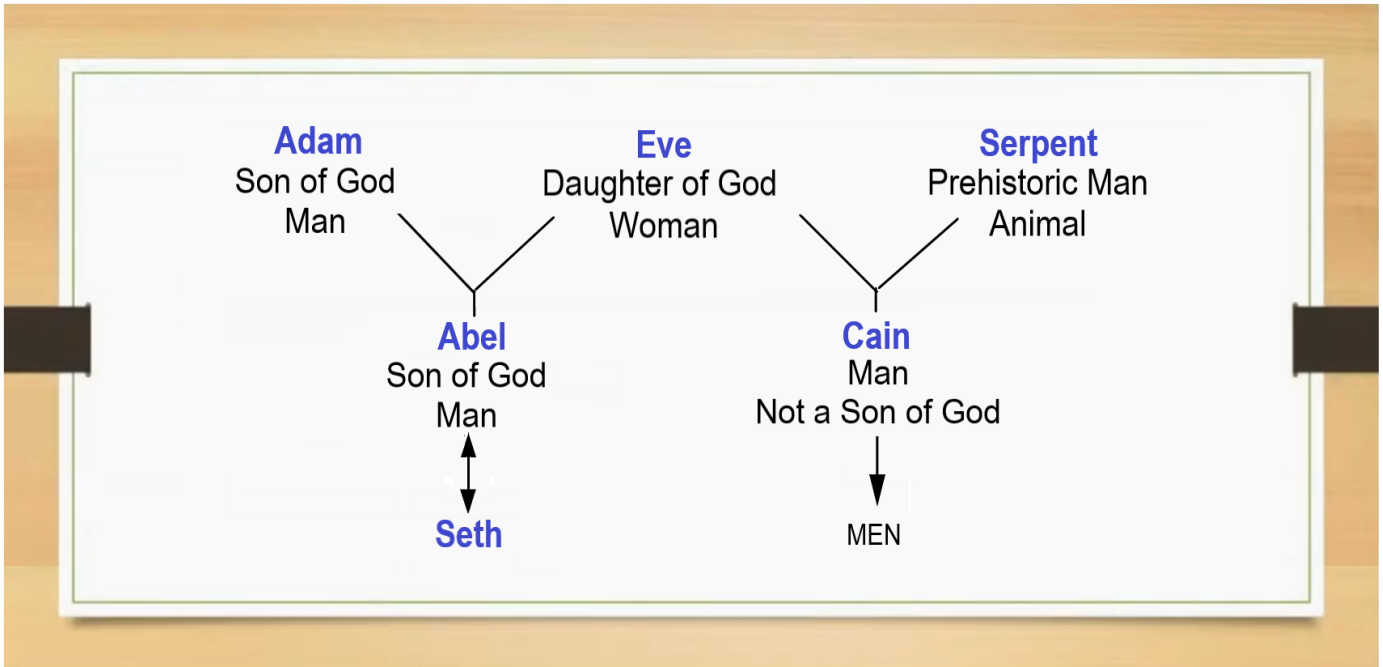


Noah was born 1056 years after Adam had been placed on the earth. Then 600 years later was *the flood*. [Genesis 7:6] So here they have the flood at 1656.



Now if we go back to this chart, at approximately 1656 years after Adam we would see a bubble, an increase in the population, and then it would go back down because *the flood killed everyone except for eight people*. [1Peter 3:20]

Let's go ahead and get back to where we were.



So there was a *mixture* of these two lines.

And on *this side of the flood*, everybody has that *serpent nature*. I have it, you have it, and we *need something* to be able to have the victory over it. Amen?

We know that the victory is in the *Lord Jesus Christ*. He was the one who was *born of a virgin*. [Matthew 1:18] Praise the Lord.

That was not God just – we can say – *displaying a great miracle*, even though yes it was a *great miracle*, but there was *no way* that a man could be – we can say – *born pure* by man and woman.

As David said: *I was shapen in iniquity, in sin my mother conceived me*. [Psalm 51:5] David *knew* he was *born with a sinful nature*. That was *David*, a great man of God. Amen.

