

LOST WORLD SERIES

MESSAGE # 1

"THE LOST WORLD"

GENESIS 4-5

Good morning and welcome to the part of God's Word I like to call the Lost World. This is a mysterious part of human history involving up to 7 billion people who lived before the Flood. What was the Antediluvian World like? Why did God destroy it? Who lived and served God in that time? And what can we learn from the world that perished? All this and so much more lies ahead in Genesis 4-5.

WHY STUDY THE LOST WORLD?

FIRST, BECAUSE IT WAS SLIDING TO THE FLOOD OF WATER, JUST LIKE OUR WORLD IS SLIDING TOWARD THE FLOOD OF FIRE!

If we could summarize Genesis 4-5 it would sound very much like the way this author puts it:

Not long after God created Adam and Eve and put them in His beautiful garden, where every one of their needs was met, they decided to do the one thing that He had told them not to do. They ate from the tree of knowledge and fell, and the rest of creation fell with them. The whole earth was cursed. Our first parents lost their fellowship with God and were exiled from Eden. Very soon after that, the first murder was committed, when Cain killed his brother Abel.

Corruption, violence, polygamy, incest, lying, stealing, adultery, idolatry, and every other sin became common and increasingly worse. Mankind, in fact, became so terribly debauched that God destroyed all people, except for the eight in Noah's family. Man's nature was still sinful, however, and in the generations after the Flood, he continued to ignore God and sinned in every conceivable way. God had tried to reach people-including through Noah, who preached while he was building the ark-but they would not listen or change. Sin reached a climax when, with the tower of Babel, men literally tried to take heaven by storm. God thwarted their scheme by causing them to speak different languages and by scattering them across the world.

Yet God did not give up on man. It was in His eternal plan that those whom He had created in His own image would worship and serve Him. To do so they had to be redeemed. God could recover man only by drastic means. It was as if a great river had been blocked by a landslide. God had to cut a new channel. He chose a certain people to be the channel to bring the river of life to the world again. The father of that people was Abraham. From his descendants was to come the nation of Israel, God's earthly, historical channel of revelation and redemption. The Old and New Covenants, the law, the prophecies, the priestly sacrifices—all came through Israel. The Messiah Himself was a Jew, the truest Jew of all. God's plan of redemption was to be carried out through these specially chosen people. "Salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). And all Jews are from Abraham.

God picked Abraham. God predetermined the life of Abraham. God set His love upon Abraham to be the one through whom the channel would be cut. It was a matter of divine choice. Abraham was honored by God because of his faith and he was saved because of his faith, but he was not chosen because of his faith. Abraham was not chosen because of any merit or quality or virtue. He was chosen purely out of the sovereign will of God. "The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers" (Deut. 7:7-8)¹

WHY STUDY THE LOST WORLD? SECONDLY, BECAUSE GOD'S DEMANDS FOR HOLINESS HAVE NOT CHANGED

The Lost World introduces us to the reality that God does not change. God is Holy and only the saints or holy ones will be with Him in Heaven. One ancient Puritan wrote this:

Consider the necessity of holiness. It is impossible that ever you should be happy, except you are holy. No holiness here, no happiness hereafter. The Scripture speaks of three bodily inhabitants *of heaven*: Enoch, before the law, Elijah, under the law, and Jesus Christ, under the gospel: all three eminent in holiness, to teach us, that even in an ordinary course there is no going to heaven without holiness. There are many thousand thousands now in heaven, but not one unholy one among them all; there is not one sinner among all those saints; not one goat among all those sheep; not one weed among all those flowers; not one thorn or prickle among all those roses; not one pebble among all those glistening diamonds. There is not one Cain among all those Abels; nor one Ishmael

¹MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

among all those Isaacs; nor one Esau among all those Jacobs in heaven. There is not one Ham among all the patriarchs; not one Saul among all the prophets; nor one Judas among all the apostles; nor one Demas among all the preachers; nor one Simon Magus among all the professors.

Heaven is only for the holy man, and the holy man is only for heaven; heaven is a garment of glory, that is only suited to him that is holy. God, who is truth itself, and cannot lie, hath said it, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Mark that word “no man”. Without holiness the rich man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the poor man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the nobleman shall not see the Lord; without holiness the mean man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the prince shall not see the Lord; without holiness the peasant shall not see the Lord; without holiness the ruler shall not see the Lord; without holiness the ruled shall not see the Lord; without holiness the learned man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the ignorant man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the husband shall not see the Lord; without holiness the wife shall not see the Lord; without holiness the father shall not see the Lord; without holiness the child shall not see the Lord; without holiness the master shall not see the Lord; without holiness the servant shall not see the Lord. “For faithful and strong is the Lord of hosts that hath spoken it” (Josh. 23:14).²

WHY STUDY THE LOST WORLD? FINALLY, BECAUSE WE CAN FIND CHRIST IS OUR ALL IN ALL THE BIBLE

But why even study the Lost World? What can we New Testament Christians find in Genesis 4-5? Most amazingly, Christ in all His glory. The way we see these chapters will color all the rest of God's Word. Listen to the testimony of a great Bible student of 150 years ago, J. C. Ryle:

In every part of both Testaments Christ is to be found—dimly and indistinctly at the beginning, more clearly and plainly in the middle, fully and completely at the end—but really and substantially everywhere. Christ's sacrifice and death for sinners, and Christ's kingdom and future glory, are the light we must bring to bear on any book of Scripture we read. Christ's cross and Christ's crown are the clue we must hold fast, if we would find our way through Scripture difficulties. Christ is the only key that will unlock many of the dark places of the Word. Some people complain that they do not understand the Bible. And the reason is very simple. They do not use the key. *To them the Bible*

²Holiness, (Simpsonville, SC: Christian Classics Foundation) 1997.

is like the hieroglyphics in Egypt. It is a mystery, just because they do not know and employ the key.

