

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**First Quarter 2016: *Rebellion and Redemption***  
**Lesson 3 “Global Rebellion and the Patriarchs”**

**Read for this week’s study**

Genesis 4:1–15; Genesis 3:9, 10; 4:9; Genesis 6:1–13; Psalm 51:1; Genesis 22; Genesis 28:12–15.

**Memory Text**

“Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you” (Genesis 28:15, NKJV).

**Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide**

- I. Introduction
- II. Cain and Abel
- III. The Flood
- IV. Abraham
- V. Jacob and Esau
- VI. Joseph and His Brothers
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. The key Cosmic Conflict texts in the Bible are found in Genesis 3, Job 1 and 2, Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, Ephesians 1 and Revelation 12. Which of these texts is your favorite and why? Which of these texts speaks most clearly about the character of God? Why does this theme not play a larger role in the Bible as a whole? (Introduction)
2. The focus of this lesson is on Genesis, chapters 4-50. What story or passage in these chapters addresses the character of God and the cosmic conflict most clearly? (Sabbath afternoon)
3. Read Genesis 4:1-15. What does this account tell us about the consequences of sin? What does this passage tell us about God? Why didn’t God prevent Cain from murdering his brother, is He somehow to blame in this outcome? Compare Genesis 4:9 with 3:9-10. How was Adam’s reaction when God questioned him similar or different from that of Cain? (Sunday’s lesson)
4. Read Genesis 6:1-13. In what ways is the Cosmic Conflict visible in this story? How does the destruction and renewal of the earth during the Flood story build on the

- creation story? What does the Flood story tell us about God? In the destruction of the world by water was God active or passive in His judgments? (Monday's lesson)
5. Read Genesis 22:1-19. What does this story have to do with the cosmic conflict? What does this story tell us about God? What if Abraham had said "no" to God on this occasion, would he have been counted as even more faithful? (see how Abraham and Moses reacted to God in Genesis 18 and Exodus 32) In what sense is the atonement implied in this story something that affects the entire universe (Colossians 1:20)? (Tuesday's lesson)
  6. Read Genesis 28:12-15. What does God's treatment of Jacob tell us about His character? (Wednesday's lesson)
  7. Did Joseph's overall behavior in relation to his brothers in Egypt speak well of God? Read Genesis 45:4-11. What was the bigger picture about God that Joseph was looking at? What lesson is there for us today in this perspective? In what way is the outcome of Abraham's faith a lot more disappointing than the experience of Jacob and Joseph? (Thursday's lesson)
  8. As we think of the many tragic stories in Genesis, it raises an extended question. How often does God get His way in the course of human history? What does the answer to that question tell us about God? (Friday's lesson)
  9. Even if your life isn't turning out in the way that you had hoped, how can the promise of eternal life help to keep disappointment from overwhelming you? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

How do you understand the Flood? What does it tell us about God? How could He do such a thing? ... Well, what do you think of a God who doesn't just discipline; He drowns... all but eight? Why did He do that? Well, supposing He hadn't? Hadn't God almost lost contact there with the human race? He was down to eight, and they weren't outstanding. Ham had problems. Even Noah had not taken the temperance pledge yet, remember?

God must have had to say to His family, "Bear with me; I'm about to do something very terrible." And they watched. But when it was all over, Noah was willing to listen. And who was descended from Noah, but Abraham, and Abraham was one of the best friends God ever had, and God worked through Abraham. But that wasn't the end; there were others yet to come. There was much yet to happen.

In the foresight of God, He knew there was much yet to be done, and the questions about Him and His government could not be answered until what the Bible calls "the fullness of time." Jesus came when the time was ripe for the answers to be given. Before the Flood the world was

wicked enough, but that wasn't enough. When Jesus came, there was something on this earth the universe had never seen before. At last, God had a group of people who seemed to be willing to obey, believe the Bible, keep the Ten Commandments, everything else, and now God could show that if people obey Him for the wrong reason, they can actually be His enemies. That's the "fullness of time." Before the Flood, every man's thoughts were wicked. And I think God moved, in that terrible way, to maintain contact with the human race. He even changed the whole nature of life here; the surface of our planet, the age of our lives. It's a better thing that we don't live a thousand years now. Seventy is long enough under the circumstances. Yet eternal life comes.

