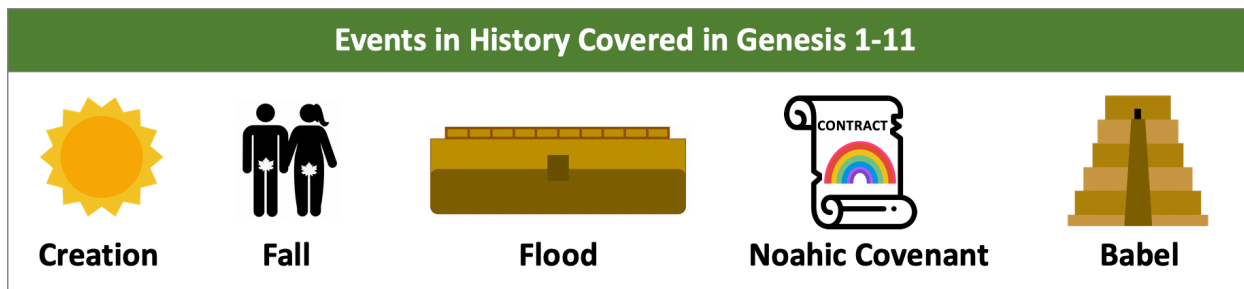


# Lesson 8: Faith in Action I – Biblical Truth Helps Us Interpret the World

**(Note:** This Faith in Action exercise works best as a workshop. Please allow more time for meaningful discussion. Recommended time: three hours.)

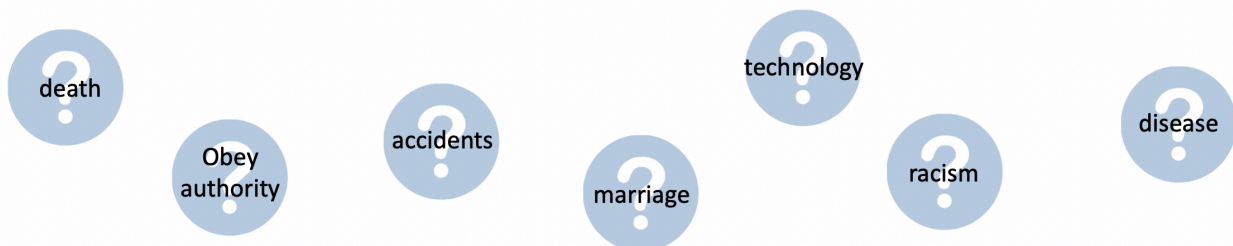
In the first seven lessons of this study, we covered the historical events in Genesis 1–11, focusing on several key ones.



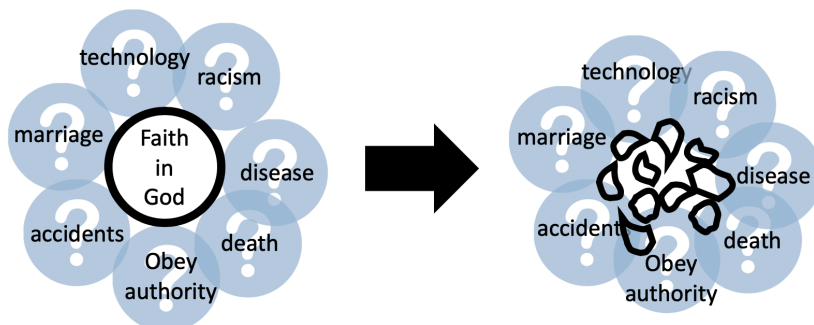
These events are “nice to know”, but are they relevant to our everyday lives? Yes.

- They provide a biblical framework to help us understand and interpret the world we live in today.
- They also help us recognise pagan ideas that are not from the Bible.

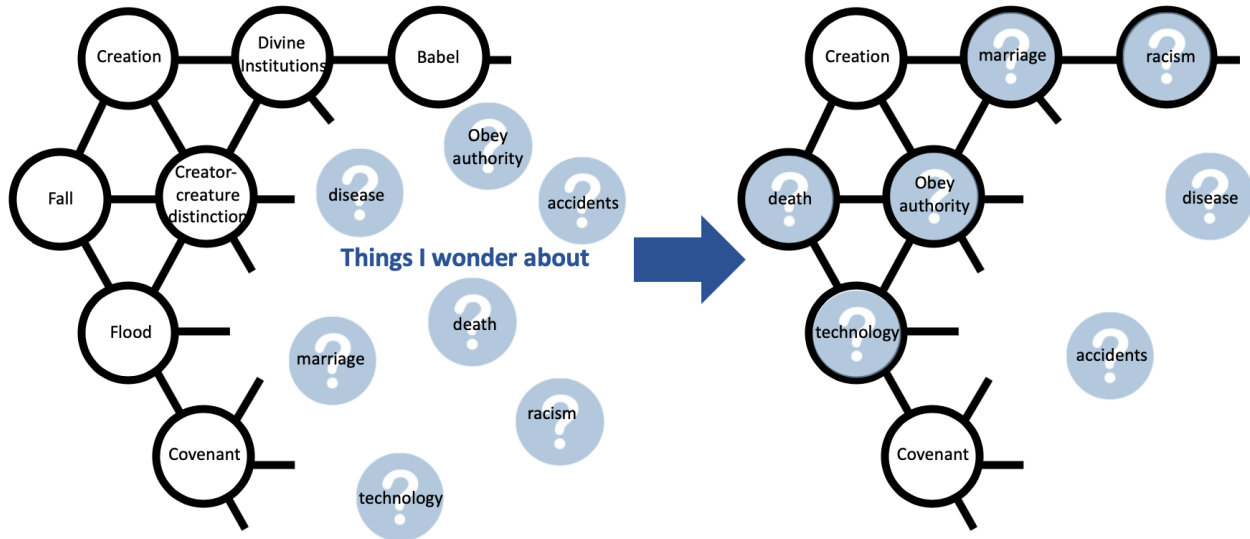
All of us have big questions in life. For many of us, these big questions float around in our heads and hearts for a long time.



If they are never answered, very soon, they become a problem and they weaken or destroy our trust in God and the Bible.



However, if we study the Bible so that we build up an interlocked network of truth, we will be able to understand and answer these big questions in life from the Bible's perspective. These questions will not keep floating loose in our brains and hearts and make a mess of our faith.



Just based on what we have learnt so far in the series, do we have enough biblical content to help us understand some of the common issues in the world today?

## Exercise

In this exercise, we will be attempting to take the biblical framework based on God's Word and apply it to situations and problems in the world.

## Instructions

On the next page is a table:

- The left column has ideas or problems that we have in the world today.
  - The right column lists Bible events that contain truth to help us understand and interpret these problems.
1. **Draw lines** to connect the issue on the left with the Bible event on the right that would help us understand and interpret the issue.
  2. **Discuss** how the truths from the Bible event help us understand the issue.