So the Lord Jesus Christ was *born of a virgin*. In other words: *God placed that perfect cell of life in her womb*.

Joseph was *not* Jesus's *biological father* – that's a term we have today – nor was Mary his *biological mother* but *her womb* was used to provide the nutrients and to incubate that *seed of life* so that it could come to maturity and be born.

When Jesus Christ was born, he was actually *born The Son of God*.

He wasn't just a *son of God* but he was *The Son of God: the only begotten Son of God*. [John 3:16] Praise the Lord.

We know on that day of the cross: he suffered, he died, he paid the sin-debt for you and me, and *he paved the way* by which you and I can partake of the Tree of Life.

He said: *I am the way*. [John 14:6]

We see in Genesis, *the way had been cut-off*. [Genesis 3:24]

But *by the Lord Jesus Christ*, the way was made open again. And when we receive *the gift of the Holy Ghost*, we receive *eternal life*. [Romans 6:23]

Then if we will subject ourselves to the leadership of the Holy Ghost, we can have the victory over that nature of the serpent. Praise the Lord.

Now let's go ahead and look at what actually happened.

If we go to Genesis 4, I know we've already read this but I just want to read part of it to see the nature of Cain. It says in verse 1:

Genesis 4:1

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

We've already spoken about that.

Genesis 4:2

And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

So it's interesting here: they have two different things that are drawing them.

Now verse 3:

Genesis 4:3

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

Genesis 4:4

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

Genesis 4:5

But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.

We see here that Cain did not have a revelation of the will of God.

So the first thing we notice *as a characteristic of that serpent seed* is a deficit of revelation or an inability to receive revelation. That's number one. And that could've been the only thing. Cain could've still had a right attitude.

But we see the second part:

Genesis 4:5

And Cain was very wroth,

He got offended.

Genesis 4:5

and his countenance fell.

So here we see that the spirit of Cain or the attitude of Cain was wrong. Right? Just because God did not have respect to his offering, Cain did not have to get angry, he did not have to get upset. He could've had a repentant attitude, a mourning attitude. He could've cried out to God and sought the will of the Lord with tears. And I believe the Lord would've led him if he'd had the right spirit.

But we see two major things here. One: *he did not have revelation*. Secondly: *his spirit was wrong*.

Those are the two things that we don't see with Abel.

Abel had a *right offering* in the first place. He had a *revelation* of what God wanted. And in second place, Abel had a *right spirit*. Praise the Lord.

So we have to understand that since *we* have that *serpent nature* today, you and I need the gift of the Holy Ghost – which is really *God Himself* coming and dwelling within us to be able to *work through us* – to give us the victory over the serpent, or over that *nature*.

We're going to read about that.

Let's go to Acts chapter 2. This is when they received the gift of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Let's start in verse 41.

Acts 2:41

Then they that gladly received his word

That was Peter's word.

Acts 2:41

were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

First of all, we know there were *a hundred and twenty* [Acts 1:15] who *received the gift of the Holy Ghost in the upper room*. [Acts 2:4] And now there were *three thousand more* who were converted. So even though it's not recorded, we have to understand that they *also* received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Now let's see: how did the church *move forward*?

Acts 2:42

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine

That was number one. And I'll say: it's still number one *today*.

There's a *spirit* in the church world today. They say: oh, that doesn't matter, we just have to get along.

Well, I have nothing against *getting along* – that's fine – but we still have to *walk in the light of truth*. Praise the Lord. And once *getting along* means that *truth is not important*, then I have to say: people are *no longer continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine*.

First of all: it's *the Word*. We can't just look around and say: where's the bigger group?

When we look at 96 AD, there was John on the Isle of Patmos. That was a group of *one*. But *the heavens were opened up to him*. Amen.

So we have to *continue in the Word*. And there is a recompense.

Again, getting back to John, before he was placed on that island, he had his chance to change his message, he had his chance to – we might say – *go with the crowd*. And if he had, they would've never taken him to the Isle of Patmos.

As a man, I'm sure it grieved him at his heart to go to that island.

