

Pleasant Springs Church

WDGW? — *What Does God Want?* • Lesson 2 of 6

Lesson 2 — What Went Wrong

Tuesday, June 9 -- 6:00 PM

After Michael S. Heiser, *What Does God Want?* · Septuagint (LXX) & ESV side-by-side

KEY TEXTS

Genesis 3 - Genesis 6:1-4 - Deuteronomy 32:8-9 LXX - Psalm 82 - Romans 5:12-21 - Romans 8:18-23

THE BIG IDEA

The Bible does not tell the story of one fall. It tells the story of **three**. In Eden a human couple takes the serpent's bargain (Gen. 3). In the days of Noah members of the divine council go their own way and corrupt humanity (Gen. 6). At Babel humanity, now scattered, is handed over to the rebellious gods who become the "sons of God" over the nations (Deut. 32:8–9 LXX). Three rebellions, one disaster: the family is broken. **And God does not give up.** The very chapter that announces the curse already announces the rescuer (Gen. 3:15).

INTRODUCTION

Heiser's framework reads Genesis 1–11 as a tightly woven story about how God's good plan for two families — supernatural and human — was shattered in three concrete acts of rebellion. Understanding all three is the difference between a Bible that feels like a random collection of stories and a Bible that reads like a single rescue mission. Once you see the three rebellions, the rest of the Old Testament stops being mysterious.

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REBELLION ONE

Eden -- the Serpent's Bargain

Genesis 3 - the first "you will be like God"

The first rebellion is the one everyone knows. A nachash — the “serpent” of Genesis 3, but the same word can mean “shining one” — offers the woman a shortcut. You don't have to wait. You don't have to trust. You can *be like God* right now. The bargain is taken, the trust is broken, the family is exiled from the meeting place.

Notice what God does next. Before any curse falls on the humans, God speaks judgment on the serpent — and tucked inside that judgment is the first promise of the gospel: a coming offspring of the woman who will crush the serpent's head. The rescuer is announced before the exile begins.

KEY INSIGHT

Read Genesis 3:15 carefully. Christian tradition calls this verse the *protoevangelium* — “the first gospel.” Before God names any consequence for the man or the woman, He has already named the rescuer who will undo the damage. The Father does not give up on the family even as the first wound is still bleeding.

Genesis 3:14-15 - The Promise Inside the Curse

Septuagint (LXX)

¹⁴καὶ εἶπεν Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τῷ ὄφει· ὅτι ἐποίησας τοῦτο, ἐπικατάρατος σὺ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν κτηνῶν...

¹⁵καὶ ἔχθραν θήσω ἀνὰ μέσον σου καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς γυναικὸς, καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σπέρματός σου καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῆς· αὐτός σου τηρήσει κεφαλὴν, καὶ σὺ τηρήσεις αὐτοῦ πτέρναν.

English Standard Version

¹⁴The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock....

¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

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REBELLION TWO

The Watchers and the Flood

Genesis 6:1-4 - sons of God taking human wives

The second rebellion is the strangest, and the one modern readers most often skip. Genesis 6 reports that “the sons of God” saw that the daughters of men were beautiful and took them as wives, producing the *Nephilim* — mighty men of renown. The Septuagint translators rendered the phrase *bēnê ha'elohim* as *οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ* — “the angels of God.” The New Testament authors knew this tradition and treated it as historical (2 Pet. 2:4–5; Jude 6–7).

The result was a corruption of humanity so deep that God sent the flood. But even there the family is preserved: Noah, his sons, and their wives. The supernatural family had betrayed its trust. The human family was nearly destroyed. God begins again with eight people in a wooden box.

KEY INSIGHT

2 Peter 2:4 (Greek). “If God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into *Tartaros*...” Peter is reading Genesis 6 exactly the way the LXX translators read it: members of the divine council stepping outside their assigned realm. Jude 6 says the same thing. This is not a marginal idea — it is part of the Bible's diagnosis of why the world is the way it is.

Genesis 6:1-2, 4 - The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men

Septuagint (LXX)

¹καὶ ἐγένετο ἡνίκα ἤρξαντο οἱ ἄνθρωποι πολλοὶ γίνεσθαι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς...

²ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι καλαὶ εἰσιν...

⁴οἱ δὲ γίγαντες ἦσαν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκεῖναις.

English Standard Version

¹When man began to multiply on the face of the land... ²the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.

⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

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REBELLION THREE

Babel and the Disinheritance

Genesis 11 and Deuteronomy 32:8-9 (LXX)

After the flood God starts again. He repeats the Eden commission — be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth (Gen. 9:1, 7). Humanity refuses. Instead of spreading out under God, they gather at Shinar to build a tower “with its top in the heavens” (Gen. 11:4) — another bid to reach divinity on their own terms.

God's response is the climax of the three-rebellion arc. He confuses the languages and (per the LXX of Deut. 32:8–9) **allots the scattered nations to the “sons of God”**. The supernatural family that should have served Him is given dominion over a humanity that has refused to be His. He keeps Israel for Himself — *Jacob is the Lord's portion* — and that single family becomes the rescue mission for all the others.

Psalm 82 picks up this story in midstream and indicts the rebellious gods for their corrupt rule of the nations: “you shall die like men” (Ps. 82:7). The court is in session and the verdict is sealed.

KEY INSIGHT

Deut. 32:8–9 LXX. The Greek (and the Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew) reads “when the Most High allotted the nations... he fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the *angels of God*; but the Lord's portion is Jacob, his allotted heritage.” Babel is when the world got divided. The rest of the Bible is about getting it back.

Deuteronomy 32:8-9 (LXX) - The Boundaries of the Peoples

Septuagint (LXX)

⁸ὅτε διεμέριζεν ὁ ὕψιστος ἔθνη, ὡς διέσπειρεν υἱοὺς Ἀδάμ, ἔστησεν ὄρια ἔθνῶν κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων Θεοῦ,

⁹καὶ ἐγενήθη μερὶς Κυρίου λαὸς αὐτοῦ Ἰακώβ, σχοίνισμα κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ Ἰσραήλ.

English Standard Version

⁸When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God.

⁹But the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

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PART FOUR

Why God Did Not Give Up

Romans 5 reads Eden through Christ; Romans 8 looks forward to the family restored

Three rebellions. The family scattered. The world handed over. And the Bible is just getting started. The New Testament reads all three falls through one lens: the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Romans 5 undoes Eden. Romans 8 announces the day when the whole creation will be set free.

Romans 5:18-19 - One Trespass, One Act of Righteousness

Greek New Testament

¹⁸ ἄρα οὖν ὡς δι' ἑνὸς παραπτώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς κατάκριμα, οὕτως καὶ δι' ἑνὸς δικαιοῦματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς.

English Standard Version

¹⁸Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Romans 8:19-22 - Creation Groaning, Children Revealed

Greek New Testament

¹⁹ ἢ γὰρ ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς κτίσεως τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπεκδέχεται.

English Standard Version

¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God... ²¹the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

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DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

1. Heiser argues there are *three* rebellions in Genesis 1–11, not one. Which is most new to you, and which most troubles you?
2. Genesis 3:15 announces the rescuer before the curse falls on the humans. Why is that order important?
3. How does the Genesis 6 / 2 Peter 2 / Jude 6 reading of “sons of God” change the way you read the Old Testament?
4. Deut. 32:8–9 LXX says God allotted the nations to the “sons of God” and kept Israel for Himself. How does this reframe everything that happens from Genesis 12 onward?
5. Psalm 82 indicts the rebellious gods. Does it surprise you that the Bible has a category for divine beings who can be judged?
6. Romans 5 says Christ undoes Adam's trespass. Where in your life do you most need that undoing this week?
7. Romans 8 says creation itself is groaning for the “revealing of the sons of God.” Where do you see that groaning around you?

A PRAYER IN RESPONSE

*Father of mercies, your family broke faith three times in the first eleven chapters of the story, and you did not give up. Forgive the rebellion that is still in our hearts. Bring the day when the nations are restored, when the rebellious powers are dethroned, and when your sons and daughters are revealed in glory. Until then, plant our feet inside the rescue mission and keep us faithful to Jesus, the second Adam, in whose name we pray. **Amen.***

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

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- Michael S. Heiser, *What Does God Want?* Blind Spot Press, 2018. (Chapter on the fall.)
- Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*. Lexham Press, 2015. (Especially chs. 11–15 on the three rebellions.)
- Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, the Watchers, and the Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ*. Defender, 2017.
- Septuagint Greek text: Rahlfs-Hanhart, *Septuaginta*. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.
- Septuagint Greek text: Rahlfs-Hanhart, *Septuaginta* (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft).
- English text: *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Crossway Bibles.