IDEAS & PROBLEMS IN THE WORLD	BIBLICAL TRUTHS
1. A plague of highly-contagious disease	A. Noah's knowledge of vineyards and wine-making and his lapse into drunkenness and nakedness (Genesis 9:20–28)
2. Legalisation of homosexual marriages	B. God's curse upon the ground (Genesis 3:17)
3. The belief that technology is evil	C. Divine institution of family (Genesis 1:28)
4. A fatal accident that appears meaningless	D. Decline in lifespan after the Flood (Genesis 11:10–26)
5. Racism	E. God's death sentence for mankind's rebellion (Genesis 3:19)
6. Lack of sense of authority in young people	F. Adam as the original source of DNA; Noah's family as the next source of DNA (Genesis 5, 10)
7. Medical research to push back ageing	G. Divine institution of marriage (Genesis 1:26–28; 2:15–25)

This page intentionally left blank to allow the entire lesson to be printed double-sided without the answers appearing on the back of the exercise.

**Instructions**

First hand out pages 1–4 to the group so they can do the exercise.

When it comes to the discussion time, hand out the rest of the notes.

## Answers and Comments

Do not read the following suggested comments till you have attempted the exercise.

### 1. A plague of highly-contagious disease

### B. God's curse upon the ground



Why are there plagues in the world? It was not this way from the beginning. God, as the owner and Lord of the universe, created the world for man to enjoy.

#### 1 Timothy 6:17

Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.

God told Adam and Eve that their job was to care for His creation. They were given the divine institution of responsible dominion.

Just as God is the Lord of creation, Adam and Eve were to be the under-lords over nature, looking after and enjoying it. Because Adam and Eve were given responsibility over nature, the choices they made affect nature.

When Adam and Eve sinned, one of the consequences was that the ground became cursed.

#### Genesis 3:17

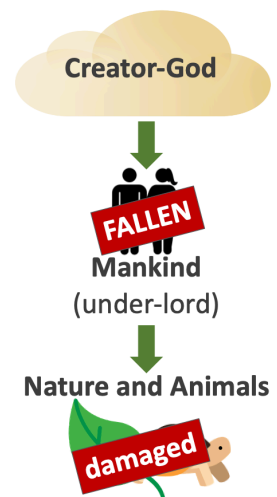
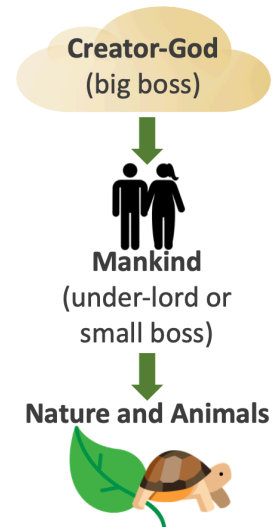
And to the man he said,

“Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you.

All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it.

Adam and Eve's sin while they were under-lords of the earth is why the world we see today is in such a state with environmental disasters, earthquakes, plagues and diseases that kill so many people. These are all the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin.

God cannot be blamed for the fallen state of the world. He had created a perfect world. Irresponsible man perverted it.

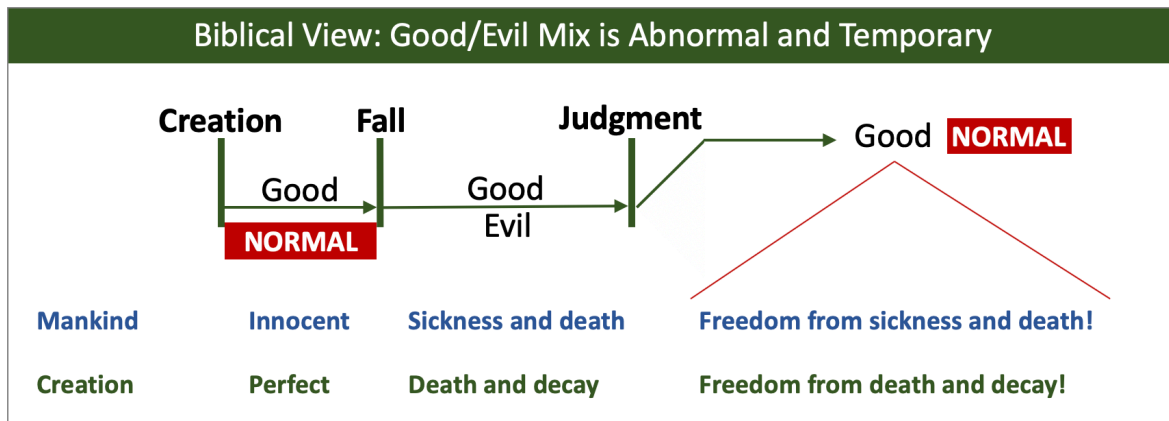


But this fallen state of the world is temporary. The Bible says there will come a day when this curse will be reversed.

### Romans 8:20–25

<sup>20</sup> Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, <sup>21</sup> the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

<sup>22</sup> For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. <sup>23</sup> And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. <sup>24</sup> We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. <sup>25</sup> But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)



With this perspective in mind, we must remember that though we have made great advancement in medical science, mankind will never be able to cure nor prevent all diseases. It will be God who removes all sickness and disease when He reverses the curse at the end of history.

### Revelation 21:4

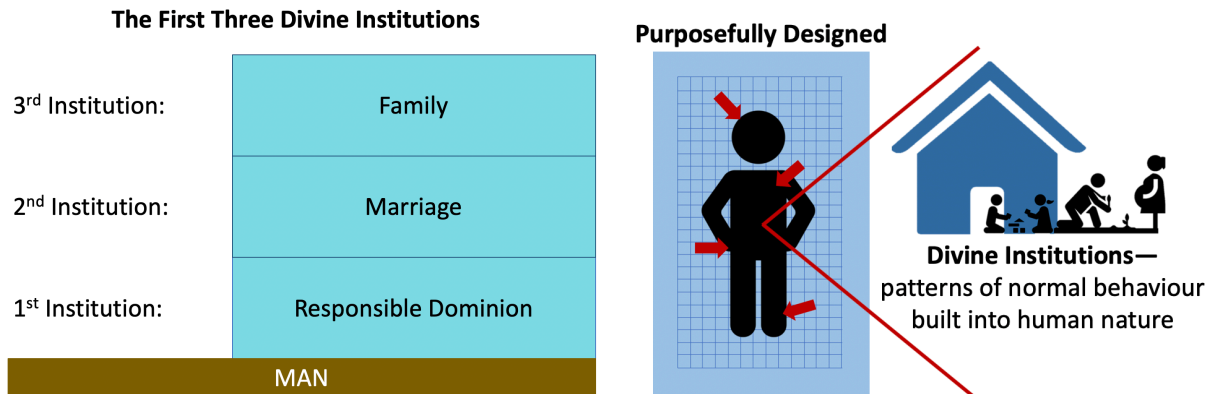
He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

## 2. Legalisation of homosexual marriage

### G. Divine institution of marriage



After God created the world, He gave man the mandate to (i) rule it and (ii) fill it.



Ruling it means to take care of it. Filling it means to procreate and fill the earth with their children.

#### Genesis 1:28

Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

However, God did not mean for man to do all this alone. He wanted man to have a partner who was “just right” for him.

When God looked among the animals, none was “just right” for man. So Yahweh created a partner that would be the perfect companion for man.