I just remember the COVID quarantine and how bad that was. Most of us still had at least some family at home and we knew it was something temporary, or at least we were hoping it was.

But John was put there *alone* and they didn't say: we're coming back in a year. Yet *God opened up the heavens*. Amen. And I have to say: John had a wonderful reward for standing for the truth.

Now let's keep reading. It says:

Acts 2:42

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,

You say: well Brother, you were just saying that it's not important. No, I didn't say that. What I said was: we don't let *that* push the other out of the way.

What we see here is that among those who were *continuing in the apostles' doctrine*, they did have *fellowship one with another*.

In fact, from the very beginning, there was an understanding that *Jesus Christ is the firstborn of many brethren*. [Romans 8:29] That's why we call each other *brothers and sisters*.

And we know that God does not have grandchildren. Right?

What do I mean by that?

Well, *salvation is not inherited through our parents*.

Just because Mom and Dad are saved and they raise their children in the church, it *doesn't mean* that their children are also *children of God*.

Yes, we can say: that's our desire. We love our children, we pray for them, and we thank God that He has had mercy on many of them and *they are saved*. But it's not because they are *our* children. It's because *Jesus Christ died on the cross*.

Sometimes we might feel that we have to pray for our family, our friends, and all our loved ones so that the Lord will save them. Well, I'll say: yes pray for them. But at the end of the day, we have to leave that in God's Hands and we have to understand: there is no guarantee of *who will be saved*.

At the end of the day, it's between *them and the Lord*. And we have to accept that.

I've even heard people come up for prayer: Brother, I'm not at peace, my family is not saved. I have to say: if you're waiting for that to be at peace, you may never be at peace.

Some may want to say: oh Brother, don't say that! Well, I'm saying it this morning! *We need to be at peace*. Yes, pray for them, trust the Lord, and try to be an example. Don't preach to them, but just *live the life* and trust God that *He knows best*.

At the end of the day, we have to be at peace *however it works out* because *His plan is right*.

So we are *brothers and sisters in the Lord*, right?

And it says that it *wasn't just the apostles' doctrine* but that they were *in fellowship*. [Acts 2:42] Praise the Lord. That means, we can say: they interacted with one another *as family*. Praise the Lord.

How is that possible when there's a nature in us that runs *against that*? Our nature is bitterness, wrath, and all of that. We're going to read that later but I don't think we'll get to it today. But it was *possible* because *they had received the Holy Ghost*.

We need the Holy Ghost to – number one – be able *to see the truth of the Word of God*. And we also need the Holy Ghost to be able *to have the right spirit and attitude* toward our brothers and sisters in Christ, and even the rest of the world.

I mention *our brothers and sisters* because the world is not going to reciprocate the Spirit that we have. The fellowship that's mentioned here was *between them*. It was *communion one with another*.

I will say: *as brothers and sisters in Christ*, we have a *closer bond* than brothers and sisters in the natural.

If our *spiritual family* doesn't come *before* our natural family and friends, then I have to say: we have it backwards. We need to get on our knees and ask: Lord, help me and lead me. I'm not saying we shouldn't love our natural family, *we do*. But *our brothers and sisters in Christ* must come before them. Praise the Lord.

Now:

Acts 2:42

and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

So we see that there was a *beautiful environment*.

How could that be, seeing everybody had that serpent nature? It's *by the Holy Ghost*.

In fact, we have a scripture here that we have read many times. Let's go to John 4 and verse 24.

Jesus says:

John 4:24

God is a Spirit:

I have to say: amen.

John 4:24

and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Praise the Lord.

He *didn't* say: they *should* worship Him in spirit and in truth, he said: *they must*. Praise the Lord. It has to be *both*.

Now, I know it's been brought up that Brother Branham said: I'd rather see a man – how did he say it? – *right in his spirit and wrong in his doctrine*, or I'd rather be *right in my spirit and wrong in my doctrine* than *right in my doctrine and wrong in my spirit*.

Well we have to understand, he was *not saying that* to say: it's okay to be right in your spirit and wrong in your doctrine.

