

### ***THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For January 3:***

#### *Genesis 5:1-7:24:*

Genesis 5:1 begins a new section of Genesis in which the descendants of Adam will be chronicled so the text can move from Adam (5:1) to Noah (5:28-32). In the genealogy from Adam to Noah there are godly persons (e.g. Enoch, 5:22), yet, by the time we get to Noah, we learn in 6:1-4 godly men were intermarrying with ungodly women during the time that bandits or those who fall upon their prey (Nephilim) were rampant. Things had gotten so bad because of sin that “The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (6:5). God reacted to this by sending a universal flood upon the world as judgment (6:6-9:17).

In 6:9 we come to another major section of Genesis which will now take up the account of Noah and his family. Noah walked with God (6:9), i.e. he trusted in God and, as a result, obeyed what God had revealed to man as His will. At this point in history God had not revealed His will to be written down in any way. Yet, He had revealed His will most likely through visions, dreams, and talking with men (Exodus 18:16 [statutes and laws before written Scriptures]; Hebrews 1:1). Throughout this part of Genesis we see God working primarily to create a godly line through whom He will carry out His plan of redemption.

In the rest of the reading we learn that Noah and his family were the only ones who believed God and listened to Him about a coming flood, so they were the only ones saved. Noah took seven pairs of the clean animals upon board (for food and sacrifice) and one pair of unclean animals. We should note, for example, Noah did not have to take a pair of all kinds of dogs or cats, but only one of each. He also did not have to take full-grown pairs (e.g. elephants or dinosaurs), but young and small ones. The size of the ark would allow for this. Rain fell for forty days and forty nights so that the earth was covered with water and the LORD killed all living beings but those saved on the ark.

The account of Noah becomes a type or pattern of how God works with mankind to save them. First, we learn that the LORD made a covenant (solemn bond or agreement) with Noah and His family (6:18), which means He is promising to save and take care of them, to do what they themselves cannot do, and to bless them. This will become the normative way God deals with mankind to save in both the Old and New Testament eras. Second, the fact that God graciously brought Noah and his family on the boat (and they came by faith) and only they were saved forms a pattern for how the LORD will save through history. Salvation is from Him alone (Jonah 2:9), He will save those who trust in Him by crediting to them righteousness (Genesis 15:6), forgiving their sins (Psalm 32:1-2), and all of this ultimately on the ground of the death of His Son, Jesus Christ (Romans 3:25), a death which all the Old Testament sacrifices looked forward to as patterns (Colossians 2:16-17) and a death which the account of the ark exemplifies and looks forward to (1 Peter 3:19-20). What we will find as we read through the Old Testament is that all of what happens in it and is revealed to readers serves to point to and prepare for Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:17; Acts 10:43).

Matthew 3:7-4:11:

In today's text we read of John the Baptist and his ministry of preparing the way for Jesus Christ (3:7-12). To understand the ministry of John we must know that previously baptism was used of Gentile proselytes to Judaism as a means of showing they have been cleansed and are now publicly professing they believe in the true God. John came calling all to be baptized, including Jews. And, even more scandalous than that in the eyes of some, he called Jewish religious leaders, such as Pharisees and Sadducees, to be baptized (3:7). Behind this stands the reality that they also are sinners in need of repentance and salvation. Such repentance unto salvation will prove itself by works that are consistent with such repentance (3:8). John chastises these Jews for their lack of good fruit and tells them that unless they repent, they will face God's judgment since their pedigree will do them no good (3:9-10). John goes on to preach that the one coming after him (Jesus Christ) will be mightier than he and will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire and bring judgment by distinguishing between the just and the unjust (3:11-12). John's point is that the saving work of Jesus Christ will make possible full and internal transformation by the Spirit and it will also show that how one responds to Him will become the deciding factor as to whether or not they are saved. Thus, in this sense, He brings both salvation and judgment.