“JUST RIGHT” = Woman



#### Genesis 2:18, 21–24

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man’s ribs and closed up the opening. <sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> “At last!” the man exclaimed.  
“This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!  
She will be called ‘woman,’  
because she was taken from ‘man.”

<sup>24</sup> This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

When God wanted to create someone who was “just right” for man, He created a woman. God did not create another man. He did not create another animal. He intentionally created a woman. God gave this woman to the man in marriage and the two were “united into one”. This was the first marriage in the Bible.

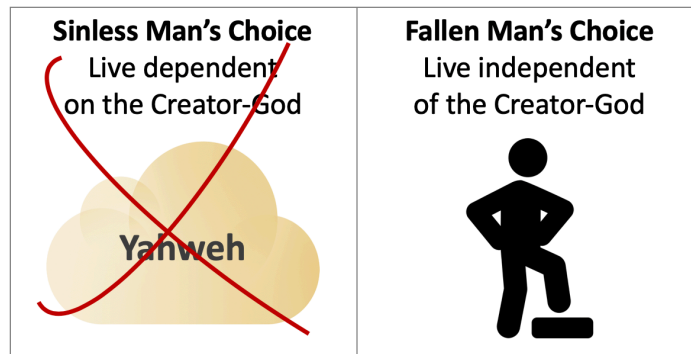
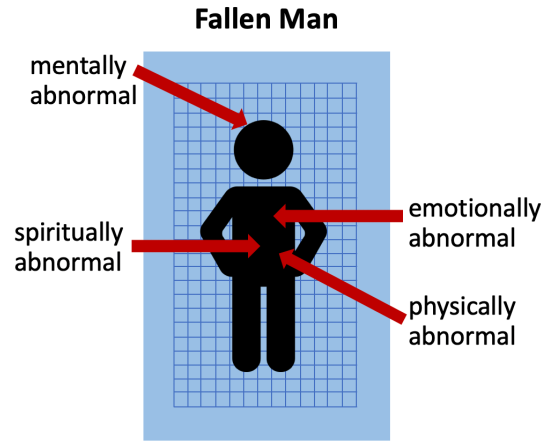
Importantly, God created woman in such a way that together with man, they would be able to procreate. They would be able to produce more men and women. In this way, they could multiply and fill the earth.

This partnership was also to allow them to successfully rule the earth. Both man and woman were created with fixed gender differences that would complement each other. In God’s design, this is how man and woman would be able to successfully fulfil His plans for them.

With the Fall, mankind and all the divine institutions were perverted in all kinds of creative ways.

There was no limit to how man could corrupt, warp and reinterpret everything good that God gave.

Homosexual relations is just one of the very many ways the divine institution of marriage that God set up has been perverted. Ultimately, mankind has chosen to ignore the Creator-creature distinction. People have rejected God’s revelation and replaced it with their own ideas.



Creator-Creature Distinction	
1 <sup>st</sup> level	CREATOR → <b>God's Revelation</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> level	creature → <b>man's ideas</b>

People put themselves, their own ideas, their own rationalising and reasoning above what the Creator-God Himself has revealed about our human design.



Even churchgoers do sometimes build their own theories or theology based on their own or their friends' experiences. They think they can understand their experiences—including their own innermost feelings—by interpreting them without any reliance on God's revelation. This is dangerous.

God's Word provides the guidelines on how to correctly interpret the world. We must not keep repeating the error of Eve. Recall how she chose to ignore God's instructions and instead base her decision to eat the fruit on Satan's words and her own thinking. People today are doing the same thing. They disregard God's revelation and believe they can reason correctly on their own. They come up with their own ideas.

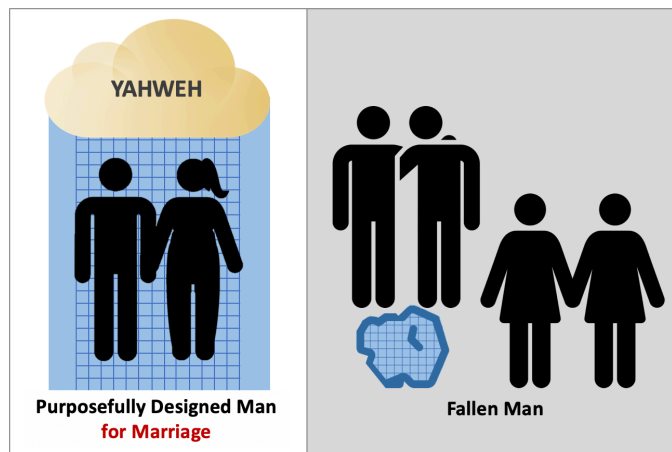
Creator-Creature Distinction		How man twists it
1 <sup>st</sup> level	CREATOR	My ideas, my experience, my own reason, my own sense of right and wrong Bible
2 <sup>nd</sup> level	creature	

However, man-made ideas cannot override God's divine purpose. Man-made law does not change God's design for marriage. Marriage was never man's idea. It was God's. So man cannot redefine it.

What happens when people stubbornly live in the way they choose? Frighteningly, the Bible says that God then releases them to go against their very own natures and practise abnormal behaviours. They will then suffer the consequences of this rebellion against God.

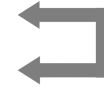
**Romans 1:26–27**

<sup>26</sup> That is why God abandoned them to their shameful desires. Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other. <sup>27</sup> And the men, instead of having normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved.



### 3. The belief that technology is evil

#### A. Noah's knowledge of vineyards and wine-making and his lapse into drunkenness and nakedness



Some people blame technology for the evil in this world. For example, they point to the internet or to smartphones as the cause of people's problems. There is social media addiction, online gambling, pornography, slandering, online harassment, information on how to make bombs, commit suicide, etc.

Some churchgoers may also be quick to advocate keeping away from technology as it leads us to sin. But the Bible has an interesting perspective on this. The Bible demonstrates to us that Noah had access to technology.

Before the Flood, God had already given Noah technology. It was God who gave Noah very specific instructions on how to build the ark and we can surmise that God also ensured that Noah had the technology he needed to build the massive ark, including producing pitch or tar to waterproof the boat. This is not an easy or primitive task.

#### **Genesis 6:14–16**

<sup>14</sup> "Build a large boat from cypress wood and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior. <sup>15</sup> Make the boat 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. <sup>16</sup> Leave an 18-inch opening below the roof all the way around the boat. Put the door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper.



After the Flood, we read that Noah had continued access to technology.

#### **Genesis 9:20**

After the flood, Noah began to cultivate the ground, and he planted a vineyard.



Noah knew viticulture—the science, production and study of grapes for wine making. Growing grapes is not an easy nor casual exercise. For example, grapes need an exact amount of moisture, good drainage, poor soil, just enough wind to prevent mould and they need to be planted in a certain direction to catch enough sunlight. God gave Noah the know-how to grow a vineyard and make wine.

In other words, God continued to give Noah technology. It was technology that enabled Noah to both build the ark and also to make wine. Technology by itself is not a bad thing. Technology is neutral.

However, Noah had Adam's sin nature in him and he abused the technology he was given and ended up drunk.

**Genesis 9:21**

One day he drank some wine he had made, and he became drunk and lay naked inside his tent.



The Bible is clear that we are not to become drunk.