And really, what we have to understand at the end of the day is that nobody is going to be *right in one* and *wrong in the other*. That's impossible because it's the *same Spirit* that makes a person *right in both*.

When he said *somebody right in their spirit but wrong in their doctrine*, all he was really looking at is: we take a Christian who has received the gift of the Holy Ghost. *Right away* there is a work *on their spirit*, and if they allow the Holy Ghost to lead them, they are going to have a certain – how can I put it? – they are going to have a *meek spirit* about them. They're going to be a person who one can feel comfortable and happy to be in their presence.

But there may be something that they still haven't learned yet as far as *revelation*. Especially today, they may still have some *traditional ideas*, there may be something that they have *misunderstood*.

So as far as *that particular point of doctrine*, they would be *wrong in their doctrine*. But we have to understand: *in time, God will show it to them*. And if it's something that He is opening to the Church, God is *not* going to wait *thirty years* to show it to that individual. Amen.

If the Jews are going to be able to see the Gospel in three-and-a-half years, then I have to say: whatever God shows to the Church, once it's been presented, we *shouldn't* need three-and-a-half years and still be thinking: well, I don't know.

I have to say: if we still don't know, it's time to get on our knees, it's time to open our Bible, it's time to read, it's time to seek the Lord, and *it's time to know!* Praise the Lord.

But the one who is *wrong in his spirit* and *right in his doctrine*, now there is a problem.

Why is he *right in his doctrine*? It's not really that he has a revelation, but it's just that this is how he has heard something taught. He has heard a *truth* taught, and *from an intellectual standpoint*, he can see it.

There we would have somebody who is *right in their doctrine* but *wrong in their spirit*.

I have to say, as Jesus himself said here: *it's necessary that the true worshippers be right in both*. [John 4:24] Praise the Lord

We can't just say: well, I know where the *truth* is preached, so that's where I gather. Or: because that's where *truth* is preached, I don't have anything to be concerned about.

I have to say: we still have to let the *Holy Ghost* give us the *right Spirit*.

And vice-versa: from a *human standpoint*, I have to say: many can *appear* to have the *right spirit*. I say *appear* because we are all *great actors*. I hope you understand what I mean.

We can be going through something and we just feel horrible *inside*. We go to work and people ask: how are you doing? And we say: Oh, I'm doing great! [Laugh] But *inside*, we're all churned up.

So yes, we can – I shouldn't say 'we' because I don't want *us* to be a part of it – but as humans, people can put on a *façade* – I don't know a better word. They can *appear* to have the *right spirit* but at the end of the day, *God knows the heart*.

He knows if it's *genuine* – if it's really the Holy Ghost within us producing fruit – or if it's just *manufactured* because we know this is how we're supposed to act as Christians.

What Jesus was saying here is: *this is the true work of the Holy Ghost in the life of the believer*. [John 4:23]

They are going to *believe the truth when God brings the fresh Word to the Church*. They are going to *gladly receive the Word of God*. [Acts 2:41] And they're also going to *enjoy and rejoice in the fellowship with their fellow brothers and sisters in the faith*. [Acts 2:42] Praise the Lord.

Let's go to Galatians chapter 5.

Here Paul is rebuking the Galatians because they've allowed certain ones to get them off-track as far as what Grace is. Really, they've been *deceived* as far as the truth and now God is *using an apostle* to get them straightened out.

So in verse 5:

Galatians 5:5

For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Paul spoke in other places of *the righteousness which is by faith*. [Romans 3:22]

What is that speaking of? It's speaking of the righteousness that is *imputed to us as we believe the Word of God*. Praise the Lord.

Galatians 5:6

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

So again, faith is: *the believing of the revealed Word. And the way it is presented, as well as the environment in which it is given to us and received in is that of love.*

Do we remember that Jesus asked Peter: *do you love me?* [John 21:15]

Now, I'll say this: none of us – looking from the natural – none of us would've asked Peter: *do you love the Lord?*

When the ship was out there in the sea, and they realized: it's the Lord! What did they do? They brought the ship to land. And they all stayed on the ship and waited until it was docked to get off, right? But there was *one*, when he realized that it was the Lord, *he jumped into the water and he swam.* [John 21:7] That was *Peter*.

