Rebecca Gedeon

Professor Jean - Pierre

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The Bible is possibly one of the greatest works of literature, in fact, it might be the greatest book ever written. This extraordinary story of redemption depicts the creation of man, the fall of man which resulted in the separation of man from God, and the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus Christ which restored man back to God. The outstanding work of literature is divided into two parts the Old Testament and New Testament, although divided into two sections, these two work together to reveal this great redemptive story. From the first book in the Old Testament, Genesis, to the last book in the New Testament, Revelation, one can see God's fingerprint in every chapter, and His desire to rekindle the relationship between man and Himself.

In the very first chapter of Genesis, we see how God created all things. The word of God reads as thus:

> God said Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. And God said, Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water. So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second

day. And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day. And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day. And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day. And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. God made the

> wild animals according to their kind, the livestock according to their kind, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kind. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day, he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

From the inextinguishable light rays of the sun to the vegetation that grows up from the ground, through Him, everything was made, and without Him, nothing was made that has been made. God gave mankind dominion over all He created, but He instructed that they “must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for when they eat of it they would certainly die.” Of all the animals God made in the Garden, the serpent was the craftiest, it was this same serpent who

convinced Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil when he asked “Did God really say you must not eat from this tree?” He goes on to say “You will not certainly die…. For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” After being enticed by the serpent Eve convinced Adam to eat from the tree, immediately their eyes were opened and they realized they were naked and hid themselves. As a result of eating from the tree sin entered the world, and as God promised death followed. According to Don Stewart, there was three death that fell upon man. The first was a physical death which occurs when the body dies, the second was a spiritual death which resulted in a separation of the spirit from the body, and lastly, an eternal death which is a permanent separation of humanity from God.

God in all of His omniscience had foreseen this and told the serpent that he will be “cursed above all and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” The serpent will endure lifelong humiliation for what he has done. This is underlined in the phrase “you will eat dust all the days of your life” the same references are seen in Psalm 72:9 “may his enemies lick the dust” this is fitting for the serpent because he not only deceived Eve but he tried to make himself equal with God, as a result, he is cursed with humiliation. The second part of the curse refers to our eternal conflict with the serpent, the verse “I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers, he will crush your head and you will strike his heel” shows that the serpents attempt to turn mankind against God resulted in mankind against the serpent. As the offspring of Eve, we are locked in this eternal conflict, but this conflict comes to its climax through a

particular offspring, the seed of David, the son of David, and the promised Messiah Jesus Christ. He will be the one to crush the serpent.

After the fall of Man in the Garden, sin caused mankind to turn from God and turn to their own devices, humanity multiplied and violence reigned. After Cain killed Abel, his brother, Cain's descendants followed in his footsteps, the evil of man intensified, and according to Genesis 6:5 "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. Throughout the Old Testament, we see this continuous cycle of sin " (1) Israel falls into sin and idolatry, and does what was evil in the sight of the Lord; (2) God allows his people to fall into bondage as a consequence of their disobedience; (3) realizing the errors of their ways, Israel cries out to God for help; (4) God raises up a judge to rescue them; (5) Israel is delivered from their oppressors; (6) peace is restored in the land and Israel again serves the Lord; and then the cycle repeats." For generations, this cycle has been a snare for the people of God, and despite all man's efforts to abstain from evil the lure of sin was too overwhelming.

In fact, the power of sin could not be broken with ordinary means, it took a lamb, one that was spotless, one who had no sin in order to take away all the sins of the world. Jesus's blameless life, excruciating death, and triumphant victory was God's prophecy fullied. Jesus, the lamb slain before the foundations of the world, was and is the central figure in God's redemptive story.