**Ephesians 5:18**

Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit...

Of all the incidents that God could record in the Bible about Noah, He chose to record this peculiar and shameful incident. Nothing about the Bible is random. God means to teach us something. And here God is telling us, be careful with our sin nature and its impact on our lives.

In this case, God is asking us to consider how our sin nature makes bad use of technology.

- Are vineyards good or bad?
- Is wine good or bad?

Both are gifts from God. For example, God instructed the Israelites to celebrate and feast before Yahweh with wine and alcohol.





**Deuteronomy 14:26**

When you arrive, you may use the money to buy any kind of food you want—cattle, sheep, goats, wine, or other alcoholic drink. Then feast there in the presence of the LORD your God and celebrate with your household.

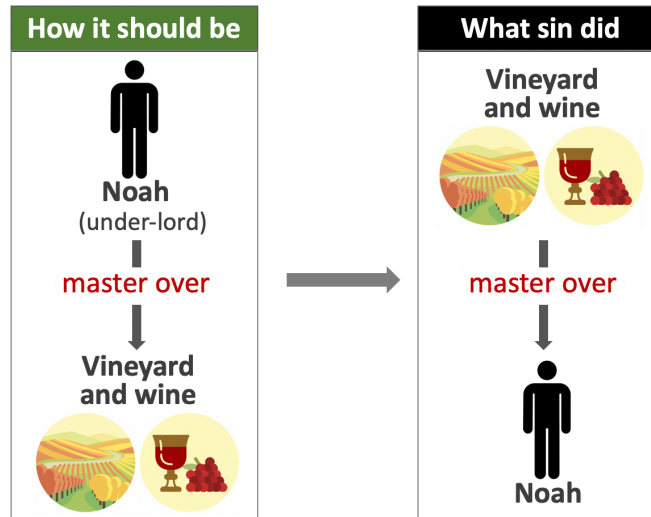
However, technology to make wine can be abused by our sin nature, just like Noah did.

Likewise, the internet can be used for good, but it can also be abused. Technology itself is neutral and how we use it determines whether it is good or bad. So we mustn't be too quick to dismiss technology as evil. Rather we should guard our hearts in our use of technology.

One last caution is that this is not limited to technology. Anything God gave mankind for good can be abused and perverted by our sinful nature. For example:

God gave man:	How sinful man abuses it:
 Food	Gluttony ----- Repulsed by food
 Work	Overworking or Being a workaholic ----- Laziness and irresponsibility
 Exercise	Obsession over physique ----- Not taking care of health
 Leisure and entertainment	Becomes main purpose in life ----- All work and not knowing how to rest

The first divine institution of responsible dominion means that mankind is supposed to subdue what God has given. Noah was supposed to be master over the vineyard, but instead, the vineyard became master over him.



Likewise, we are supposed to be masters over technology, food, work, exercise, leisure, etc. But we often allow them to master us. Knowing this temptation and danger, we need to use wisdom and guard our sinful hearts against abuse of any of the good gifts God gave us.

## 4. A fatal accident that appears meaningless

### E. God's death sentence on man



When we learn about a tragic accident or when we hear someone has died of an illness, we lament. Some may ask God, "Why did he or she have to die?" Certainly, death is awful. But it is important for us to remember that death is abnormal.

When does the Bible first talk about death and sickness? Do we know what it was like before that? The Bible tells us that when God finished with creation, everything was good. Mankind was created to live forever. There was to be no sickness and death.

#### Genesis 1:31

Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

That was the "normal" world that God created.

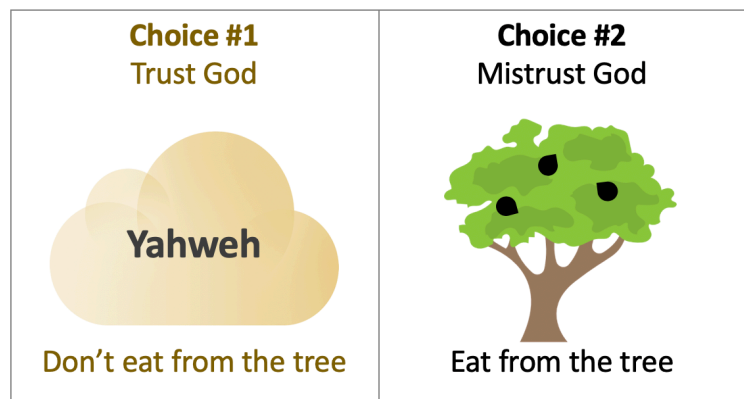
And in this "normal" world, God created genuine friendships. In a real friendship, both parties have the freedom to remain in the friendship or leave it. Without the freedom of choice, one party would be a slave or a robot, just programmed to behave in a certain way.

In placing Adam and Eve in this perfect world, God created a genuine relationship with them by giving them free will. They could trust Him and continue their friendship with Him, or they could choose not to trust Him. God gave them the freedom to decide. But He also warned them of the consequences of not trusting Him: death.

#### Genesis 2:15–17

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. <sup>16</sup> But the LORD God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden— <sup>17</sup> except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die."

**Genuine relationship: Adam and Eve had free will. They could choose to trust or to mistrust Yahweh.**

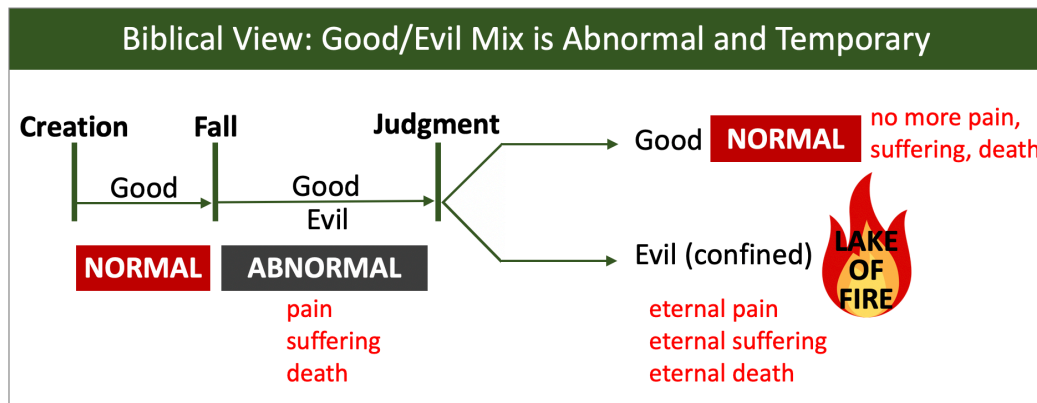


When Adam and Eve chose to rebel against God, death entered the world.

#### Romans 5:12

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

As a result of Adam and Eve's sin and rebellion against God, all people die. Death was the penalty that God warned Adam and Eve about.



Can God be blamed for death? No. God created everything perfect and there was to be no death. Mankind is totally and entirely responsible for introducing death. Together with death came many other "abnormals".

- Nature is abnormal: the world suffers from earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, etc.
- People are also abnormal:
  - They are sinful. They think and do selfish and evil things, causing hurt, pain and suffering to others.
  - Their bodies are abnormal. They suffer from disease, cancers and tumours and imperfection of all kinds.