I think it's consistent with God that He did this terrible thing, and there will be more coming up, but if we didn't know about the great controversy, it surely would be hard to understand, and I think that as we enter the next sixty-five books, as far as I'm concerned, nothing helps more than to remember the whole family watching everything that happens, and seeking to understand everything that happens. And when God picks out a man and says to the rest of the family, "Now there's a real friend," what is the quality in a person that marks him as a real friend? And God will save all His friends. What's the main thing that is mentioned of Abraham? Abraham trusted God, and God said, "That's what I'm looking for." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 - Genesis*, recorded October, 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/1MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Isn't it becoming clearer in Scripture, that when God indeed has used force and displayed His power, it may have gained attention, but it has never accomplished what He really wants? How about the Flood last time? Did the Flood lead people to deny the existence and power of God? No. When they built Babel, was it because they didn't believe in God? Was it because they didn't believe He had the power to destroy? Or was it because they did believe in God, and they did believe He had the power to destroy? Now, they didn't think He could be trusted when He said, "I'll never drown you again." They didn't believe that. That's why they built that tower. Isn't that what it says?

You see, they really believed in God, His existence and His power. That's why to believe that doesn't say which side you're on. The devils believe that, too. In fact, they had such confidence that God could destroy; they built that tower as tall as they did. You see, the exercise of power and force may only make rebels worse. It might for a moment gain the attention of those who are sinners indeed, but would love to hear what you would have to say, if everyone would be quiet. And God wins people every once in a while, during those quiet moments. But the devil

must mock Him for failure to be able to clear up the problems on this earth by the exercise of power. But the great controversy is not over who has the power, is it? It's over who is telling the truth. God has been accused of the abuse of divine power, and I'm sure Satan accused Him of abusing His power in the time of the Flood; "See what He'll do; obey Him, or He'll drown you!" The inhabitants of Babylon believed that: "Believe God, or He'll drown you!" Well, they didn't want to obey Him, so they built the tall tower so they could escape the next flood when it came! {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 - Exodus*, recorded October, 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/3MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/4MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

There is another possible approach to obedience. Could you say this? "I do what I do because I have found it to be right and sensible to do so, and I have increasing admiration and reverence for the one who so advised and commanded me in the days of my ignorance and immaturity. And being still somewhat ignorant and immature, I am willing to trust and obey the one whose counsel has always proved to be so sensible, when he tells me to do something beyond my present understanding."

This sounds more like the way an understanding friend would talk. And it speaks well of God, as an admirable, trustworthy Friend.

When God asked his friend Abraham to sacrifice his son, Abraham knew God well enough, first to recognize his voice, and then to obey at once so incredible a command. But on the long journey to the place of sacrifice, Abraham respectfully questioned, "Why?" As he thought it through in the light of his knowledge of God, he came to the conclusion that God would either provide a substitute or resurrect his son. God's old friend was right! (*See Genesis 22:8; Hebrews 11:19*) {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends*, 96. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.} <http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter7.html>

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

Sin not only shuts away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. Through sin, the whole human organism is deranged, the mind is perverted, the imagination corrupted; the faculties of the soul are degraded. There is an absence of pure religion, of heart holiness. The converting power of God has not wrought in

transforming the character. The soul is weak, and for want of moral force to overcome, is polluted and debased. {PK 233.1}

Satan is constantly at work, with intense energy and under a thousand disguises, to misrepresent the character and government of God. With extensive, well-organized plans and marvelous power, he is working to hold the inhabitants of the world under his deceptions. God, the One infinite and all-wise, sees the end from the beginning, and in dealing with evil His plans were far-reaching and comprehensive. It was His purpose, not merely to put down the rebellion, but to demonstrate to all the universe the nature of the rebellion. God's plan was unfolding, showing both His justice and His mercy, and fully vindicating His wisdom and righteousness in His dealings with evil. {PP 78.3}

It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature, that by beholding, we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence. Man will never rise higher than his standard of purity or goodness or truth. If self is his loftiest ideal, he will never attain to anything more exalted. Rather, he will constantly sink lower and lower. The grace of God alone has power to exalt man. Left to himself, his course must inevitably be downward. {GC88 555.2}