IT WAS CHRIST CRUCIFIED WHO WAS SET FORTH IN EVERY OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICE.

Every animal slain and offered on an altar was a practical confession that a Saviour was looked for who would die for sinners—a Saviour who should take away man's sin, by suffering, as his Substitute and Sin-bearer, in his stead (1 Peter 3:18). It is absurd to suppose that an unmeaning slaughter of innocent beasts, without a distinct object in view, could please the eternal God!

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,

IT WAS CHRIST TO WHOM ABEL LOOKED WHEN HE OFFERED A BETTER SACRIFICE THAN CAIN.

Not only was the heart of Abel better than that of his brother, but he showed his knowledge of vicarious sacrifice and his faith in an atonement. He offered the firstlings of his flock, with the blood thereof, and in so doing declared his belief that without shedding of blood there is no remission (Heb. 11:4).

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

IT WAS CHRIST OF WHOM ENOCH PROPHESED

In the days of abounding wickedness before the flood "Behold," he said, "the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all" (Jude 14, 15).

Jude 14-15 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones 15 to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

IT WAS CHRIST TO WHOM ABRAHAM LOOKED

WHEN HE DWELT IN TENTS IN THE LAND OF PROMISE.

He believed that in his seed, in one born of his family, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. By faith he saw Christ's day, and was glad (John 8:56).

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

IT WAS CHRIST OF WHOM JACOB SPOKE TO HIS SONS, AS HE LAY DYING.

He marked out the tribe out of which He would be born, and foretold that "gathering together" unto Him which is yet to be accomplished. "

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10).

IT WAS CHRIST WHO WAS THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CEREMONIAL LAW WHICH GOD GAVE TO ISRAEL BY THE HAND OF MOSES.

The morning and evening sacrifice, the continual shedding of blood, the altar, the mercy-seat, the high priest, the passover, the day of atonement, the scapegoat—all these were so many pictures, types and emblems of Christ and His work. God had compassion upon the weakness of His people. He taught them Christ, line upon line, and, as we teach little children, by similitudes. It was in this sense especially that "the law was a schoolmaster to read" the Jews "unto Christ" (Gal. 3:24).

Galatians 3:24 So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

IT WAS CHRIST TO WHOM GOD DIRECTED THE ATTENTION OF ISRAEL.

By all the daily miracles which were done before their eyes in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud and fire which guided them, the manna from heaven which every morning fed them, the water from the smitten rock which followed them—all and each were figures of Christ The brazen serpent, on that memorable occasion when the plague of fiery serpents was sent upon them, was an emblem of Christ (1 Cor. 10:4 ; John 3:14).

IT WAS CHRIST OF WHOM ALL THE JUDGES WERE TYPES.

Joshua and David and Gideon and Jephthah and Samson, and all the rest whom God raised up to deliver Israel from captivity—all were emblems of Christ. Weak and unstable and faulty as some of them were, they were set for examples of better things in the distant future. All were meant to remind the tribes of that far higher Deliverer who was yet to come.

IT WAS CHRIST OF WHOM DAVID THE KING WAS A TYPE.

Anointed and chosen when few gave him honor, despised and rejected by Saul and all the tribes of Israel, persecuted and obliged to flee for his life, a man of sorrow all his life, and yet at length a conqueror—in all these things David represented Christ.

IT WAS CHRIST OF WHOM ALL THE PROPHETS FROM ISAIAH TO MALACHI SPOKE.

They saw through a glass darkly. They sometimes dwelt on His sufferings, and sometimes on His glory that should follow (1 Pet. 1:11). They did not always mark out for us the distinction between Christ's first coming and Christ's second coming. Like two candles in a straight line, one behind the other, they sometimes saw both the advents at the same time, and spoke of them in one breath. They were sometimes moved by the Holy Spirit to write of the times of Christ crucified, and sometimes of Christ's kingdom in the latter days. But Jesus dying, or Jesus reigning, was the thought you will ever find uppermost in their minds.

1 Peter 1:11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

IT IS CHRIST, I NEED HARDLY SAY, OF WHOM THE WHOLE NEW TESTAMENT IS FULL.

The Gospels are Christ living, speaking and moving among men. The Acts are Christ preached, published and proclaimed. The Epistles are Christ written of, explained and exalted. But all through, from first to last, there is one name above every other, and that is the name of Christ.