God is not happy with this situation at all. It is God's plan to restore the perfection. God is the source of all good, all life and all perfection. He will separate the evil from the good forever.

Importantly, God did not make physical death the "end". All people continue to live beyond death in spirit form. And then later on, God will give people new physical bodies. This is what the Bible says about those who trust in God.

### **2 Corinthians 5:1–5**

<sup>1</sup> For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. <sup>2</sup> We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. <sup>3</sup> For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. <sup>4</sup> While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life.

<sup>5</sup> God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

There will be no more sickness and death for those who trust in God.

**Revelation 21:3–4**

<sup>3</sup> I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them.

<sup>4</sup> He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

Those who reject God will also be given new bodies, but they will then be separated from God and confined forever to eternal death in the lake of fire. They will be condemned.

**Daniel 12:2**

<sup>2</sup> Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting disgrace.

**Revelation 20:11–15**

<sup>11</sup> And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. <sup>12</sup> I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. <sup>14</sup> Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Right now, on earth, no matter how long a person lives, they will eventually die. (Except for the believers that will be miraculously taken off the earth at the future event called “the rapture”. We will cover this in a much later lesson.)

This means everyone—whether good or bad, believers or unbelievers, young or old. Death is inevitable.

- Some will die of sickness and disease.
- Others will die from poverty or starvation.
- Still others will be killed.
- And some will die from old age.

All deaths are the result of the rebellion at Eden that continues to this day.

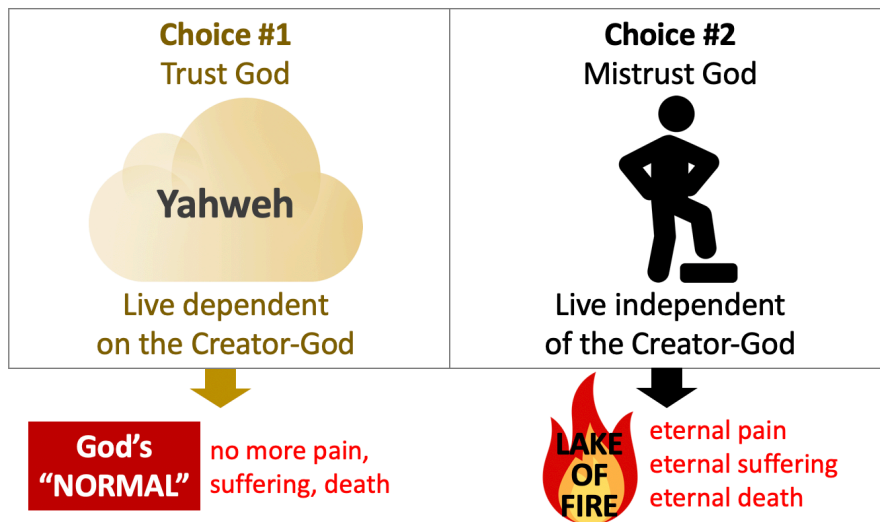
However, death is actually also a mercy from God, because He does not wish for us to live forever in this sin-filled, disease-prone body and suffer endless pain, while stuck in a world full of tragedy, accidents and natural disasters.

The important question to ask is not “when and how will I die?” Rather, it is “where will I go after I die?”

Just like Adam and Eve, people today have a choice. While we are alive:

- If we choose to trust God, we will be reconciled to Him, the One who is all-good and all-perfect. He promises to give us new, incorruptible bodies and we will live with Him in the perfect new heaven and earth forever.
- If we choose not to trust Him, we will be forever separated from Him and will be confined to an existence of continued pain and suffering in the Second Death.

**Genuine relationship: We have free will.  
We can choose to trust or to mistrust Yahweh.**



**Hebrews 9:27**

And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment...

How will God judge us? Will our future be life with the perfect God or life separated from God in the lake of fire?



## 5. Racism

### F. Adam as the original source of DNA; Noah's family as the next source of DNA



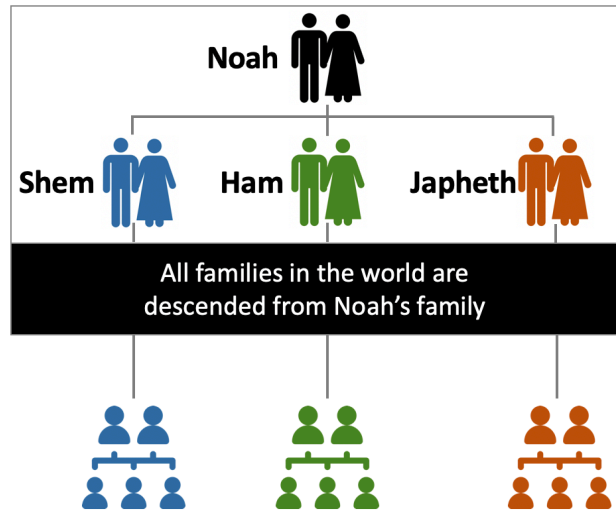
People today view themselves as being born of a certain race. Racism is the problem where people are discriminated against because of physical characteristics.

In the Bible, God tells us that we are all from the same family. Every single person on earth, whether in the past or currently living, comes from the same family.

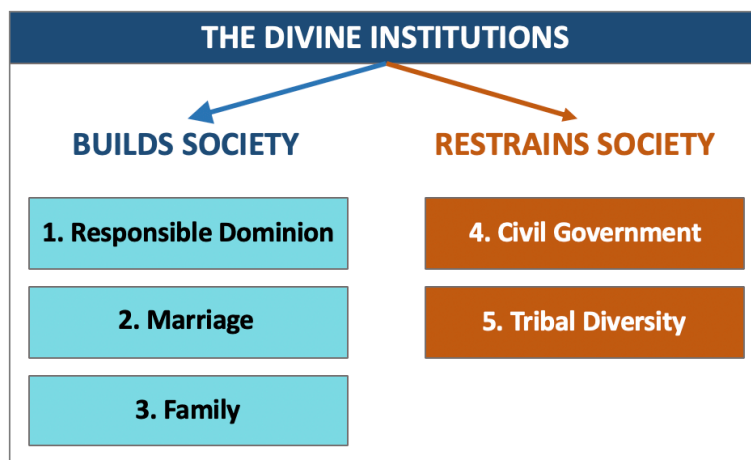
First, we come from the family of Adam and Eve. The Bible records the family line very clearly and meticulously in Genesis 5, tracing Adam's descendants all the way down to Noah.

Then after the global Flood, Noah's family was the only one left on the earth. Genesis 10 records how all the peoples of the earth came from Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Some Bibles entitle this section, "The Table of Nations". This is because it reports each son's role in filling the earth. The Bible describes:

- The tribes they are related to
- Where they live (their geography)
- What languages they speak
- Their national identities.