So from the natural side, we would say: *this is backwards!* Jesus should be asking *the others* who stayed on the boat: *do you love me?* We would think: clearly Peter does. Jesus should've said: *do you all?*

But he asked *Peter*.

And when Peter said that he did, Jesus said: *feed my lambs.* [John 21:15]

We're not going to go through the whole thing but he speaks of *feeding his lambs* and *feeding his sheep*. What is that? He's telling Peter: *minister the Word. Go out and preach my Word.*

So we receive that faith *by love*. Amen.

Now:

Galatians 5:7

Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

That's the first thing Paul focuses on. He said: *you've gotten off-track as far as the truth.* Right? That's the number-one thing.

And really, this entire Book or letter to the Galatians was to get them back *on-track* as far as *the truth*.

But if we jump down to verse 18, actually let's start in verse 16, we might read more of this later but we'll start in verse 16.

Galatians 5:16

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit,

The fact that Paul was telling them to *walk in the Spirit* means that we *can't* just say: well praise the Lord, I've accepted the Lord, I've been baptized, and I've received the gift of Holy Ghost. Now that I have the Holy Spirit, I'm just going to walk however I feel to walk.

I have to say: if we do that and we don't take care, we're *not* going to be walking in the Spirit.

Paul instructs us: *walk in the Spirit*. Amen.

This is something we each have to decide: I'm going to be *led by the Holy Ghost*. So we still have to put *our effort* to walk according to the Spirit. Praise the Lord.

And *if* we have the Spirit, then *that* will give us the victory. It will give us *the ability* to walk in a way that's *pleasing to God*.

He says here:

Galatians 5:16

Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

What is he speaking about? He's speaking about the *evil desires*. He's speaking about that *serpent nature*. He's saying: we're *not* going to fulfill what would be accomplished *if we do not have the Holy Ghost*.

And for all of us: we all have our strengths and our weaknesses. That's the truth.

I'll just give a couple of examples. Maybe for somebody, *money* is a weakness. They really want money. They struggle and maybe they would even be dishonest to obtain money. On the other side of things, as far as *recognition* or *fame*, they don't feel a pull, that's not really a temptation to them.

For somebody else, it might be exactly the reverse: they want *attention*, they want *fame*. Maybe money is not that much of a temptation to them but: oh, they want to be seen! That's just a couple of simple examples.

So when we get down to the part of reading this list that Paul gives us [Galatians 5:19-21] it's not that we all struggle with every one of these things. There could just be two or three things that we really struggle with.

Let's go ahead and keep reading. He says here:

Galatians 5:17

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,

The will of God for our life as redeemed man *rubs against* the lust of the flesh.

He says here:

Galatians 5:17

and the Spirit against the flesh:

That's what God told the serpent. He said: *there's going to be enmity between thy seed and her seed*. [Genesis 3:15]

The one is: the *nature of God* which was expressed in the *sons of God*. The other is: the *nature of the flesh*, that *serpent nature*.

And now that there is a *mix* in all of us, that *war* is *within us*.

But by the *seed of the woman* which is the *Lord Jesus Christ*, we can have the victory. It says that *the head of the serpent would be crushed*. [Genesis 3:15] Amen. Praise the Lord.

So we are reading here about that *enmity* that was put between the two seeds.

Galatians 5:17

and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Galatians 5:18

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

That's where we need to be: *led by the Spirit of God*.

In another place, Paul said: *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* [Romans 8:14]

We can say: I go to *this* church, or *that* church. Or we can say: I was baptized in Jesus's name. And we must so be. That's true. But at the end of the day, Paul says: *those who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* [Romans 8:14] Praise the Lord.

So we have to have *received* the Holy Ghost to be *led* by the Holy Ghost. But even then, we have to *consciously subject our flesh to the leadership of God.*

He says here:

Galatians 5:19

Now the works of the flesh are manifest,

And before we read any further, let's remember: *Adam was created in the image of God.* [Genesis 1:27] Right? When God created Adam's body, it says: *He formed him of the dust of the ground. He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.* [Genesis 2:7] Amen.