I charge every reader of this message to ask himself frequently what the Bible is to him. Is it a Bible in which you have found nothing more than good moral

precepts and sound advice? Or is it a Bible in which you have found Christ? Is it a Bible in which Christ is all? If not, I tell you plainly, you have hitherto used your Bible to very little purpose. You are like a man who studies the solar system, and leaves out in his studies the sun, which is the center of all. It is no wonder if you find your Bible a dull book!³

The Flood Judgment

Methuselah comes from *muth*, a root that means "death"⁴; and from *shalach*, which means to bring, or to send forth. The name Methuselah means, "his death shall bring"⁵.

Methuselah's father was given a prophecy of the coming Great Flood, and was apparently told that as long as his son was alive, the judgment of the flood would be withheld; but as soon as he died, the flood would be brought or sent forth. (Can you imagine raising a kid like that? Every time the boy caught a cold, the entire neighborhood must have panicked!)

And, indeed, the year that Methuselah died, the flood came⁶. It is interesting that Methuselah's life, in effect, was a symbol of God's mercy in forestalling the coming judgment of the flood.

Therefore, it is fitting that his lifetime is the oldest in the Bible, speaking of the extensiveness of God's mercy.

The Other Names

If there is such significance in Methuselah's name, let's examine the other names to see what may lie behind them.

Adam's name means **man**. As the first man, that seems straight forward enough.

Seth

Adam's son was named Seth, which means **appointed**. Eve said, "*For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.*"⁷

Enosh

Seth's son was called Enosh, which means **mortal, frail, or miserable**. It is from the root *anash*, to be incurable, used of a wound, grief, woe, sickness, or wickedness.

It was in the days of Enosh that men began to defile the name of the Living God.⁵

Kenan

³ *Holiness*, (Simpsonville, SC: Christian Classics Foundation) 1997, chapter 20 "Christ is all".

⁴ *Muth*, death, occurs 125 times in the Old Testament.

⁵ See Pink, Jones, and Stedman in the bibliography.

⁶ Methuselah was 187 when he had Lamech, and lived 782 years more. Lamech had Noah when he was 182 (Genesis 5:25-28). The Flood came in Noah's 600th year (Genesis 7:6, 11). 600 + 182 = 782nd year of Lamech, the year Methuselah died.

⁷ Genesis 4:25.

Enosh's son was named Kenan, which can mean **sorrow, dirge, or elegy**. (The precise denotation is somewhat elusive; some study aids unfortunately presume that Kenan is synonymous with Cainan.)

Balaam, looking down from the heights of Moab, uses a pun upon the name of the Kenites when he prophesies their destruction⁸.

We have no real idea as to why these names were chosen for their children. Often they may have referred to circumstances at birth, and so on.

Mahalalel

Kenan's son was Mahalalel, from Mahalal which means *blessed or praise*; and El, the name for *God*. Thus, Mahalalel means the **Blessed God**. Often Hebrew names include El, the name of God, as Dan-i-el, "God is my Judge", etc.

Jared

Mahalalel's son was named Jared, from the verb *yaradh*, meaning **shall come down**.

Enoch

Jared's son was named Enoch, which means **teaching, or commencement**. He was the first of four generations of preachers. In fact, the earliest recorded prophecy was by Enoch, which amazingly enough deals with the Second Coming of Christ (although it is quoted in the Book of Jude in the New Testament):

Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, "*Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,*

To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against."

Jude 14, 15

Methuselah

Enoch was the father of Methuselah, who we have already mentioned. Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah. Apparently, Enoch received the prophecy of the Great Flood, and was told that as long as his son was alive, the judgment of the flood would be withheld. The year that Methuselah died, the flood came.

Enoch, of course, never died: he was translated (or, if you'll excuse the expression, raptured). That's how Methuselah can be the oldest man in the Bible, yet he died before his father!

Lamech

⁸ Genesis 4:26 is often mistranslated. Targum of Onkelos: ...desisted from praying in the name; Targum of Jonathan: surnamed their idols in the name...; Kimchi, Rashi, and other ancient Jewish commentators agree. Jerome indicated that this was the opinion of many Jews of his day. Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishna (a constituent part of the Talmud), a.d. 1168, ascribes the origin of idolatry to the days of Enosh.

Methuselah's son was named Lamech, a root still evident today in our own English word, lament or lamentation. Lamech suggests **despairing**. (This name is also linked to the Lamech in Cain's line who inadvertently killed his son Tubal-Cain in a hunting incident.¹⁰)

Noah

Lamech, of course, is the father of Noah, which is derived from *nacham*, **to bring relief or comfort**, as Lamech himself explains in Genesis 5:29.

The Composite List

Now let's put it all together:

Hebrew	English
Adam	Man
Seth	Appointed
Enosh	Mortal
Kenan	Sorrow;
Mahalalel	The Blessed God
Jared	Shall come down
Enoch	Teaching
Methuselah	His death shall bring
Lamech	The Despairing
Noah	Rest, or comfort.

That's rather remarkable:

Man (is) appointed mortal sorrow; (but) the Blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring (the) despairing rest.

Here's the Gospel hidden within a genealogy in Genesis!