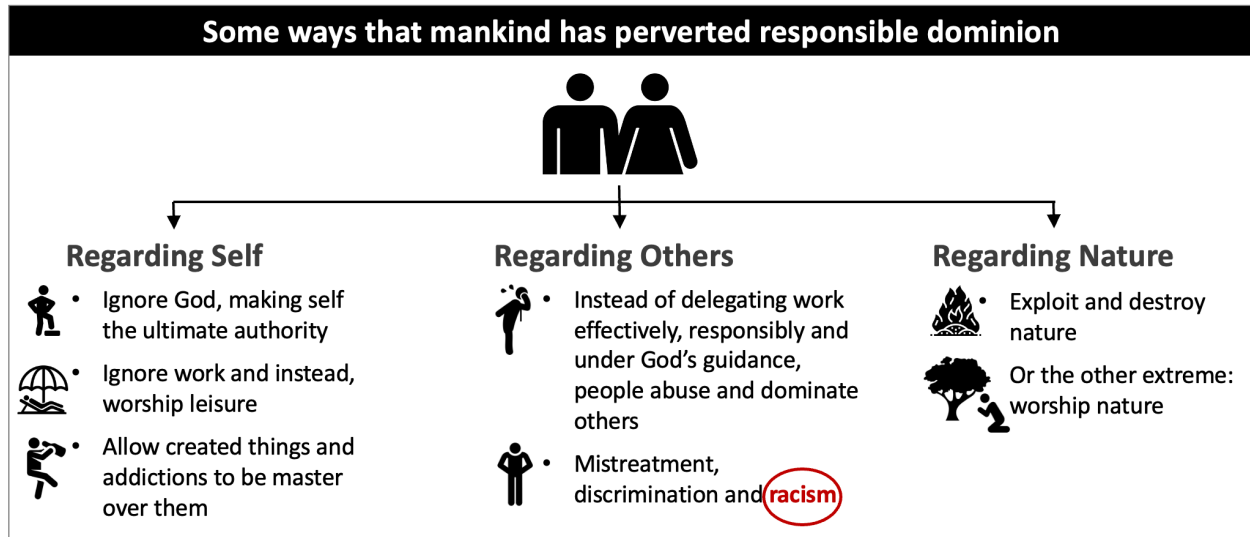


This separation of people into people groups divided by families, languages, tribes, geography and national identities is the fifth divine institution of tribal diversity that God put in place to restrain the spread of man's evil.



Note that God did not divide people up by race. All of us carry DNA that came from Noah's family. We may be of different coloured skin, live in different places, speak different languages and identify with different people groups, but the Bible tells us we are all related.

The notion of race as a separator is not a biblical idea. Again, it is a perversion, in the same way that man perverts many things.



As believers, we therefore need to reject racism and any discrimination of another people group because all of us belong to the same "race"—the human race. We are of the same family.

At the end, the Bible tells us that people of all kinds will be with God.

### Revelation 7:9–10

<sup>9</sup> After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> And they were shouting with a great roar,

“Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!”

## 6. Lack of sense of authority in young people

### C. Divine institution of family



Many youth today feel they have the freedom to make their own decisions. Many believe they can exercise this right even if it hurts the well-being of their family and others. Are they right to think this way? What does the Bible say?

The Bible is clear that children are to be brought up in the ways of God by their family.

This third divine institution is very important to Yahweh. He created the family after responsible dominion and marriage. God's plan was for men and women to marry and have children and together, they would become a family.

3<sup>rd</sup> Institution:

Family

2<sup>nd</sup> Institution:

Marriage

1<sup>st</sup> Institution:

Responsible Dominion

MAN

#### Some important responsibilities of the parents



A. Teach the ways of God



B. Teach how to live with people, friends and society



C. Warn of the dangers of rebellion and disobedience

A. It is the responsibility of the parents to train the children in the ways of Yahweh.

#### Deuteronomy 6:5–9

<sup>5</sup> And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. <sup>6</sup> And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. <sup>7</sup> Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. <sup>8</sup> Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

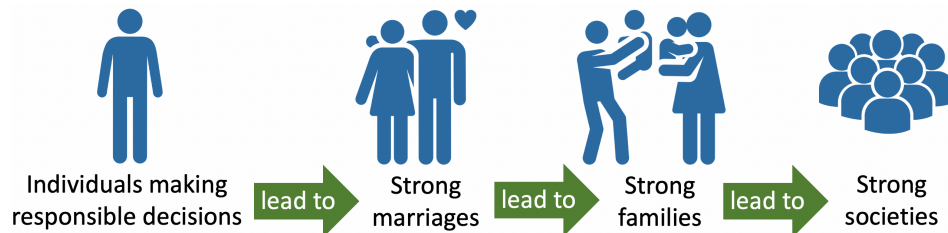
B. In training children in the ways of Yahweh, parents would also be covering many principles of how children are to live with people, friends and in society.

Many of these principles are found in:

- the books on law (for example, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)
- the “wisdom” books or books of poetry (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon).

- C. As part of training, the Bible says that these children should also be warned of the dangers of rebellion and disobedience.

Importantly, parents will also be equipping their children to train their own future children. This ensures continuity in the teaching through the generations. And it ensures children are positive contributors to society.



### Psalm 78:4–8

- <sup>4</sup> We will not hide these truths from our children;  
we will tell the next generation  
about the glorious deeds of the LORD,  
about his power and his mighty wonders.
- <sup>5</sup> For he issued his laws to Jacob;  
he gave his instructions to Israel.  
He commanded our ancestors  
to teach them to their children,
- <sup>6</sup> so the next generation might know them—  
even the children not yet born—  
and they in turn will teach their own children.
- <sup>7</sup> So each generation should set its hope anew on God,  
not forgetting his glorious miracles  
and obeying his commands.
- <sup>8</sup> Then they will not be like their ancestors—  
stubborn, rebellious, and unfaithful,  
refusing to give their hearts to God.

- i. However, before training children, parents are to **first obey God’s commandments themselves**.

No parent can successfully and meaningfully impart disciplines that they themselves do not practise or instructions that they themselves do not follow.

### Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.



**Parents must:**

- i. First obey God themselves**
- ii. Model godly behavior**
- iii. Not be unreasonable**

- ii. The apostle Paul reminded Titus **how important modelling godly behaviour is**.

While Paul was not talking to Titus about parenting, what he said is very true even for parents.

**Titus 2:6–8**

<sup>6</sup> In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely. <sup>7</sup> And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. <sup>8</sup> Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us.

- iii. Also, parents are not to be unreasonable and randomly annoy their children.

**Colossians 3:21**

Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged.

If parents follow God's instructions on training their children from the Word of God:

- They are **modelling** how they themselves submit to God as the main authority in their lives.
- And in following God's rules on holy living, the parents will also **model** how they submit to other authorities that God has put in place including governments, civil servants, teachers, police officers, bosses, judges, etc.

The result is that children will grow up seeing what it means and how it looks like to **submit to the authorities in their lives**.

In addition, God tells us what He expects for the children and young people. God expects them to honour their parents as the authority over them. This is so important to God that it is included in the Ten Commandments.

**Exodus 20:12**

"Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Interestingly, this is the only commandment that is followed with a promise that "you will live a long, full life". None of the other commandments is followed up immediately with a promise. This is how importantly God views this.

**No age limit**

Also, notice there is no age limit attached to this. It does not say this is only meant for children below a certain age. This means God never means for children to stop honouring their parents.

But what does it mean to "honour"? The apostle Paul explains that to honour is to obey.