In 3:13-17 we learn that Jesus is baptized by John. It was not because Jesus was sinful and in need of repentance that He was baptized, for He pleased the Father fully by his perfect obedience and lack of sin (3:17 [cf. John 5:19; 6:38; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26]). We must keep in mind that those during this time of preparation for the Christ who trusted in the true God and were thus credited with righteousness were those who expressed this through baptism. As such, Jesus was expressing that He is righteous and will identify with man that they might be righteous, which seems to be the meaning of 3:15. From His baptism we also see that the Father affirms this is His beloved Son with whom he is well pleased (3:17) after the Spirit descended upon Jesus (3:16). The dove and the voice show the Father's affirmation of Jesus, as well as the reality that Jesus is fulfilling the role of the perfect son who always does the Father's will and who is part of God's saving plan (Genesis 22:2), a role that the nation of Israel was supposed to fill, but never did rightly (Hosea 11:1). In other words, Jesus is the ideal man who carries out the original purpose God had for man of glorifying and serving Him (Psalm 8:5-6; Hebrews 2:5-9). This was all communicated at the baptism. Also, by the time that Matthew wrote his Gospel to instruct the Church in the 60's, his readers would have also recognized another meaning in the designation "Son," namely that Jesus Christ was and is the second person of the Godhead, the God-man. As we read the Gospel, these are all the things we are intended to take away from this baptism.

Finally, the reality we read of the Father, Spirit, and Son all simultaneously acting in the baptism helps us understand that the idea of modalism cannot be true. Modalism teaches that God sometimes works and/or appears as the Father, sometimes as the Son, and sometimes as the Spirit. Matthew 3 clarifies that the one God is always Father, Son, and Spirit.

In 4:1-11 Jesus, the ideal man and the God-man, the Savior, is divinely-directed to go into the wilderness to fast for forty days which shows connection not only between Him and Moses (Exodus 34:28), but also between Him and the Israelites who were in the wilderness forty years (Numbers 14:33). As the ideal man and Savior Jesus is tempted by Satan three different times. In this sense, Jesus also serves as the second Adam (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45) who is tempted as mankind's representative. Contrary to Adam who stands as the representative or head of all mankind who are in their sin, Jesus trusted in and obeyed the Father and thus when one is united to the second Adam by faith, His righteousness is credited to that one who believes. Three different times Satan sought to get Jesus Christ to cease trusting the Father, to by-pass His suffering which was willed by the Father that He might gain the glory of the Savior apart from God's will. Three times Jesus trusted the Father and His Word, resisted Satan, and so eventually Satan left Him defeated (cf. James 4:7). Three times also the God-man, the ideal man, exemplified for us the importance of trusting in the written Word of God!

We must see that these temptations were an important part of Jesus serving as our substitute. He saves us not only by dying in our place to pay the penalty for our sins, he also saves us by living perfectly and obediently in our place so that perfect obedience and righteousness (God's standard, Matthew 5:48) will be credited to those who trust in Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:18).

#### Psalm 3:1-8:

This is the first of many psalms which have a title. The titles communicate things such as the situation behind the psalm (as here), the author, and/or notations for musical purposes. The titles are either original or were certainly added to the psalms early on. They are not added by the translators of your Bible version, but part of the text.

Here we learn that this psalm was written by David when he was pursued by his son, Absalom (2 Samuel 14-18). Absalom wanted to kill David so he could take his throne from him. The king, who had lost his home, his comfort, was separated from the beloved temple of the LORD, had been taken away from family and friends, and who was dealing with the threat of death and the grief this was at the hands of his own son, gives insight into how he dealt with this situation. What he writes is a pattern that emerges in many other psalms in which he (or another psalmist) faces hardship: He is honest and open about the situation (1-2), he focuses upon who God is and His faithfulness (3), which enables him to cry out to the LORD in prayer and rest secure in Him (4-8). This is a very helpful pattern for us to follow when we are depressed or in despair.

#### Proverbs 1:10-19:

In these verses the young disciple learns that if he gives into the enticements of the ungodly and participates in their evil schemes and ways, though reward is promised for such actions, the reality is that such evil will end up trapping and destroying them. This passage forms the headwaters for a stream of teaching throughout the book of Proverbs which distinguishes between the way of the righteous (which brings reward) and the way of the wicked (which brings heartache and destruction). Such is not only a key indicator of wisdom literature in general, but is also designed as a motivation for the young

disciple to follow the way of wisdom! This is still wisdom which should be remembered and followed today! After all, God's commands are not only for His glory, but also for our good (Deuteronomy 10:12).