The *flesh* in the sense of the *physical body* was created by God. So it's *not* that there was something evil about the flesh of Adam's physical body. But again, we have to understand: God has allowed this to be written – we can say – *in code* because He's going to leave it there for us to have a *revelation* or not.

It's really not the *flesh* itself that's the problem but it's that *serpent nature*.

So when he says: *the works of the flesh*, we could say: *the manifestation of that serpent nature*, right?

And the first thing we see here:

Galatians 5:19

Adultery,

Well that's exactly what happened in the garden with the serpent and with Eve.

Galatians 5:19

Adultery, fornication,

We still see that in the world today, but look, there is much more:

Galatians 5:19

Uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Galatians 5:20

Idolatry,

It's a sad thing we see today among the Branham following. To some of them, if you mention Brother Branham, oh they just get all bubbly and excited.

I have to say: the man was a man *like any other man*.

Yes God decided that *he* would be the messenger but there are people today to whom everything is all just: *Brother Branham, Brother Branham, Brother Branham!*

I have been criticized by some who say that I don't say enough about Brother Branham. Well, I know somebody else who didn't say very much about Brother Branham. Do you know who that was? *Brother Branham*. He wasn't always pointing to himself. You didn't hear him always preaching about Brother Branham. So why should I or anybody else? But we preach *Christ*.

Brother Branham preached *Christ*, Brother Jackson preached *Christ*. The true ministry today preaches *Christ*. Praise the Lord.

Now:

Galatians 5:20

Idolatry,

There is so much idolatry in the Message Movement today. They *idolize* Brother Branham. That's the truth.

Galatians 5:20

witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

We could spend a lot of time on that verse. And we might do that.

Galatians 5:21

envyings,

Now look at the next word:

Galatians 5:21

murders,

We see some of these and we might say: I'd never do that! Well, now remember: *Cain killed his brother* [Genesis 4:8] right?

And even when the Law came, yes the Law held people back from murder but *it was still in their heart*. As they let *anger* and *bitterness* grow, many of them probably thought: I wish I could kill them! That was *in their heart*, but the Law wouldn't let them do it.

But *envyings* [Galatians 5:21] we would say: oh that's so much different. Yet Paul is putting it all in the same basket.

Envy: I should be getting the attention they're getting. I should have the place, the position that they have. What is that? That's *envy*. That's *not* of the Spirit of God.

Galatians 5:21

drunkenness, revellings, and such like:

He doesn't even leave the opportunity: *anything else that is similar to this*, all of that is *of the flesh*.

But again: how do we overcome that?

Well first of all, we have to truly receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then we have to let the Word of God *talk to us*. The Word of God becomes *as a mirror*: we can look at it and see ourselves. And maybe we don't always like what we see. Then we have to do some work. We have to work to get *our flesh in subjection to the Spirit of God*.

So I'm going to close this morning.

Remember, there are two things: we have to have the Holy Ghost to be able to *see the truth* as it is continually revealed to the Church, and we have to have the Holy Ghost and subject ourselves to the Holy Ghost to really have that *true communion* one with another.

Again, when I say that, I'm not talking about running out in the religious world and being together with every religious camp. But I'm speaking of *true fellowship with true brothers and sisters*. Praise the Lord.

Because remember: there is an enemy who – I'll close with this, I know I already said I was going to close but *maybe* I'll close with this – it's written in Psalm 133, *how beautiful for brethren to dwell together in unity*.

I have to say: the devil knows how *beautiful* that is.

Don't think he's just going to sit back and say: well I wish I hadn't made a mistake so I could be a part of that. No, he's going to do everything in his power to break up that *beautiful unity*.

But if we are *led* by the Spirit of God, we will be able to have the victory over the work of the enemy. The promise is: the true Church will have *the unity of the faith* [Ephesians 4:13] and she will have *the unity of the Spirit*. [Ephesians 4:3]

So let's go ahead and stand.