**Ephesians 6:1–3**

<sup>1</sup> Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. <sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother.” This is the first commandment with a promise: <sup>3</sup> If you honor your father and mother, “things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.”

The principle that God is sharing here about authority is clear:

- Parents are to teach and model to their children how to show respect to authority.
- Families are to be respectful and considerate to each other: parents to children and children to parents.

Therefore, young people are not free to think only of themselves with no consideration for others. In fact, Paul says that the overriding principle that they need to turn to is love.

**1 Corinthians 12:31, 13:4–7, 13**

<sup>31</sup> But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all.

<sup>4</sup> Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud <sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. <sup>6</sup> It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. <sup>7</sup> Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

<sup>13</sup> Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

Does this mean that parents and children will never disagree on anything or that adult children do not have the right to ever disagree with their parents? No.

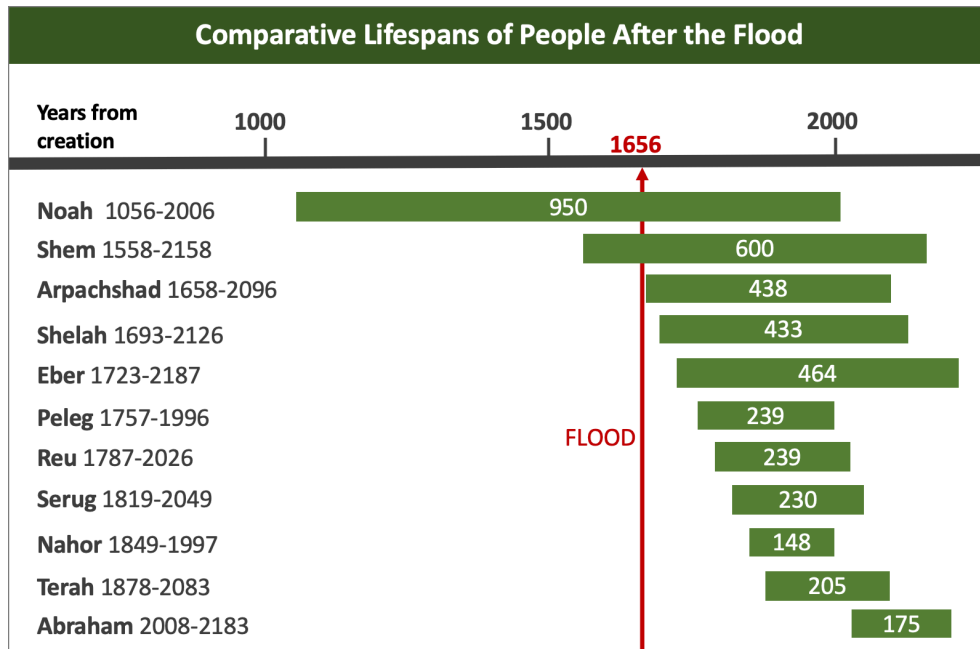
But if families—both parents and children—are committed to God and His Word, using love, honour and mutual respect as the guiding principles in their relationships, then the young people have a better chance of:

- Growing up with respect for authority
- Being considerate to others out of love, even when they disagree
- Being equipped to train their own children.

## 7. Medical research to push back or abolish ageing

### D. Decline in lifespan after the Flood

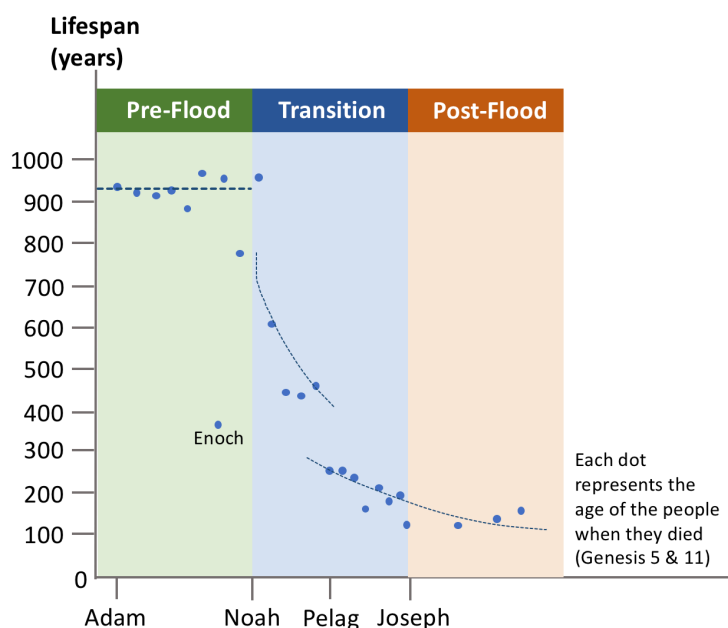
A lot of medical research is going into anti-ageing skincare and healthcare. Scientists are looking for ways to make people stay youthful longer. While it is one thing to want to be healthy and take care of one’s body, the Bible clearly demonstrates that after the Flood, human lifespan became incredibly short when compared with people who lived before the Flood.



For example, Noah lived 950 years!  
Shem lived 600 years.

After his generation, the lifespans of the later generations rapidly declined to what we see today. This is the effect of the post-flood world on humans.

No amount of medical research will significantly increase man’s lifespan.



As believers, we should focus more on how God wants us to live our lives, rather than obsess on how long our lives will be.

### **Ephesians 5:1–17**

<sup>1</sup> Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. <sup>2</sup> Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

<sup>3</sup> Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. <sup>4</sup> Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. <sup>5</sup> You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.

<sup>6</sup> Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. <sup>7</sup> Don't participate in the things these people do. <sup>8</sup> For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! <sup>9</sup> For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true.

<sup>10</sup> Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. <sup>12</sup> It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, <sup>14</sup> for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said,

“Awake, O sleeper,  
rise up from the dead,  
and Christ will give you light.”

<sup>15</sup> So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. <sup>16</sup> Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. <sup>17</sup> Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.



## Closing Thoughts

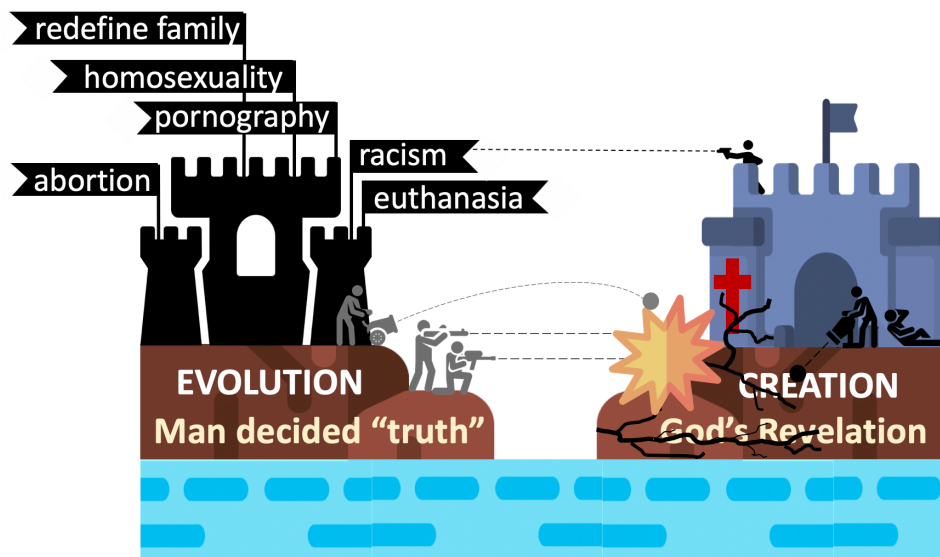
This faith exercise reminds us that when we read God's Word, we must take time to understand God's perspective and explanation of how the world works and how we got to our current state.

God very specifically chose to put into Scripture accounts that help us make sense of the world. The incidents in the Bible are not random but help us build a framework to interpret the world. In Genesis 1–11 we find much information that explains a lot about the world in both its spiritual and physical aspects.

It is critical that we understand and believe Genesis 1–11 correctly. It is foundational teaching. Genesis 1–11 introduces creation, fall, sin, God's judgment and the need for a Saviour. These truths are essentially the content of the gospel. Jesus and all the apostles fully believed the accounts in Genesis. Genesis 1–11 is interlocked with the New Testament. We cannot understand the Bible well or accurately without understanding the Old Testament. God did not choose to only record the New Testament. Rather, the New Testament builds upon and follows on from the foundation of the Old Testament.

Because a correct understanding of these foundational events is so critical, Satan has focused much effort in attacking Genesis. If he can chip away and destroy the authority of the Bible, he can:

- cast doubt in the minds of churchgoers to make them think they don't need the historical truths of Genesis 1–11 to interpret and understand everyday life.
- convince churchgoers that they have the right to reinterpret the Bible and uncover what God "really" means.
- cause churchgoers to fight internally against other churchgoers regarding the authority of Scripture.
- destroy their faith.
- turn people away from the God they grew up with, the God their parents worship.



Over the years, Satan has used unbelievers to challenge Christians. Many of them are more informed on the Bible, Christian teachings and church history than most churchgoers. They are laser-focused on destroying the foundations of our faith: the authority of the Bible and God's revelation about origins. In fact, this could very well be their taunt towards Christians:

**Psalm 11:3**

The foundations of law and order have collapsed.  
What can the righteous do?

Thankfully this psalm doesn't end there. While the ungodly might taunt and attack and the fainthearted believer might be tempted to flee in fear, the psalmist reminds us that our God is all-seeing, all-knowing, all-powerful and all-sovereign.

**Psalm 11:1–7**

- <sup>1</sup> I trust in the LORD for protection.  
So why do you say to me,  
“Fly like a bird to the mountains for safety!”
- <sup>2</sup> The wicked are stringing their bows  
and fitting their arrows on the bowstrings.  
They shoot from the shadows  
at those whose hearts are right.
- <sup>3</sup> The foundations of law and order have collapsed.  
What can the righteous do?”
- <sup>4</sup> But the LORD is in his holy Temple;  
the LORD still rules from heaven.  
He watches everyone closely,  
examining every person on earth.
- <sup>5</sup> The LORD examines both the righteous and the wicked.  
He hates those who love violence.
- <sup>6</sup> He will rain down blazing coals and burning sulfur on the wicked,  
punishing them with scorching winds.
- <sup>7</sup> For the righteous LORD loves justice.  
The virtuous will see his face.

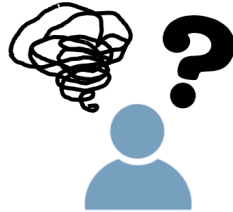
What does this mean for us as Christians?

First, we can have confidence that God sees all the attacks of the evil one and those he is using to do his will. We need not fear that God is uncaring towards us.

Second, we can bravely turn to what God gave us, His Word, the Bible. This is how He had chosen to communicate with us. In spending time studying His Word and in prayer, we would be better equipped to face the challenges in front of us. We need not flee in fear or hide in terror.

When the troubles of life threaten to overwhelm us, or when a complex issue confuses us, we will have studied enough content to ask ourselves, “Where in God’s Word can I find the biblical perspective on this question?” In other words, we can start our “Faith in Action” exercise.

### FAITH IN ACTION EXERCISE



**1** “Which events in God’s Word help me with the question that I have?”



Creation



Fall



Flood

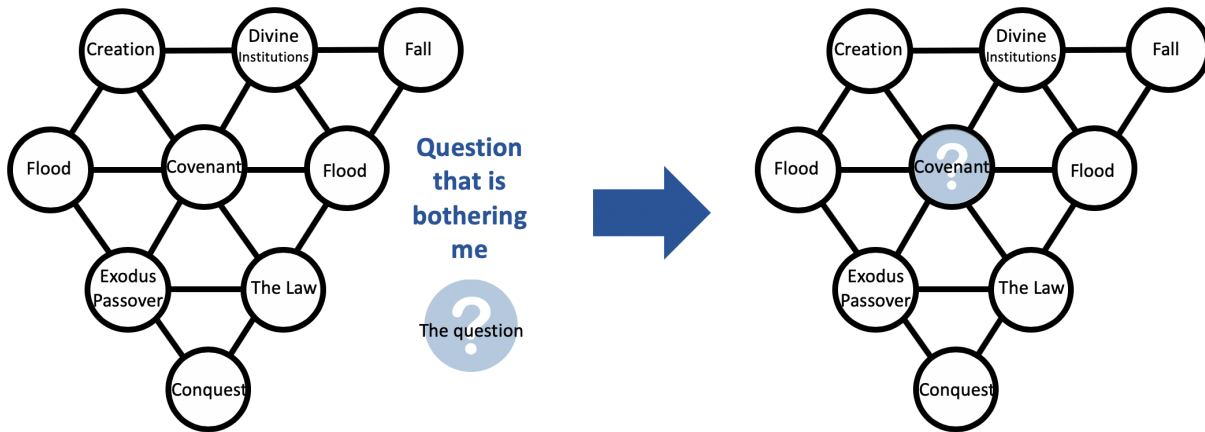


Noahic Covenant



Babel

**2** “Does this fit into everything else I know about God and is consistent with the rest of the Bible?”



If we go through Scripture intentionally drawing out truths that lock tightly together, we will have the tools to look at a problem or question from God’s perspective.

Seeing life from God’s point of view will calm us down, give us proper perspective, and help us understand life in the correct way. Importantly, we will have a much stronger foundation for our faith. We will not be easily swayed by strange teachings or pagan thoughts.

Instead, we will see that God is actively and sovereignly in control of the world and where it is heading. We will marvel at how all-knowing, all-powerful and all-loving God is and how much He is indeed worthy to be praised. We will appreciate how God has never left the world alone but is directing it towards the glorious end that He has planned for it.

At this point in the series, we have only covered the first 11 chapters of the Bible. As we study more and more biblical events, our framework for understanding God, history and His plan will expand. We will have greater biblical understanding to address even more questions that we might have and challenges that we might face.

In future “Faith in Action” exercises, we will address even more ideas, problems and tricky situations by using the additional biblical content we will study in upcoming lessons.



Pre-reading for next lesson: Genesis 12:1–9, 15:1–21